



ART SY

The Gallery's Guide to Content Creation

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Introduction

Public-facing information about your gallery and its artists is critical for visibility and influence, both online and offline. Whether you're just starting to develop your gallery's content strategy or in the midst of producing a curatorial essay, read on to learn about quality content and how it can boost your digital marketing, drive traffic to your gallery, and engage both new and existing collectors.

What is content, and why should
your gallery produce it? —



What Is Content, and Why Should Your Dedicate Time and Resources to Produce It?

Content is anything that communicates a unique, valuable message to your audience (current or potential). Great content is meaningful, helping to build trust with your audience and fostering brand loyalty, which leads to continued engagement. This is especially important for galleries, considering that the next generation of collectors are tech-savvy and looking to connect with artists and galleries online. Nearly half of all collectors globally are now millennials (49%), and 92% of millennial collectors have bought art online.¹

Distributing content across multiple channels (such as social media, websites, and marketplace platforms like Artsy) can increase brand awareness for your gallery, driving more traffic to your website and storefront. One post on Instagram that links back to your gallery's website likely won't drive significant traffic, however. You'll need to consistently think of content for each channel that reinforces your gallery's message, drives traffic, and creates sales opportunities.

Content (or lack thereof) also affects your gallery's visibility online via search. Search engines rank websites with fresh content more highly, so when it comes to search engine optimization (SEO), it's crucial to consistently update your website with new content. For more on this, read [The Gallery's Guide to SEO](#).

What is a content marketing strategy? —



What is a content marketing strategy?

A content marketing strategy consists of two parts. The first is content strategy, which defines your overall vision—the specifics of why you're developing content and who it's for. The second is content marketing, which deals with the execution, curation, and creation of the content itself.

To illustrate how these concepts work together, let's look at Artsy and our company mission: to expand the art market to support more artists and art in the world. This mission funnels down into the content strategy for Artsy Editorial, which is to educate a wide audience about the art world and market in an accessible way, via multiple channels. The Editorial team's content marketing tactics include covering fairs and auctions, profiling artists and collectors, and spotlighting trends in contemporary art. Each platform is utilized and approached differently to ensure relevance to that platform's audience, habits, and content expectations. Keep in mind that whatever you create, the vision you define for your content should always be present in one way or another—from every article you write to every image you post.

How to create a content strategy —



How To Create A Content Strategy

1. CRAFT YOUR VISION

Articulating a vision for your content involves asking yourself: What do I do, and why? What makes my gallery different from other art businesses? Ideally, this vision will reflect your gallery's ethos and appeal to your audience.



2. DEFINE YOUR AUDIENCE

Before you start creating content, it's crucial to have a clear picture of who you're creating it for. When defining your audience, ask yourself:

- Who is in your target audience, and why? What are their characteristics and behaviors?
- How does this person share, consume, and find content?
- What industry do they work in? What is their role at work? (This can involve multiple answers for different types of people, but it's good to come up with personas.)
- Why are they coming to my gallery to find this content? Do they want to purchase art, learn about it, or both?
- What topics are they interested in? Can I offer any expertise?

How To Create A Content Strategy

3. AUDIT EXISTING CONTENT

As you begin to define a content marketing strategy, take the time to go through any content that your gallery has published in the past. This can involve reviewing artist biographies on your website or cleaning out your Instagram feed. Get rid of any old pieces of content that no longer align with your gallery's vision or brand.

4. KNOW WHATS OUT THERE

Conducting market research is a must when it comes to developing a content marketing strategy. Look at a range of galleries, institutions, online platforms, and other art businesses to see the kind of content they're distributing, who follows them, and what users are engaging with.

Also, make sure to check out successful content marketing strategies in industries outside of the arts. Many content marketing ideas are translatable and adaptable, and what's tried and true for other companies may also make a splash for yours.

Make sure you don't just do this once a year—you want to continually audit and review what your peers and other aspirational brands are doing.

