



# **How to Build an Authority Site**

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# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Pick a Niche.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Plan Your Site.....</b>	<b>8</b>
Make Sure Your Site Looks Professional.....	8
Prepare Your Overall Plan.....	9
Develop a USP.....	10
Create a Brand.....	12
<b>Produce Content.....</b>	<b>13</b>
Characteristics of Authority-Site Content.....	14
Three Ways to Create Authority-Site Content.....	20
<b>Profit.....</b>	<b>25</b>
Drive Traffic.....	25
Monetize Your Site.....	28
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>29</b>

## Introduction

What's an authority site?

Well, that depends on whom you're asking. If you talk to people who're primarily focused on search engine optimization, they'll tell you that an authority site is one which Google has given special consideration to. That is, Google tends to give the site good rankings, because backlinks and other factors suggest that this is a trusted site.

On the other hand, those who aren't concerned with Google really don't care what Google thinks about a site. Instead, they look at authority sites as those created by experts and valued by users. Think of something like WebMD.com here, where users trust the content because they know it was created by those in the medical field.

So, who's right?

Actually, they both are. Because if you create expert content that your users trust, they'll start giving you backlinks. In turn, Google will give you a nod and smile, perhaps christening your site as an authority site.

Point is, create authority sites for your user... and Google will take care of itself.

Now the question is, how do you create these authority sites? The answer is by following these steps:

- Pick a niche, something that's not too broad.
- Plan your site.
- Produce your content.
- Profit.

Read on to get all the juicy details on these four steps...

## Pick a Niche

I'm assuming that at this point you at least have some idea about the general topic for your site (e.g., dogs, golf, homeschooling, gardening, karate, etc). Generally, you're looking for something with a robust market – a field in which you know there are customers who're eagerly buying information, goods and services in the niche.

Keep these points in mind:

- **Competition is a good thing.** Don't shy away from it. If there are a lot of marketers all going after a market, that's a sign that this market is a "big pie" – and there's plenty of market share (profits) to go around.
- **It's a good sign if marketers are paying to advertise.** If they're buying air time, paying for pay per click ads, purchasing print ads, doing media buys and engaging in other forms of paid advertising, consider it a good sign. Marketers don't plunge thousands of dollars into advertising if there aren't hungry consumers buying goods and services.
- **It's a good sign if you see lots of products and services offered to a market.** Again, this is generally a sign that the market is big and profitable.

Example: Just look at markets that you know to be big – like weight loss – and you'll see thousands of products and services targeted at these consumers.

Once you've determined that the overall market has an audience, then you need to pick a smaller slice of this market. That is, you need to pick a niche.

Why? Because all the big markets are already dominated by these huge authority sites that were started many years ago. It would be like pushing a boulder uphill in order to overtake these sites. And why make it hard on yourself when you don't have to? Instead, pick a smaller niche – and then dominate it.

Let me give you a couple examples of larger markets followed by related niches...

Market	Niche
Fitness	1. Weight loss (still big) 2. Weight loss for women (better) 3. Weight loss for women who want to get rid of baby weight
Dogs	1. Dog training (still big) 2. Dog training for toy dogs 3. Dog training for poodles
Marketing	1. Online marketing 2. Traffic generation 3. Harnessing social media 4. Harnessing the power of Facebook

Golf	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. How to improve golf swing</li><li>2. How to improve golf drive</li><li>3. How to improve putting</li><li>4. How to improve golf swing (amateurs)</li><li>5. How to improve golf swing (pros)</li><li>6. How to improve golf swing (college athletes)</li><li>7. How to improve golf swing (women)</li></ol>
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You get the point. The idea is that you need to carve out a smaller slice of the overall market – something that you can dominate. Something which has competition (which helps prove it's a viable, profitable market), yet you're confident that you can claim your share of the profit pie by building an authority site.

In order to determine this, you need to do two things:

1. **Do your market research once again to determine whether a niche is profitable.** Is there competition? Is there evidence that consumers are buying goods and services? (Hint: Go to [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com), search for your keywords, and check if a lot of relevant products come up in the search results).
2. **Review the competitors' sites.** How strong are they? To answer this, really look at them. Just because a site is big doesn't mean much if the content isn't good. (Later on you'll discover tricks for beating your competition, no matter how big and strong their sites are.)

