



Outsourcing content writing activities

*Writing content is a difficult skill. It is different from classic or administrative writing. Nowadays, many people do not want to read long texts; they prefer short paragraphs and short sentences. A simple word or short phrase can prompt someone to take the next step. Good grammar is a necessity, and you must know how to write remarkable short sentences. Content writing is an art and vital to successful (digital) marketing campaigns. Unique content increases traffic to a website; **an attractive, well-written tour itinerary will lead to a sale.***

*There are many challenges, whether you write for B2B or B2C audiences. Creating content can be very time-consuming if you have not done it before and you are trying to run your business at the same time. Lack of experience, language barriers or limited knowledge of SEO and keyword placement can make things difficult. Outsourcing (hiring the services of a content writer) can be a solution! **Outsourcing content writing can massively boost your business and online presence. It is also an extremely effective marketing tool in today's world.***

In this short manual, we will explain what content writing is about and what you should take into account when outsourcing it.

Content writing in tourism

Tangible products are products which a person can directly experience to some degree. They can touch, smell, taste or test the product before buying it. It is not often that one can test, try out or inspect **intangible products**, such as travel/tourism, in advance. When prospective customers cannot experience the product in advance, they essentially buy promises. The way the product is packaged (how the promise is presented, for example, in a brochure or letter), presented, and by whom are all part of the product. They are elements of what the customer finally decides to buy or reject.

Getting customers to buy an intangible product such as travel requires a strong company (online) presentation, high-quality content and clear communication. It also requires constant reselling efforts. You will need to repeat what the customer is getting from you in your different communications with them.

Content writing is essential to great travel agent marketing. A travel agent, a tour operator or any other company which sells products for the tourism industry often does not have the time to write content. This can result in websites and content being overlooked.



Content writers

If content writing is not your area of expertise, you may benefit from working with professional content writers. These are experienced content creators who do research for you, create articles and blogs, and write day-to-day travel programmes and other forms of written (web) content.

Of course, **you have to pay for this content creation**. But you can then upload the content to your blog and website, add it to your brochure, and so on.

There are many different types of content writers, including:

- Digital marketing content writer
- E-commerce content writer
- Creative content writer
- English content writer
- SEO content writer
- Senior content writer
- Technical content writer
- Web content writer

An example

(a content writer wrote a blog post for you which is now online)

A potential customer is browsing the internet and finds your blog article: 'These pictures will blow your mind!' The user then clicks on the link, reads and enjoys the content. Throughout the content, embedded links lead readers to your product pages. This increases your website traffic.

Please note: A content writer is not the same as a translator

A translator translates content into different languages. The main role of a translator is to read and thoroughly understand a text. They then translate it using appropriate translation tools and proofread the final text.



Where to find content writers

You can use the internet to look for content writers. But, the internet is huge, and it can be difficult to know where to look. Luckily, there are many service sites that make finding the right content writer easy. There are sites that cover a specific niche, industry and price range. For some of these platforms, you will have to create an account and post a job vacancy for a content writer. You will then have to interview freelancers for your content writing position. Other platforms work differently and offer you a closed service. This means that you never meet your content writer. You simply share what kind of article you want and all the details, including topic and length, and so on. You then submit your order. This method often costs more, but the quality may be higher. Please note that some content writing platforms and marketing companies specialise in travel writing.

Here are a few online platforms where you can find (travel) content writers:

- [upwork.com](https://www.upwork.com)
- [fiverr.com](https://www.fiverr.com)
- [indeed.com](https://www.indeed.com)
- [boostcontent.com](https://www.boostcontent.com)
- [contentdevelopmentpros.com](https://www.contentdevelopmentpros.com)
- [peopleperhour.com](https://www.peopleperhour.com)
- [eu.textmaster.com](https://www.eu.textmaster.com)
- [traveltractions.com](https://www.traveltractions.com)
- [greatleaptudios.com](https://www.greatleaptudios.com)

What about (travel) content writers/bloggers in my country?

Tip:

To start looking for content writers on the internet, use a search engine and search for **travel content writers**. Then check the search results!

**Tip:**

Communicate clearly about your available budget and the skill level you expect from a content writer. It is important to check a freelancer's reviews and references.

An example**(a job description for a blog content writer)**

I am looking for an experienced content writer to research and create blog posts for my travel blog. I am looking for reviews, comparison guides and industry news. The project is for 5 months, and the budget is 30 USD per article. Samples and past experience in the travel industry are required.



How much do I pay for a content writer?