After you've developed your content strategy, it's time to move on to the content marketing, or the execution and planning of the content.

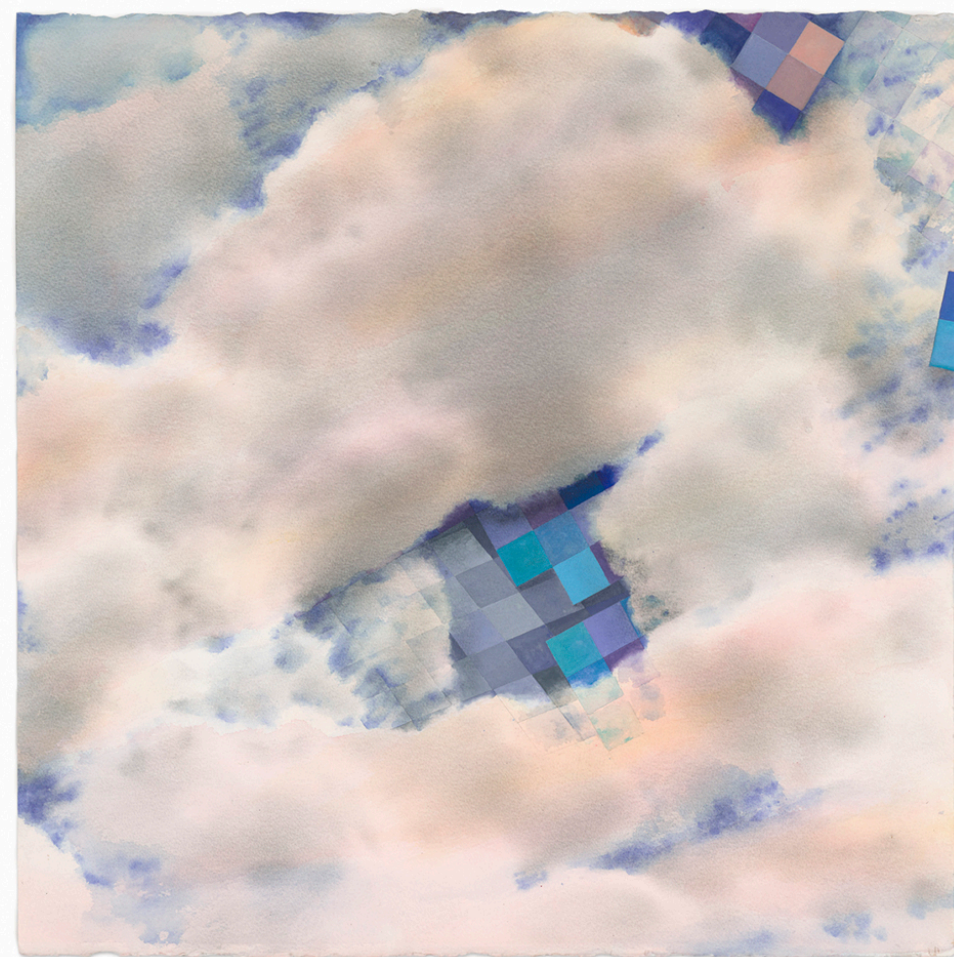
How to master content marketing —



How to master content marketing

1. HOST A BRAINSTORM SESSION

Brainstorming is a crucial first step in determining your gallery's content schedule. Be sure to invite a few colleagues to your brainstorm so you can get a range of ideas and viewpoints. Check out our sample brainstorm agenda to the right to get started.



PRO TIP

Send out the agenda beforehand so contributors can come prepared with ideas. Also, make sure someone is responsible for note-taking so no ideas get lost.

5 MINUTES

Casual chat and catch up

10 MINUTES

Quick review of topics you already know you want to cover such as artist bios/interviews, fair features, or exhibition promotions

10 MINUTES

Dedicate a limited amount of time at the beginning of each brainstorming session to big “blue sky” ideas to get creativity flowing. A design exercise called “[Crazy 8's](#)” is a fun and productive way to get people thinking creatively.