Once you've completed your market research and settled on a laser-targeted niche market, then you can move on to the next step...

## Plan Your Site

Before you rush out and buy a domain name and hosting, you need to sit down and do some planning and brainstorming. Here are the points I want you to consider...

### Make Sure Your Site Looks Professional

Look at the top sites in your niche (or any niche, for that matter). Chances are, these sites all have at least one thing in common: their designs look slick and professional.

I know, you might be on a budget as you start building your authority site. And you might be tempted to skimp on the design. But don't do it.

You only have one shot to make a good first impression, so you need to make sure your site's overall design leaves the impression that your site is:

- Professional
- Trustworthy
- An authority/expert site

You might be tempted to just buy a web template, WordPress template or something of that nature. But I wouldn't advise it. Ideally, you should get a custom design created by a professional web designer (such as one you hire on [elance.com](http://elance.com)). That's because you want your web designer to integrate your brand into your site's design.

We'll talk about branding in just a moment. But first, let's talk about some of your site's other features...

## Prepare Your Overall Plan

The next thing you need to do is plan your overall site. That is, what features will it have? How will you share content?

Perhaps you'll share content via a blog. If so, will you enable comments? What categories will you have on your blog? Will you interact with your readers via any other means, such as on a forum?

Tip: Sometimes it's easier to start a community AFTER your site is well-established. So once you have steady traffic coming in, then you might consider adding a forum. (Still, it's optional.)

Example: Let's say you have a site related to weight loss. And perhaps you decide that you'll enable comments (as the extra content your users will generate can sometimes be beneficial in terms of search engine fodder). Then you just need to decide on the main categories (topics) for your site, such as:

- Nutrition topics
- Weight lifting topics
- Cardio topics
- Motivation topics

Within each of these categories you may have subcategories, such as “high intensity interval training” under the general category of cardio, or “macronutrients” under the general category of nutrition.

Not sure what all topics and categories to include on your site? Then you need to revisit the top sites in your niche (and the general market) to see what they include.

You want to cover the same angles, and see if you can’t come up with angles and topics that they’re not covering. In other words, you want to create a site that’s even *better* than the competitors’ sites.

While you’re visiting these top sites, take note of what makes them different from the other sites in the niche. You’ll need that bit of information to help you with the next step...

## Develop a USP

When visitors and prospects come to your authority site, somewhere in the back of their minds they’re going to be wondering what makes your site different from and better than all the other sites in the niche. And your visitors aren’t going to spend a whole lot of time figuring it out for themselves. This is why you need to tell them what makes you different.

This factor that makes you different is called your USP, or unique selling proposition. It’s what separates you from your competitors.

The interesting thing about a unique selling proposition is that it doesn’t actually have to be totally unique. Instead, you just need to be the first among your competitors to stake claim to the USP.

Example: Folgers states that their coffee is “mountain grown” coffee. But the thing is, virtually all coffee is mountain grown. However, Folgers was the first one to use this claim, so it became their unique selling proposition.

So let’s look at an example from an authority site: WebMD.com. Their USP (and slogan) is, “*Better Information. Better Health.*”

This accomplishes two things. First, it tells readers why the site is better than other similar sites (because it has better information). Then it shares with the reader the benefit (better health for the reader).

One of WebMD.com's competitors is KidsHealth.org, which of course caters to the narrower niche market of those seeking health information for kids and teens. KidsHealth.org's USP is, "*The Web's Most-Visited Site About Children's Health.*" That's what sets them apart from the competition, but it also serves as a powerful form of social proof.

Yet another competitor is Health.com. Their USP is, "*Vital Information With a Human Touch.*" Thus they're telling visitors that the information isn't just being provided by nameless, faceless usernames online. It's real information provided by real people.

Now let's look at the bodybuilding market.

