

## How does brand journalism work?

While it includes some features of traditional marketing and writing for media platforms, brand journalism isn't exactly like either. So if you've only created SEO content, brand journalism can feel like wading into intimidating uncharted territory. We'll break it into actionable steps for you.

### **Develop a brand journalism strategy**

Like content marketing, brand journalism requires a marketing strategy to succeed. However, this is a different kind of content game. To build your brand journalism strategy, consider the following:

- **Your audience:** Who is your content for? How wide an audience do you hope to engage? Brand journalism typically targets a wide audience, but visualizing your ideal readers will help you stay on track with your content goals.
- **Content types and formats:** Which kinds of content creation will you focus on? Will you be writing articles about your company's values, publishing podcast interviews with industry leaders, or running interviews with company employees in your newsletter? Decide which kinds of content will best support your strategy and choose the best distribution channels for them.
- **Content goals:** Do you want to build brand awareness, increase social media visibility, or become an industry thought leader? Will you be

creating any bottom-of-the-funnel content to support causes or grow your company somehow? Which metrics will you use to measure your success? Knowing your goal will make content ideas easier to source.

- **Tone:** Creating an editorial style guide to maintain a consistent brand voice and tone will make your content more trustworthy and memorable.

With your strategy in mind, you can also perform keyword research to see which search terms align with your strategy. This is a great way to kill two birds with a stone—maintaining a strong brand journalist voice while tapping into search engine content.

## **Use your experts**

With brand journalism content, take advantage of expertise to make your articles informative and entirely unique to your company.

Ideally, company employees should write your brand stories, but where this is not possible, consider outsourcing the project to ghostwriters and assigning bylines to your employees. Enrich the articles by basing them on interviews with actual employees, experts, and even customers and featuring their insights.

If you'll be writing industry trend pieces, you can assign these to writers and interview external subject matter experts to create a more well-rounded article.

## Tell the truth

Journalism is built on the foundation of truth-telling. Don't whitewash or "greenwash" your company to make it more appealing to readers. Avoid half-truths and inaccuracies in your stories, as these could easily undermine your efforts.

When sharing industry trends or investigating industry issues, invest in thorough research. If you can't do the research, only use data from reliable sources. When using quotes or statistics, be sure to credit the sources appropriately.

## Take a stand

There's no room for diplomacy with brand journalism. A recent survey showed that

*"62% of customers want companies to take a stand on current and broadly relevant issues like sustainability, transparency or fair employment practices."*

The best way to reflect strong company values is to have opinions and share them. You don't need to be crude or offensive, but being clear about where your company stands on major issues will help build trust and confidence in your brand.