20 MINUTES

Hand out sticky notes and ask everyone to write what they'd like to see in your gallery's content marketing. Remind them to consider the medium or type of content as well (such as an article or Instagram post). Use the following questions as prompts::

- What content are we good at creating and should create more of? Can the format be improved?
- What are questions or pain points we hear from collectors? How can we address those?
- Are there moments we should be highlighting that we're not?

How To Master Content Marketing

2. SCHEDULE CONTENT

After the brainstorm, gather core members from the team who will be working on the content, and go through the ideas you've collected. Decide how many pieces of content you'll be producing per month based on your team's bandwidth. Generally speaking, quality is better than quantity, so don't get overly ambitious, and make sure to outline how long it'll take to produce and post each piece of content.

Free project management programs like Airtable and Trello offer excellent templates for everything from [content calendars](#) to [campaign tracking](#). Both tools allow you to assign and tag collaborators, which makes for clear and efficient project management and execution

PRO TIP

Don't be afraid to change your content schedule if something relevant comes up at the last minute. Topical content performs well, and it's always important to consider what's currently relevant to your audience when posting or sending out content.

How To Master Content Marketing

3. ASSIGN ROLES

It's important for your content production team to have clearly defined roles, which keeps operations organized and ensures high-quality content. Consider having a project manager who oversees each project. Project managers should be responsible for delegating tasks, creating a timeline and sharing it with stakeholders, and ensuring that steps are completed on time.

No matter how big or small the piece of content, it's important to have at least one editor and one copy editor. Ideally, neither of these people would have previously been involved in the project, so they can give it additional sets of eyes and a final check for grammar and punctuation. If you're part of a small gallery with one or two employees, consider consulting a friend or hiring a freelancer.

PRO TIP

Check out our simple [project management template](#) which we created to help you manage content production easily and effectively. If you're looking for something more advanced, consider subscribing to software for project management and communication such as [Basecamp](#), which is great for managing several projects and multi-person collaboration. For copy editing, [Grammarly](#) offers free grammar checks.

The top screenshot shows the introductory text of the template, including instructions for personalization and a disclaimer. The bottom screenshot shows a 'Project Management Schedule' table with the following data:

Status	Due Date	Duration	Task	Person Responsible
Complete	Aug 13	1 day	Assign Editors	Project Manager
Complete	Aug 15- Aug 17	2 days	Research framing artworks for collectors	Author
In-Progress	Aug 20	1 day	Send outline to editors	Author
To Do	Aug 21	1 day	Editors provide feedback on outline	Editor 1, Editor 2
To Do	Aug 22-23	2 days	Author sends first draft to editors	Author
To Do	Aug 24	1 day	Editors provide first draft edits	Editor 1, Editor 2
To Do	Aug 25	1 day	Author sends second draft to editors	Author
To Do	Aug 27	1 day	Editors provide second draft edits	Editor 1, Editor 2
To Do	Aug 28	1 day	Author sends editors final draft for approval	Author
To Do	Aug 29	1 day	Author sends final draft to copy editor	Author
To Do	Aug 30	1 day	Copy editor makes edits	Copy editor
To Do	Sept 3	1 day	Author stages content on website	Author
To Do	Sept 4	1 day	Copy Editor does Quality Analysis	Copy editor
To Do	Sept 5	1 day	Publish content on website	Author

Content ideas for art businesses —



Content ideas for art businesses

When it comes to creating and publishing content, the possibilities for galleries are endless. When collectors research a prospective work, they often want to know as much as possible about the history of the artist and the piece. Providing this information is a meaningful and interesting way to help collectors contextualize the work and better connect with the artist who created it—increasing the likelihood that they'll add it to their collection.

Here are a few of our favorite gallery content ideas to help you get started.