Take a look at these three top authority sites and how they differentiate themselves from one another:

1. Bodybuilding.com: "*The World's #1 Online Bodybuilding Website & Supplement Store!*" Again, there's social proof in play here as they stake their claim to being the World's (not just the United States) #1 bodybuilding site.
2. FlexOnline.com: "*The Ultimate Bodybuilding Information Resource.*" Maybe these guys don't have the biggest site, but they do claim to be the ultimate resource. As in, once visitors see what they have to offer, they won't need to visit any other sites.
3. GetBig.com: "*American Bodybuilding's Original Online Community.*" This site differentiates themselves by pointing out they were first – they were the original online community.

Now it's your turn. What USPs are your competitors using? And how can you set yourself apart from all of them? Is there:

- Something unique about your information?
- Something unique about your site?
- Something unique about you?
- Something unique about your visitors?
- Something unique about what your information does for visitors?
- Something you can claim to be the "first" in?

Whatever you decide, sum it up in one short sentence. Make sure it answers the question, "How is your site different than the competitors' sites?" or "Why should your visitors seek out your site rather than going to your competitors?"

Then move on to the next step...

## Create a Brand

Earlier I mentioned that you want a custom, professional-looking site that incorporates your brand. In other words, you don't want a "me too" site that looks like everyone else's site. And so that your overall business doesn't just blend into the abyss that is the World Wide Web, you need to create a brand that helps set you apart from your competitors.

A brand is NOT just limited to creating a logo or a slogan.

Rather, a brand is about creating a feeling. This is the feeling that you want your readers and prospects to have while they're on your site. And everything on your site – from the colors to the overall design to the way you write your content – will help contribute to his feeling.

### Examples:

- A site about babies might want to convey a feeling of love and nurturing. (Indeed, run a search for baby sites, and you'll see that the top sites use warm, soft colors and overall convey a nurturing, loving feeling.)
- A bodybuilding site might convey a feeling of power.
- A site about finding one's soul mate might convey a feeling of romance.
- A spiritual site might convey a Zen-like feeling of peace.
- A site about wealth-building might convey a feeling of power or sophistication. Or if it was aimed at women, it might convey more of a feeling of security and family.

You get the idea.

Once you know the overall feeling that you'd like your site to convey, then you need to build your entire site around this feeling. This includes:

- Integrating the brand feeling into your site design (colors, graphics).
- Designing a logo and slogan which support your brand.

- Creating content that helps support this brand. This includes your articles as well as pages such as your “About” page.
- Making sure other facets of your business, such as the way you answer customer inquiries, also support your brand. For example, if your brand is all about revving people up and making them feel motivated, then make sure the way you answer emails conveys this same motivational feeling.
- Integrating your brand into your domain name, if possible. Ideally you should choose a .com domain name. You may also seek to choose a name which tells people what your site is about while also being brandable – like WebMD, for example.

In other words, it helps if your name isn’t too generic, like [NicheTopic].com (e.g., dogs.com).

Take my site [IMstitute.com](http://IMstitute.com) as an example. It’s catchy and brandable, yet it gives people an idea of what the site is about (IM + Institute = internet marketing institute).

## Quick Recap

At this point you have a niche picked out, and you’re designing and planning your site. You’ve scoped out your competitors to find out what they’re offering, so that you can offer something even better. You’ve even planned out the general categories of information that you’d like to share.

Next step, it’s time for you to start adding articles under your various categories. Read on to discover how to make sure your site becomes a true authority site, and not just a site with a lot of articles on it...

## Produce Content

You’ve done your market research. You know what your competitors are writing about. And if you check sites like Amazon.com (or even Clickbank.com) and look for the bestselling information products in your niche, then you’ll quickly discover what kinds of content your prospects are already buying.

This is the sort of content you want to include on your site. If your visitors are already buying it elsewhere, they'll be thrilled to come to your site and get the same value for free.

So what kind of content helps turn your content site into an authority site? You'll find the answer in the next section...

## Characteristics of Authority-Site Content

Why does one site become a trusted authority site, while a seemingly similar site never gets any traction? It all boils down to the quality of the content and whether it possesses the following characteristics:

### Shares Unique Concepts

Not every article you write needs to share a startling new method or concept that no one has ever heard of before. True, that would be next to impossible. However, you do need to give your readers content that they can't find anywhere else.