There are many factors to consider. These include, among others:

- a content writer's skill level,
- the research needed,
- time the article/blog/itinerary will take to write,
- word count, and
- quality of content.

It could cost you anything from 20 euros per post to a couple of hundred euros. The best thing to do is agree with your content writer on a set price that you are both comfortable with.

If you cannot agree on a price, find another content writer.



How to successfully work with content writers

→ The importance of communication and a content brief

Avoid miscommunication

One of the main disadvantages of using remote freelance services is miscommunication. A content writer may think they understand your project and spend hours writing and researching.

But then, when they submit their work, it is not what you wanted.

It is best practice to ensure everybody understands what is expected of them before the work starts. Make sure you provide all the details for the content you want to have.

Content brief

The best way to set up a task for your content writer is to write a briefing document that the content writer can refer to. This is called **a content brief**. Content briefs are suggestions. They give content writers the relevant input they need to create content that suits your target audience.

In a content brief, you can include information such as article or product title, word count, the tone of voice and style of the content. You can send links to similar articles/blog posts/tour descriptions as examples. To save time for the content writer and to save you money, it is always good to first carry out some light research yourself.

This can include sites with relevant information that you want your proposed article to include next to any sources. Include everything you want to be included in your article/blog/tour programme in your content brief.

If you already have a template to describe your tours online, you can also share this with the content writer, if relevant.

IMPORTANT

Discuss your content brief with your content writer. Also, remember to set a realistic deadline and give the content writer the opportunity to ask questions before they start the work. Consider the content writer you hire as being one of your staff members and part of your content marketing team.

Make sure you:

- communicate regularly,
- provide feedback on their work, and
- work closely to ensure the content is exactly what you want.

Content brief example

Content type	Tour description, article, blog, infographic, report.
Length	The number of words you want.
Where will it be used?	Corporate website, Facebook, Twitter, press release.
Content category	For example, blogs or tours. Make sure that you organise your content the same way for each category.
Keywords	Suggested keywords that your content writer should include.
Background	The reason you want to create this content now. For example, the launch of a new tourism destination, to promote your commitment to CSR, and so on.
Supporting evidence/information	Extra information for this content brief, links to other blogs/products, and so on.
Insights or angle	Reason/purpose, USPs, sustainability aspects.



Content writing in tourism – examples and tips

Content writing was one of the subjects during the 17-19 May 2022 CBI sustainability training session in Jordan. During the session, we explained word choice DOs and DO NOTs. In the slides below, you will find DOs and DO NOTs that we used during a 2019 training

session for Myanmar. You will also find useful tips to improve your content/tour programme presentation. You can look at these to learn, get inspired and make choices for your itineraries.



Let's start from the top...Programme name

- > FIRST RULE: Remember not to actually start from the top!

Exploring the ancient temples of Bagan by bicycle



Bagan by Bike



Programme name

The Elephants, Dolphins, Tortoises & Birds of Myanmar



Wild Myanmar





Highlights / USPs

- > Maximum 3 for a day program and maximum 5 for a multi-day programme
- > These can be in either bullet point form or as a short text
- > Use action verbs that make the programme sound exciting!



- Escape
- Experience
- Explore
- Get 'hands on'
- Journey
- Learn
- Take part
- Venture



- Do
- Go to
- Have
- Look at
- See



Highlights / USPs

- > **Escape the daytime heat of Mandalay with some leisure time at the pool**
- > Have some leisure time at the pool while it is hot
- > **Experience sunset at Yangon's glittering Shwedagon Pagoda**
- > Go to Shwedagon Pagoda at sunset
- > **Explore the ancient temples of Bagan by e-bike**
- > Visit the ancient temples of Bagan by e-bike
- > **Get 'hands on' with a craft-making workshop in Kalaw**
- > Do a craft-making workshop in Kalaw





Highlights / USPs

- > **Journey to the south of Inle Lake**
- > Visit the south of Inle Lake
- > **Learn about traditional rice cracker making at a local home**
- > See traditional rice cracker making at a local home
- > **Take part in a cooking class and make your own Myanmar salad**
- > Do a cooking class
- > **Venture out of Bagan to the sleepy colonial town of Salay**
- > Go to the sleepy colonial town of Salay



Highlights / USPs

tour highlights

- Explore Shwedagon Pagoda, one of the world's most spectacular religious monuments
- Get a chance to interact with faithful locals and monks
- Admire the intricate artwork of the pagoda
- Discover the pagoda's rich history and daily rituals





