

CONTENT CONFIDENCE

Part 1: Start with a Plan



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We've all been there before.

You realize we haven't posted on social for a few weeks and feel the pressure to get something out asap. You pull something together and get it out the door, only to repeat the same stressful series of events in a few weeks.

By taking the time to develop strong foundations, including a strategy and a planning process, you'll break the cycle and free up time to work on impactful content that you can feel proud of. This applies to all content, by the way, not just social media.



This is Part 1 of our Content Confidence series, with three parts total.

They all build off of each other and the presentations will be shared afterward. There are links throughout to helpful, vetted resources so you can put everything into action as seamlessly and easily as possible.

And of course, myself and LVECC are here to help too.



Let's Go!



Establish brand foundations and strategy.

The best marketing is grounded in something meaningful. By establishing foundations, you give yourself something to latch onto, a focus, which makes brainstorming and decision making infinitely easier. It also leads to consistency which results in a strong, positive [brand perception](#) by your current and potential clients/customers.

Identify your:

- [Target audience](#)
- [Differentiators/value prop](#)
- [Objectives](#)

Define your:

- [Values](#)
- [Mission](#)
- [Vision](#)
- [Personality/voice](#)



Establish a visual identity.

Your brand foundations will (or should!) inform almost everything from here on out, including how you look and present yourself to the outside world. Use your mission, values, etc to guide your choice of colors, fonts, and logo design to represent your business through consistent branding that brings your foundations to life.

You'll thank yourself the next time you set out to create an event banner, social media graphic, or update your website, that instead of having an overwhelming number of options, you'll know exactly which font, colors, and design style to use.

Plus, this is vital for brand consistency. When all of your marketing looks and feels cohesive, [it inspires more trust with your target audience.](#)

Logo:

- Invest in a well-designed logo if you can
- Square and rectangular versions for different applications
- Black and white versions for different placements

Define your:

- Color palette
- Font(s)
- Imagery and icon style



And now you're ready for a channel strategy.

You have what you need to create consistent content from how you write things, to how they look.

But which digital channels should you establish or maintain for your business? On those channels, [what format should your content be?](#) What topics should you cover?

Sounds like you're in need of a content strategy, starting with figuring out *where* you want to be.

Identify your:

- Digital marketing channels to focus on based on where and how your target audience spends their time online
 - Web pages and content like blogs and recipes
 - Primary social media channel(s)
 - Emails
- Publishing cadence for each channel
 - *Be very honest and realistic about how often you can post on social, create and send emails, write blogs*

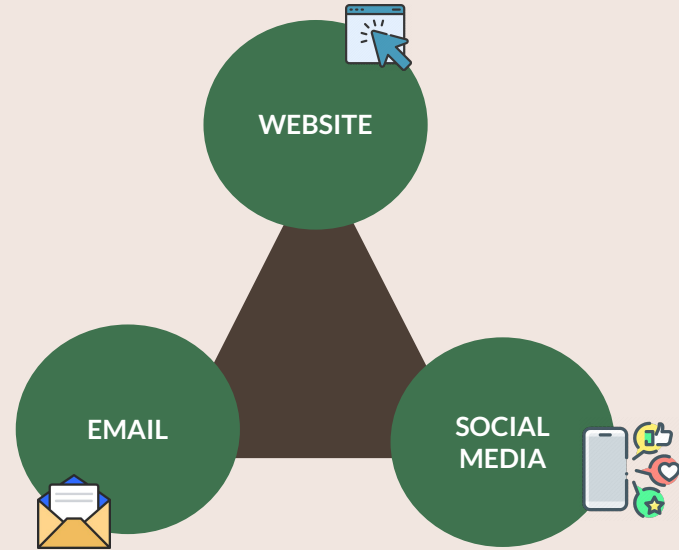


Part of channel strategy is understanding how they impact each other.

How often do you receive an email that links to a blog post? Or see a social media post that links to a webpage? Ever noticed your web traffic spike after you send out an email?

Look at your content/digital marketing as an interconnected ecosystem—because it is!

Another example of this is [cross-posting on social media](#), which is an amazing way to maximize impact while saving time and resources.