Here are some ways to do this:

- **Share interviews.** Instead of just writing about your topic, get out into your niche and interview experts. You can then share these interviews in full, if you'd like. Or you can simply include relevant quotes inside your articles. But either way, it's unique because not everyone has quotes and interviews from niche experts.
- **Offer a twist on an old concept.** Do you have some trick you use, some twist that you've applied to proven ideas to make these ideas even better? If so, share these ideas with your readers because it will make your content stand out from all the other "me too" content on the web.

Example: Maybe you have a weight loss site. And maybe you have an exercise routine that's fun yet high-intensity, so it burns lots of calories. Or maybe you have a food substitute you use that's just as delicious as the fattening version, but with half the calories.

- **Share old information in a new way.** One of my favorite tricks is to "formulize" content. So instead of sharing content the way everyone else shares it (via a step-by-step format), I first create a memorable formula.

Then I create my content around this formula. Typically, I like to do this using acronyms.

Example: I created an article called "7 Ways to I.M.P.R.O.V.E. Your Business in 24 Hours," with the acronym standing for:

I - Initiate  
M - Make  
P - Produce  
R - Resolve  
O - Organize  
V - Vent  
E - Educate

Get the point? Even if you're sharing proven information, you can still do it in a way that's fresh and exciting for your readers. Plus any personal touches you can add, such as stories, examples or tips, will make the content even more valuable, useful, fresh and memorable for your readers.

Tip: When you create unique, fresh and exciting content for your readers, it tends to naturally go viral. This means that people share your content, which increases your backlinks, traffic and your site's good reputation.

## **Demonstrates Expertise**

This is a big one. Your readers need to trust you.

You need to show them through your content that you're an expert (or whoever is writing the content is an expert). That means you need to focus on providing meaty, useful content.

Cut out the fluff and the filler. Ease up on the rants and the opinion pieces. Because the vast majority of your content should be solid, actionable material (like "how to" articles or tips articles).

In addition to the content itself demonstrating expertise, the way you *write* this content should convey a tone of authority or expertise. By that, I mean you need to be confident. You need to lead your readers rather than leaving them to work out the details for themselves.

You see, people want to follow a leader. But not just any leader – people want a strong, confident leader. And that’s why your content needs to reflect a confident, strong tone.

Let me give you an example...

Weak: “You probably should cut sugar out of your diet.”

Stronger: “You need to cut sugar out of your diet if you want to see great results.”

See the difference?

The word “probably” makes the first line weaker, because it makes the author sound uncertain and unsure. The second line is stronger because it conveys confidence using the word “need” followed by letting readers know what results they get if they follow the advice.

You should do the same thing. While you’re writing, focusing on projecting confidence with your recommendations and content. And after you’ve finished an article, re-read it to spot weak words, like “try” or “probably” or anything else that may indicate that you’re uncertain about what your advice.

Tip: The exception to this rule is if you really ARE uncertain or unsure about the advice you’re offering. For example, if you’re sharing an untested theory or idea, then by all means you need to let your readers know that it’s untested. In other words, do NOT act confident about something that’s untested – not only could you be delivering bad advice, it could be dangerous to your audience!

## Remains Evergreen

Another characteristic of authority sites is that they contain a lot of evergreen content. This is content that never goes stale. It’s the kind of advice and content that was workable and relevant last year, it’s still workable and relevant today, and it will remain workable and relevant in two years.

Example: Advising overweight people to cut their calories while upping their exercise is good evergreen advice. And you can write hundreds or even thousands of exercise, nutrition and motivational articles that’s based on this overall (evergreen) point of cutting calories and upping exercise.

For instance, your site might include articles about:

- How to substitute health food for junk food.
- How to create healthier meals with ingredient substitutions.
- How to create healthy meals that taste great.
- How to get rid of cravings.
- How to eat balanced meals.
- How to do high intensity interval training (HIIT).
- When to do steady-state cardio.
- Different kinds of cardio exercises.
- How to lift weights safely.
- Different ab exercises.
- Different lifts for sculpting the pectoral muscles.

And so on. That's just a short list, but I could go on and on, listing hundreds of different evergreen articles you could create for a weight loss site.

On the flip side, there are articles that are not evergreen. This is content that:

- Dates itself, perhaps by actually mentioning dates or events.