What Are Good Content Ideas for Arts Enterprises?

CONTENT IDEAS:

TYPE OF CONTENT	WHY YOU SHOULD PRODUCE IT	PLACES TO PUBLISH
Artist biography	Artist biographies provide collectors with insights into an artist's life, practice, and work. For tips on writing a compelling bio, read " What We Learned from Writing 7,000 Artist Bios. "	Gallery website, or a social media post dedicated to an artist
Artist or curator interview	Engaging, informative, and easy to read or watch, an interview at your gallery with an artist or curator is a unique piece of content for collectors and critics to consume.	Gallery website, Facebook, or Instagram (with "link in bio" or as a story)
Artist essay	Giving your artists a written platform can deepen a collector's connection with their work. If one of your artists has another creative practice such as poetry or fiction, invite them to share one of their pieces of writing through your gallery.	Gallery website, Instagram (with "link in bio"), blog, or email
Curatorial essay	Many exhibition catalogs include essays written by the curator or gallery director. Why not turn them into content users can read online? Think about inviting a curator to write an essay about your gallery's current exhibition or a piece they love by one of your artists.	Gallery website, social media (with a link), blog, or email

What Are Good Content Ideas for Arts Enterprises?

TYPE OF CONTENT	WHY YOU SHOULD PRODUCE IT	PLACES TO PUBLISH
Fair preview	<p>If your gallery is exhibiting at a fair, it's important to let collectors know. Send an email to your contacts with a brief description of the fair and a few highlights of the pieces you'll be bringing. On Artsy, you can even upload your fair booth online—click here to learn more.</p>	Artsy profile or email
Collecting tips	<p>Millennials are now the fastest-growing segment of art collectors. As they accumulate wealth, they're only just beginning to venture into collecting. By sharing logistical tips like buying, framing, and conserving art, you can make a new collector feel more comfortable engaging with your gallery. Check out this article by Patrick Parrish as an example.</p>	Gallery website, social media, or email

What Are Good Content Ideas for Arts Enterprises?

TYPE OF CONTENT	WHY YOU SHOULD PRODUCE IT	PLACES TO PUBLISH
Studio or exhibition tour	<p>Social media has made it easier than ever to create and share interactive video content. Take advantage of this and provide collectors with unique insights into your gallery through a guided video tour of an artist's studio or your current exhibition.</p>	Gallery website, YouTube, or social media (post, story, or live stream)
Newsletter	<p>Perhaps the most common form of content marketing, email newsletters are easy to create and a surefire way to maintain steady communication with collectors.</p> <p>However, not all newsletters are created equal. Learn more in The Gallery's Guide to Email Marketing.</p>	Email

What Are Good Content Ideas for Arts Enterprises?

CONTENT IDEAS:

TYPE OF CONTENT	WHY YOU SHOULD PRODUCE IT	PLACES TO PUBLISH
Artist takeover	For a few hours (maybe even a day or two), give one of your artists access to your gallery's Instagram. This "takeover" can have a real payoff, connecting you with new collectors while strengthening your existing audience. Let your followers know about it beforehand, and make sure posts by the artist are clearly marked as such.	Instagram stories and posts
Curator's Picks	Build your brand's reputation by sharing expertise from a curator. Ask them to choose a theme and curate artworks from your inventory, then promote their picks.	Social media, blog, or email
Viewing rooms and/or online-only exhibitions	Online viewing rooms and exhibitions offer opportunities to tell interesting stories about your gallery, artists, and works. Create immersive, branded experiences that collectors can engage with online.	Online exclusive shows on Artsy or your gallery website

How to track your content's performance —



How to track your content's performance

Monitoring engagement with published content is essential to an effective content marketing strategy. Tracking engagement lets you understand which topics and types of content your users like best, which can inform your strategy as a whole and help you produce smarter content.

Depending on the platform, there are different ways to track content. Before we get into measuring success on individual platforms, here are some metrics you should keep in mind as you track performance.