Start looking into the tools and resources needed to make planning and execution (aka Parts 2 and 3) easy breezy.

The amount of tools claiming to make content creation easier is staggering. One might be great for one business, and wrong for another.

So we've put together a list of our top recommendations so you can start to explore and find what's right for you so you're ready to hit the ground running by the end of this series.



Tools & resources for sparking ideas.

You have plenty of sources for inspiration within your business, you just have to harness them—more on that in Part 2. But that doesn't mean you can't, or shouldn't, look elsewhere for fresh ideas.

Name	Meant For	Why it's great	Other considerations
ChatGPT and other AI tools	All	Free! Tell GPT (or other AI tools) a little about your business and what you want help with and voila! A list of actionable, relevant ideas appears.	There's a learning curve for how to prompt it to get the most effective and helpful responses. However, there are many free resources for prompts that can be found with a quick Google.
Really Good Emails	Email	It's free! And an amazing resource for email inspiration. You can filter by type like <i>product announcement</i> and their newsletters are full of helpful tips.	It's a free resource but as with most free things like, you can unlock more features if you pay for a subscription.
More!	All	This article is one of <i>many</i> full of sustainable, fruitful ways to come up with new ideas that will resonate with your target.	Just make sure you're doing what makes sense for you and your business. And don't be afraid to bounce ideas off of others.



Tools & resources for writing & designing.

Execution is often the most time consuming and frustrating part of content creation. But these days, there are many free and affordable tools to turn that frown upside down.

Name	Meant For	Why it's great	Other considerations
Canva	Design	The sky's the limit with Canva, and their free tier still provides great resources, and they also offer affordable paid plans that unlock even more capabilities. They provide lots of guidance so you can comfortably start designing no matter your comfort or experience level.	It's tempting to use a variety of templates, but without adding in your own branding, it can make for a disjointed look and feel. Take the time to customize the designs to reflect your brand foundations and visual identity!
Free video editing tools	Design	There are a million free video editing tools these days, and many social media platforms offer them right in the app. However, some can be clunky and difficult to use, so we found a great list of vetted options that suit a variety of needs and skill levels.	Look online for tutorials for the video editing app of your choice—there are many easy-to-follow resources out there. And do the same for general editing tips like this. But before you get to the editing stage, check out these tips for capturing good video .
GPT , Copy.ai , Claude	Writing	You might have noticed almost every online platform has rolled out their own AI assistant. While not all are created equal, many of them can still provide valuable help.	All copy written by AI needs to be edited by YOU! It gets you started, but you need to add your brand voice/personality, remove words that don't fit well, and ensure the copy is original and not word-for-word from another source, leading you to accidental plagiarism. Run all copy through a plagiarism checker like this before publishing it!



Tools & resources for publishing & scheduling.

Sure, you can publish content in real-time. But the goal is to batch your content, especially social media posts, so you can turn your focus to other things for a few weeks. That's where a tool to publish and schedule your content comes in. Plus, you save time when you can post to all of your different platforms from one place, and with the calendar view that comes with these tools, you can easily see where you have gaps that need to be filled in.

Name	Meant For	Why it's great	What's not-so-great
The 6 best social media management tools in 2024	Social	This is a fantastic article that provides an in-depth look at the best social media management tools out there, with a focus on criteria that are important to small businesses, like pricing.	This isn't a be-all-end-all list. There are other reputable tools out there worth looking into including Metricool and SocialBee . Sites like G2 and TrustRadius are helpful in comparing tools and reading reviews for different platforms.
Mailchimp	Email	Mailchimp has changed a lot over the years but is still one of the best options for smaller businesses. You can schedule, segment your audience, and analyze your emails to improve future ones.	The price can jump up fairly quickly, once you hit a certain number of email subscribers, but that's true of most email platforms. If you also have (or want) a CRM, it could make sense to use a tool like HubSpot so you can have all of your customer/client information in one place.



In Part 2, we cover how to generate ideas and plan your content in a consistent, sustainable way.

In Part 3, everything (finally!) adds up to putting your content out into the world, how to analyze how it performed, and what to do with that information.





Interested in working together?
Check out my services and reach out here!

Follow @heybrandi marketing on Instagram for
more helpful tips.