Example: "Last year during the Olympics in London..."

- Shares news about new products or fads.

Example: "These diet pills just hit the shelves last week..."

- Offers advice on untested theories.

Example: "Here's a new weight-loss idea that's circling the weight-loss community..."

And so on.

Basically, if someone can read your content and get an idea about when you wrote it – or if the content won't be relevant in a few months or a year – then it is NOT evergreen.

Now, just because you want a lot of evergreen content on your site doesn't mean that every single article needs to be an evergreen article. Not at all. Because sometimes you'll want to share the latest news in your niche. That's ok, as long as you make it clear to

readers that you're sharing your opinion or expertise about something new and potentially untested. And as long as the majority of your content is evergreen (because you want your site, overall, to be evergreen).

## **Offers Variety**

Another thing you'll want to do is offer a variety of content. That's because your site visitors will be attracted to (and learn better from) different types of content.

Some will prefer "how to" articles, while others while like tips list. Some want meaty 2000-word articles while others like quick-hitting 500-word articles.

The other thing you'll want to do is offer your content in multiple formats. So in addition to text content, you might offer videos or even audios from time to time. Indeed, you can offer multiple formats at once. As an example, you might offer a text article alongside a supplementary video that further explains or demonstrates a concept.

Finally, be sure to offer photos or other graphics whenever possible. That's because people's eyes are naturally drawn to photos, so it helps to bring readers into your content. This is especially true if you use a caption under the photo which arouses curiosity, shares a benefit or otherwise makes people want to read your article.

Example: Let's suppose you have a weight loss site. You might post an article about getting more-defined abs, alongside a photo of a person with nice abs. Your caption might read something like, "Do you know the #1 secret to getting six-pack abs?"

## **Optimized for Humans First**

Many of the people who talk about "authority sites" strictly in terms of Google will tell you that your first priority should be to optimize your content for Google by including relevant keywords in your articles.

I disagree.

Instead, I suggest that you optimize your content for your humans FIRST. Because who cares what Google thinks? If your readers don't love your content, then who really cares what Google thinks of it? See, it doesn't matter if content brings in search engine traffic if this traffic hits the "back" button right away because your content is dull.

So, write your content with your users in mind. Figure out what they want, what problems they need solved, and create articles that offer solutions. Tell stories. Add in examples. Share tips. Ask questions that engage your readers and make them think. Offer solutions. Give readers a new perspective. Offer your readers hope.

Once you've done all these things with your content, then you can consider ways to optimize your content (and site) for the search engines. This means finding what your market is searching for by using a tool like [WordTracker.com](http://WordTracker.com) or [MarketSamurai.com](http://MarketSamurai.com). Then:

- Add the keywords to your article titles (if appropriate).
- Include the keywords in the article itself. But only if you can do it naturally, without detracting from the natural flow of your content.
- Include the keywords in your filenames (e.g., `domainname.com/keyword.html`).
- Include the keywords in your page titles.
- Include the keywords in the file names of your pictures as well as in the alt text.
- Include the keywords in your navigation menu.
- Include the keywords in the anchor text (i.e., the clickable part of a link) whenever you link internally to another article on your site.
- Include the keywords in your anchor text whenever you're linking from an external site back to your own site (such as on your Facebook page).

In short, the idea is to use your keywords on your site (the same words your market is using to search for niche-related content in the search engines), but ONLY if doing so doesn't interrupt the flow of your content.

## Quick Recap

You just discovered factors that play into whether your site becomes a trusted authority site or just another article depository on the web. I trust that you'll integrate all of the above factors so that you do create engaging, trustworthy and fresh content.

Which leads to the next question: How do you create this content? Read on to discover the answer...

## Three Ways to Create Authority-Site Content

You can create the content yourself, if you'd like. Or you can have others create it for you, as outsourcers or as guest experts. Or you can combine two or three of these methods.

Let's look at these options a little more closely...

### 1. Create the Content Yourself

If you have a knack for writing and/or if you're an expert in the niche, then it makes sense for you to create the content yourself.