Programme details – Shwedagon Pagoda

tour details

Shwedagon Pagoda, one of the world's most spectacular religious monuments, rises majestically from Singuttara Hill in the city of Yangon, casting its golden gleam over the capital. Starting from the Eastern entrance of Shwedagon Pagoda, you'll walk through the small shops where monk accessories, Buddha statues, and flowers are sold. You'll learn about the daily life of the people who reside in the surroundings and gain a deeper insight into the Buddhist religion as you provide offerings to the monks. Then, walk along the pagoda platform clockwise, as is tradition. During this interactive walking tour of the pagoda, you'll explore walkways and hidden gems that are unknown to most visitors. Continue through the back door of Shwedagon Pagoda to discover more of its fascinating history.



Shwedagon Pagoda (Golden Pagoda) was built with the height up to 105m located in the center of Yangon City. It is considered as the most sacred monument of Myanmar built in the 6th century on the hill Singuttara (According to legend, the pagoda built before the Buddha passed away for 2500 years ago. It is said that in the time India had been under the crisis with hunger and crops, two Burmese brothers Khoa Ca Dat Pho Da take boat carrying rice to relief. When they returned from India, they received 8 hairs of the Buddha Shakyamuni, and then with the help of their dynasty, they built Shwedagon pagoda and brought Buddha's hair to the pagoda for worshipping). The pagoda has 4 gates in 4 directions: the East, West, South, North, each gate is guarded by one pair of giant Lion God (chintre). This sacred pagoda is said to be holding four treasures of Buddhism: "8 Buddha's hair, the cloth of Buddha, the rod of Buddha and Water filter of Buddha". The pagoda covered with over 60 tons of gold and attached to the huge number of 2317 gems, rubies and 5448 diamonds, especially on top of the tower is also fitted with a 76-carat diamond.



Programme details – Inle Cooking Class

Dive into an Inle culinary adventure and learn to cook as it was done by our grandparents.

Shan State is famous across Myanmar for its yummy dishes and distinct flavours. Classes are run as part of our social funding model, so what you pay goes toward our heritage work here in the Inle region.



Shan State is famous across Myanmar for the distinct flavors of its culinary creations. Our cooking classes take you through our experience: sourcing Inle ingredients, some only found in the lake, at a local market. Then you will learn to prepare real traditional dishes in our cooking classroom.

Would you like to learn how to cook authentic traditional Inle cuisine and bring it back home to your family?

Please book here!

In the morning, pick up from your hotel in Nyuang Shwe, shopping at local market then transfer to home cooking class.

One course entitles to-

- Two curries (fish / chicken/ pork /beef)
- One salad
- One soup
- Steam rice
- Local snacks





Programme details – CBT experiences



OVERVIEW

Start the morning at Kandarawaddy Haw Nan, one of the oldest and most interesting examples of classic architecture in the town. Alternatively, if the itinerary falls on Wednesday or Saturday, we'll visit Demawsoe market, one of the best markets (accessible to tourists) in Myanmar. After winding your way through the various stalls, continue to the sleepy settlement of Pan Pet, technically a village made up of five smaller hamlets. Whilst the majority of tourists come here to take photographs of the Kayan Lahwi, the group in which the women decorate their necks with brass coils, the village has so much more to offer. We'll aim to showcase this through a range of activities including cotton spinning, jewellery production, a jungle picnic, a mountain top pagoda hike and a good old-fashioned sing-a-long. Weather and time permitting, end the day with a sunset view from Thiri Mingalar Taungkwe Zedi or Mya Kalat Pagoda.



PACE

Medium pace



TOUR PERIOD

Full day



Programme details – CBT experiences

DAY 2 - LOIKAW

MEALS [B|L]



Today the sightseeing begins at 08:00.

Begin the day with a visit 30 minutes outside of Loikaw to the Demawso market (only open Mon, Wed, and Sat). This local market attracts tribes from the surrounding area selling unique wares, including the local *khaung-yay* wine. Local women line up with batches of homemade wine, each offering free samples to any interested customers. After deciding on a particularly tasty one, customers will make their purchase, filling up containers they brought themselves.



Following the market visit, drive out to the countryside for an easy walk through local villages and farmland. After an hour, reach the Pan Phet village. Most of the inhabitants of Pan Phet are of the Padaung tribe. The Padaung women are famous for the many golden neck rings they wear. Though the tradition is dying out, most women over 40 in the village can still be seen wearing these heavy accessories. There will be a unique chance to interact with these ladies during a stroll through the village. A few roadside stalls have opened to cater to tourists here, so there will be a few chances to pick up some locally sourced souvenirs and refreshments.