1. BRAND AWARENESS

How many people is your content reaching? Out of those people, how many of them are new? This information can come in the form of views of your content.

2. ENGAGEMENT

Are people engaging with your content and brand as a whole? This can come in the form of likes, shares, comments, follows, and conversations—in person or on the phone.

3. CUSTOMER AND USER RETENTION

Once someone engages with your content or purchases a work from your gallery, are they opting in to receive further content and continue that pattern of behavior? Ideally, with

retention, you want to prevent a user from disengaging with your brand in any way after their initial engagement.

4. LEAD GENERATION

Of the users engaging with your business—whether on social media, your website, or an online platform like Artsy—how many of them become collectors that purchase from your gallery?

5. SALES

Out of all the visits to your website or online platform and social media engagements, how many have led to an action by a user (e.g., a request for more information or a purchase)?

What's the Best Way to Measure Success by Platform?

SOCIAL MEDIA

When it comes to social media, an increase in followers indicates brand awareness, while comments, shares, and likes are important means of monitoring a post's engagement. After posting something, check in periodically to see who is engaging with it. Keep track of the metrics mentioned above (comments, shares, and likes) in a spreadsheet, so it's easy to compare how each piece of content is performing side by side. Read our three-part [Social Media Toolkit](#) for more tips, as well as information on algorithms and performance.

GALLERY WEBSITE

Begin by [creating a Google Analytics account](#) for your gallery's website. Once it's synced with Google Analytics, you can measure things such as unique page views and time spent on the website, both of which are strong indicators of how interested users are in your gallery's content.

While page views measure the total amount of views a page gets, unique page views track the number of views on a page by each user—in other words, they show you how many individuals looked at your page. Meanwhile, time spent on a page indicates a user's level of engagement with your content. For example, if someone spends five minutes on a page with an article, it indicates that they likely read most of the content—whereas if they only spent 30 seconds on the page, they probably skimmed the headline and clicked out of the browser.

For more information on engagement metrics for websites, read the “Reporting and Tracking” section in [The Gallery's Guide to SEO](#).

What's the Best Way to Measure Success by Platform?

EMAILS

Regardless of the email provider you use, it's essential to track the performance of your emails, especially if they act as a vehicle for distributing content. Metrics to keep top of mind include open rate, click-through rate, and unsubscribe rate. Open rate measures the percentage of emails opened in a marketing campaign, while click-through rate (often shortened to "CTR") measures the number of people who click the link(s) embedded in your email. Unsubscribe rate measures the number of people who opt out of your content, which goes back to the note about user retention above.

If you don't currently use an email provider, consider switching to a free software that tracks email engagement for you. Such programs generally limit how many emails you can send in a month and typically have limited branding options, but they also may offer free templates for creating emails. Mailchimp, Hubspot, and Sendinblue are among the free email tracking programs out there.

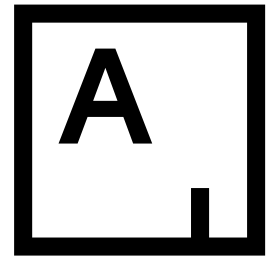
ARTSY PROFILE

Through Artsy CMS, gallery partners have access to detailed analytics of their performance on our platform. These statistics include everything from a geographic breakdown of your Artsy traffic to the number of views on each artwork you upload. They can also guide content production: For example, if you notice that a work has gotten 800 views on Artsy, it may be worth asking the artist or a curator to write something on that artwork or speak about it in a video.

Conclusion

Creating high-quality, engaging content takes commitment, time, and resources from you and your team. Results may not be immediate, but over time, an established content marketing presence can increase brand awareness and drive traffic and sales to your gallery—both online and offline.

No matter the size of your gallery, producing and distributing content is essential in this moment of digital and experiential marketing. Learn more about how *Artsy* can boost brand awareness and help your gallery get started with content marketing.



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