So, what qualifies you as an expert? Here are a few factors to consider:

- **You have extensive experience (and success) in the niche.** Perhaps you've been a bodybuilder for five years. By now you know a lot about the sport, so you can realistically offer expert advice alongside your personal experiences to your readers.
- **Your career is in the niche.** Perhaps you're a farmer who's sharing agricultural tips with others.
- **You obtained a degree in the niche.** Perhaps you're an attorney writing about legal issues.
- **You've won awards or received other accolades in the niche.** For example, maybe you've won writing contests and landed publishing contracts, which would qualify you to teach people how to be better writers.

Some people start authority sites because they've done a lot of research in the niche, so they feel qualified to talk about it. However, it's better if you have actual experience in the niche.

So if you want to write about gardening, then spend some time gardening so that you're sharing real advice and stories as opposed to rehashed material.

Tip: Keep in mind, as mentioned earlier, that you can always interview experts in your niche. That way, you can present solid information to your readers while getting exclusive information from experts. There is another way to get content from experts, which you'll learn about just a bit later.

## 2. Outsource the Content Creation

Another option is for you to hire a freelance writer to create the content for you. Within this overall option you have two additional options:

- **You work with the freelancer.** Perhaps you're not much of a writer, but you do have expertise in the niche. In this case, you can provide a rough draft of your content and let the freelancer polish it to make it more engaging and useful.
- **You hire a freelancer who's an expert in the niche.** That way, you get the best of both worlds. Not only do you get a great writer, but you someone who's qualified to write content for the niche.

Of course there's a third option: you can hire a good writer who's also a good researcher. But again, you'll run into the problem of not being able to share real insider tips and strategies in the niche.

However, one way to get around this is to hire the freelancer to create basic content for you. Then you can enlist the help of experts to create other unique content for you. (You'll learn more about that in just a moment.)

There are a variety of ways to find freelancers, such as:

- Looking locally (using your classified ads or [Craigslist.org](http://Craigslist.org)).
- Using Google (search for "freelance writer" or "ghostwriter").
- Asking for recommendations (on sites like [WarriorForum.com](http://WarriorForum.com)).

One quick way to attract a lot of candidates to you is to use freelancing sites like [Elance.com](http://Elance.com), [vWorker.com](http://vWorker.com) or [oDesk.com](http://oDesk.com). The idea here is to post a project and let qualified writers bid on your project.

Here's an example ad you can swipe and tweak to suit your purposes...

-----

Wanted: Writer to create 10 golf articles.

I'm looking for a freelance writer to create 10 500-word articles on golf topics such as:

- How to improve play from the green.
- How to deal with hazards.
- How to become a better putter.
- How to choose a golf grip.
- How to drive longer and straighter.

And similar topics.

The ideal candidate for this job will:

- Be a native English speaker and writer.
- Have real-life experience golfing. (If you're an expert, that's even better.)
- Have extensive experience writing about golfing topics.
- Be able to create engaging, accurate articles.

Budget range for this job is [enter your price range].

Please send me a link to your portfolio and tell me more about your own golfing experiences.

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Once you start getting bids coming in, you'll need to do some due diligence. This means you check the writer's feedback rating, portfolio and references (if available). You may also run a search for the writer's name in Google.

What you're looking for is a writer who's been in business for at least six months to a year and has a good reputation. Obviously, you're also looking for someone who can create engaging, accurate, well-researched and well-written content.

You'll note that the above project is for 10 articles. That's because you want to start slow and hire your prospective writers for small projects first. If you're satisfied with the quality of their work and their communication and project-management skills, then you can give them more work to do. But don't put expensive projects in front of them until you both know that you can work well together.

Tip: Go ahead and hire multiple writers in the beginning, such as four or five qualified writers. Then you can retain the writers that you like the best. Or you can retain them all and get a lot of content created quickly.

### 3. Get Others to Create the Content

Yet another way to get content for your site is to get others to create it for you. However, this time the key is that you're getting the content for free.

There are two ways to do this:

- Get user-generated content.
- Get experts to create the content for you.

Let's look at these separately...