After leaving the village, take the hour return back to the car and head for a late lunch.

In the evening, we'll head to a jetty just on the outskirts of the city. Your private motorboat cruises on the Bilu River which meanders its way through the heart of Loikaw and out into the countryside. We'll pass under the city's many bridges, witness locals washing clothes and bathing in the river and finish the 45-minute journey at Thatta Bilu village where our vehicle will be waiting to take us back into town.

Overnight in Loikaw.



Programme details – Keep up-to-date

After lunch return to your hotel to relax by the swimming pool and escape the heat of the day. In the late afternoon meet your guide at the hotel and climb to the top of one of Bagan's ancient temples for a panoramic view over the pagodas at sunset.



After lunch return to your hotel to relax by the swimming pool and escape the heat of the day. In the late afternoon meet your guide at the hotel and visit an elevated viewpoint for a panoramic view over Bagan's ancient pagodas at sunset.



Content writing TIPS

- > Make your content **unique** - when visiting a popular tourist destination try to focus on the *intangible* rather than the *tangible* (easy to imitate) i.e. the feeling your customers will get when they visit that destination
- > Do not just **list** consecutive activities using the Word 'then'..'then'...'then'..
- > Use **strong verbs** to generate excitement and convey a sense of adventure: Discover, venture, experience, learn, listen, feel, taste, smell
- > Do not include too much **historical information** in the programme text – leave that to your guides
- > Embed **images** within the programme text, next to the corresponding text
- > **Slow** your story down





Slow your story down

- > Do not write too much – readers do not want to be inundated with content and your average prospective customer receives more than 6,000 advertising messages per day so KISS (Keep it Short & Simple)
- > Do not **do** too much in one day – for example when visiting Bagan do not mention too many temples in the programme text
- > European travellers do not just want to observe, they want **learning experiences** that allow them to connect with people and nature – this requires time so *less = more* in your itinerary as it allows more time for these learning experiences



❖ Do not just **SEE** an elephant, allow extra time to **LEARN** about elephants



Storytelling TIPS



- > Make your customer the **protagonist** of the story – when writing your programme, put yourself in the shoes of the customer and write it as if you were experiencing the tour yourself (this is easier if you have actually tried and tested the tour from start to finish)
- > Ensure your story (programme description) has a well-defined arc of start, middle and end- it is important to give your reader a clear **time frame**
- > Remember that a Good story needs interesting **characters** – involve local people
- > Find something unique to **connect** your customers to a particular place – Good storytelling can allow you to make a lesser-known destination a 'must-see'
- > **Numbers** can make your story more compelling e.g. How old is Shwedagon Pagoda? How many temples are there in Bagan?
- > **Sustainability** can play an essential role in storytelling so we'll look at this later.



Language is very important

- > Poor language within your programme texts looks unprofessional and will deter European tour operators
- > It may be beneficial for some of you to outsource your content writing to improve the storytelling and language quality – short-term investment for long-term gain
- > Which key programme details should you submit to a content writing partner?

Duration, destinations, location and timing of various activities and experiences, information about activities and experiences, highlights for travellers, information about meals included / not included, transportation details with distances to be travelled





Below are some examples of Spanish and US tour operators and how they promote community-based tourism online. Look at what images, words and sentences they use.

Table 17 : Examples of Promotional Imagery used in Community-Based Tourism

Community-based Tourism Promotion			
Company	Website	Imagery Used	Phrasing of Appeals to Consumers
 Viajes Responsables (Spain)	 www.viajesresponsables.com	 locals and travelers interacting, cultural landscape	 "su viaje afecte de forma positiva a la población del destino que se visita," "participar en el desarrollo local de tres comunidades indígenas organizadas"
 Paso de Noroeste (Spain)	 www.pasonoroeste.com	 locals and travelers interacting, cultural landscape	 "disfrutar del país, vivir su realidad," "benefician directamente a la población autóctona," "no solo pasar por encima del destino sin profundizar en él"
 Global Exchange (U.S.)	 www.globalexchange.org	 natives/locals and interacting travelers	 "travel can be educational, fun, and positively influence international affairs," "working toward positive change"

Source: Compiled by CREST, 2009.

Other sources of information

For more information, read the CBI Market Intelligence Reports:

- [How to start a travel blog.](#)
- [How to be a successful tourism company online.](#)
- [How to get started developing your tourism product.](#)

[Marlon van Hee](#) and [Ameer Virani](#) created this manual for CBI.