#### ➔ User-Generated Content

User-generated content tends not be expert content, so you shouldn't rely solely on this method. However, you can certainly use user-generated content alongside your other content. Here's how:

- You can ask your users to submit their articles and tips to the site.
- You can give your users the ability to blog on your site, such as by using the WordPress Network ([http://codex.wordpress.org/Create\\_A\\_Network](http://codex.wordpress.org/Create_A_Network)).
- You can set up a forum on your site where your users can post and discuss niche-relevant topics. (A good software choice is [www.vbulletin.com](http://www.vbulletin.com).)

Basically, if you set up a community, your users will naturally help you create the content for your site.

That's one option. A better option is to enlist the help of experts...

#### ➔ Get Experts to Create Your Content

The second way to get others to create your content is by asking experts to become guest authors (or guest bloggers) on your site.

Examples:

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<http://plr-mrr-products.com/>

- If you were starting up a site about online marketing, you might ask well-known people in the niche to be guest authors, such as me (Jimmy D. Brown), John Reese and Ted Nicholas.
- If you were creating an authority site about dogs, you might ask multiple local authority figures to do a guest article. Examples include a veterinarian, a dog groomer and a dog trainer.

As you can see, the person doesn't necessarily have to have a well-known name in the niche.

Example: Many articles on the WebMD.com were created by people without name recognition. Yet they're well-qualified to write the articles (as they're usually doctors or other authorities in the health field).

If you're approaching someone locally, it's usually better to pick up the phone or visit the person to make your request. If your only access to someone is online, then you'll probably have to email them.

Here's a sample email:

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Subject line: I'd like to feature you on [name of site]

Hello [name],

My name is [your name], and I publish the [name of your site/link] site. The reason I'm writing today is to propose that you become a guest author on the site.

My readers have been asking for information about [topic]. And since you're the net's foremost expert on this topic, I can't think of anyone better qualified to give my readers the information they need.

What I'm looking for is an article which covers [explain what you want the article to be about]. In exchange for this article, you'll get the following benefits:

- Your name, link and article will be featured on the front page of [name of site] for one week.

- You'll enjoy the benefits of a permanent backlink on a site which gets [number] daily targeted visitors.
- You'll get extra exposure when I tell my [number] of social media contacts and email subscribers about your article and website.

All you have to do to accept this proposal is reply now to let me know when you'd like to see your article published. I look forward to hearing from you!

[Your name]

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As a side note, you're more likely to get "yes" responses if you build relationships with these experts first, such as by talking to them on their blogs or meeting them at industry events.

Tip: If the person doesn't seem keen on the idea of writing a guest article, you might alternatively suggest that you interview him or her. That way, you still get the benefit of exclusive content from an expert, yet your expert doesn't have to do as much work (especially if you do the interview over the phone).

## Quick Recap

You just learned how to produce your content. So not only did you discover the characteristics of authority-site content, but you also learned different ways to create this content.

Once you start loading this content up on your site, then you have one thing left to do... profit from it. Read on...

## Profit

Great content alone isn't going to put a profit in your pocket. In order to make money from your authority site, you need to do two things:

1. Drive traffic to the site.

## 2. Monetize this traffic.

Let's look briefly at these two issues...

### **Drive Traffic**

We've already talked about the ways you can optimize your content for the search engines (though you should write for humans first and search engine robots second). And we've talked about how unique, fresh content can go viral, thus bringing you even more backlinks and traffic.

Of course you shouldn't build your traffic strategy on those two methods alone. Instead, you should seek to employ as many methods as possible.

In particular, you can focus on those methods that involve content (either text or videos), as this will help you further establish yourself as niche authority.

Here then are six additional traffic strategies for you to consider:

#### **1. Forum marketing.**

This is where you find the biggest and most popular forums in your niche and you become a regular contributing member.

By "contributing," I mean that you offer thoughtful answers, content and solutions to other members. In exchange for becoming a contributing member, you usually get to place a link at the end of your posts (in your signature file). As your reputation in the forum grows, and as your site's reputation grows, so will the clicks on your signature file.

#### **2. Blog commenting.**

Another way to get noticed in your niche is by joining the discussions on popular niche blogs. Again, the key is to post thoughtful comment, followed by a link to your site.

If it's a busy blog, it's also helpful if you're one of the first people to comment (so that your comments don't get buried underneath dozens of other comments).

#### **3. Social media marketing.**

The two sites you'll want to focus on include [Twitter.com](https://twitter.com) and [Facebook.com](https://facebook.com). Not only should you link to your site from your Twitter and Facebook accounts, but you should

also link back to your Twitter and Facebook accounts from your website. In particular, you should encourage your site visitors to “share,” “like” and “tweet” out your content to their friends.

#### **4. Press release marketing.**

You can start by submitting press releases to distribution sites like [PRWeb.com](http://PRWeb.com). But don't forget to send press releases directly to your local and national media as well.

Example: If you have a site about weight loss, you can send out a press release talking about new findings (such as how caffeine affects weight loss).

Then you mention your site someplace in the article, such as when you quote yourself.

Example: “Jimmy D. Brown, founder of IMStitute.com, says that...”

#### **5. Joint venture marketing.**

This is where you join forces with other webmasters, marketers and bloggers in your niche to work together for mutual benefit. For example, you can:

- Guest blog on each others' sites.
- Swap links on your blogrolls.
- Endorse each other to your mailing lists.
- Split the cost of a media buy.
- Split the cost of an offline mailing.
- Create free reports together.
- Create teleseminars together.
- Create videos together.
- Create offline seminars together.

This is by no means an exhaustive list, as joint venture marketing is only limited by your imagination.

#### **6. Video marketing.**

This is where you create and upload videos onto YouTube.com. You'll also link to these videos from your social media accounts as well as tell your readers and subscribers about them.

Example: If you have a dog site, you might create a video of cute dogs doing cute tricks. It's not hard-core content, but this is the sort of thing that tends to go viral.

The above list is just the tip of the iceberg. To learn more about how to get traffic to your site, please visit [www.traffic-fuel.com](http://www.traffic-fuel.com).

## Monetize Your Site

You've got good traffic numbers and you have good content to keep people coming back.

So how do you monetize this traffic? Like this:

- **Build a mailing list.** No matter how you choose to monetize your site, you should always seek to build a mailing list. Simply use an mailing list manager like [Aweber.com](http://Aweber.com), and offer your readers something valuable (like a free report) to entice them to subscribe. Then you can follow up with them again and again, selling them a variety of products and services. Which brings us to our next point...
- **Sell your own products.** This is one of the most profitable ways to monetize a site, since you get to keep 100% of the profits and you get to build a mailing list.

Example: If you have a golf site, then perhaps you'll sell a set of golf-training videos.

- **Sell affiliate products.** Here's where you sell other peoples' products and services for a commission. If you're selling digital products, you'll want to check out [Clickbank.com](http://Clickbank.com). Otherwise, you can become an affiliate for sites like [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com), which tends to have a good conversion rate. Or you can find a variety of companies to be affiliated with by going to [cj.com](http://cj.com).
- **Place Google AdSense ads.** This shouldn't be your first choice, simply because the earnings can be low. In other words, you should make more money as an affiliate as opposed to placing AdSense ads on your site. Nonetheless, this is a fairly passive way to make money, since you don't need to sell anything.

- **Sell advertising space.** Finally, you can just put your ad space up for sale directly to advertisers. You can include a link on your site so that advertisers know you have ad space for sale. Or you can go through a third-party service like blogads.com.

## Conclusion

You've been wondering why some sites become authority sites, while others just become content graveyards that don't get much traffic, trust or profits.

Now you know! Let's recap the steps:

- ✓ **Pick a Niche.** Big companies already dominate the broad markets. However, there's plenty of room for you to grab a fair share of the market by building a focused niche site.
- ✓ **Plan Your Site.** Here you learned how to plan your content, design, branding and your USP (unique selling proposition). This is also the step where you spent a lot of time analyzing what your competitors are doing.
- ✓ **Produce Your Content.** Here you learned how to create authority-site content that's unique, evergreen and includes the other characteristics we talked about. You also learned how to create the content (yourself, outsourcing or getting others to create it).
- ✓ **Profit.** Finally, this is where you learned how to turn your content into cash, by getting traffic and then monetizing this traffic.

Bottom line?

**You now have a blueprint for creating an authority site.**

So your next step is obvious – **take action on what you just learned.** Because the sooner you start building your authority site, the sooner you get to move to the final step: profits!