

Maverick Media Content Specification v.1.0

I. Media Mission Statement

To be the leading originator, aggregator, syndicator and distributor of how-to and reference content within each niche market.

II. Content Objectives

- A. Inform
- B. Instill a feeling: confidence, accomplishment
- C. Solve problems
- D. Educate
- E. Entertain
- F. Motivate
- G. Coach or guide

III. Quality Criteria

- A. Simple
- B. Functional
- C. Organized
- D. Visually stimulating (jumps out - attention-grabbing)
- E. Concise
- F. Directed (tell them what to buy/do vs. allow them to choose??)
- G. Comprehensive

IV. Content Breakdown

A. Instructional How-To Solution

A step-by-step process for accomplishing a specific objective.

1. Types

a) **Project Solutions:** A step-by-step process to completing a project, defined as a one-time undertaking with specific objectives, deliverables and timeframe.

(1) *Ex: How-To Create A Media Kit*

(2) *Elements of Projects*

(a) Charter

(i) Description

(ii) Objectives

(iii) Assumptions

(iv) Constraints

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- (v) Scope Management Plan
- (b) **Release(s)**
- (c) **Phases**
- (d) **Deliverables**
- (e) **Tasks**
 - (i) Description
 - (ii) Effort
 - (iii) Duration
 - (iv) Dependencies
- (f) **Network Diagram**
 - (i) Critical Path
- (g) **Milestones**
- (h) **Responsibility**
- (i) **Resources**
- (j) **Issues**

b) Task Solutions: A step-by-step subset of a project, leading to deliverable completion and/or milestone achievement.

(1) *Ex. How-To Select A Telephone System For Your Business*

c) Choose Or Decide: Information and advice designed to assist the user in narrowing down several options to one.

(1) *Ex: How-To Decide To Form An LLC, How-To Know When To Change Your Oil, How-To Decide To Fire An Employee*

(2) *Basic Copy Components (Outline Points)*

- (a) **Introduction**
- (b) **General Questions (with explanatory paragraphs)**
- (c) **Result From Answers To Questions**
- (d) **Closing Paragraph(s)**

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d) Affect Change or Improve: Information and advice designed to assist the user in an ongoing process for betterment of self, a project, or an idea.

(1) *Ex: How-To Be Successful In Your Small Business, How-To Negotiate, How-To Improve Staff Morale*

B. Subject Overviews

Introductory information whose function is to provide fundamental knowledge and pique the user's interest on a particular subject

1. Types

a) Broad Overview: A quick background of the many different sub-sections of a broader topic; will include comparisons of the different sub-sections to be discussed in the Focuses Overviews.

(1) *Ex. How-To Understand Communication Services, How-To Understand Computers*

b) Focused Overview: More in-depth information on a subject touched upon in a Basic Overview; will usually lead users to an Instructional Solution.

(1) *Ex. How-To Understand Telephone Systems, How-To Understand Cell Phones (both subsets of How-To Understand Communication Services)*

2. Basic Copy Components (Outline Points)

a) Overview

(1) *Description*

(2) *Definition*

(3) *Pros & Cons*

(4) *How it works*

b) Types (including comparison)

c) Components/Features

d) Accessories

C. Comparison Chart of Solution Elements (see Solution Flowchart)

D. Definitions

E. Other site content

1. Specialty Columns - regular (i.e., weekly, monthly, etc.) articles created, usually by an advisor and/or expert, for specific channels, either responding to specific user questions or discussing a focused topic (i.e., a case study of a marketing campaign gone awry; examples of successful business plans and where those companies are today; etc.)

2. Top 20 Small Business Problems - a static list of the most common problems business owners have faced over the years, including links to solutions on how to avoid such problems.

3. Top 20 How-To Solutions - the most popular content, determined by hits, on the How-To site; will change probably every day or so.

V. Format Guidelines

A. Content Flow

1. Page breaks should be positioned at outline points and/or where an overflow of information occurs.
2. Subsequent pages should be broken down into Page X of X format.

B. Special words

1. "E" words
 - a) For common "e" words, the format is *E-mail, E-commerce, etc.*
 - b) For proper "e" words, the format is *E-learning.*
 - c) An "e" word at the beginning of sentence receives a capital e only, unless it is a proper noun.

C. Elements of a Printable Solution

1. **Product/Comparison Chart:** A table of two or more subjects or products to be contrasted in an easy-to-use visual aid of features.
2. **Tips:** Highlighted areas of copy, written by either the expert or a user, that showcase important information that might otherwise be overlooked.
3. **Shopping List:** The list of items, similar to ingredients in a recipe, that will be needed in order to successfully complete the solution.
4. **Pictures/Diagrams:** Visuals that will either add entertainment value to the solution or help to convey an idea that might otherwise be difficult for a reader to understand.
 - a) "Quickview" Diagram: **A diagram that provides a general overview of a subject or product.**
5. **Action List:** A "call to action" for the user to refer to after reading a solution. (Still a hotly contested element.)
6. **Outline:** A quick "table of contents," probably hyperlinked to the different sections of the solution.

D. Features

1. **Factoids:** Entertaining but useless (unless you're scheduled to appear opposite Regis) pieces of information that appear throughout the solution as blurbs.
2. **Q&A:** An "interview" with an expert designed to give the user further information and to reinforce the notion that we know what we're talking about.
3. **Downloads:** Forms and Templates, ASPs, etc. that a user can download in order to assist with the solution.
 - a) *Ex. Fax cover sheets, rate calculators, CD databases, etc.*
4. **Assessment Tests:** Evaluations either of a person or group's behavior and/or personality, or of the status of a project.
 - a) *Ex. Are you a good manager? Are you a Type A personality? How effective is your advertising campaign? Should your company be an LLC?*

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- 5. Related Solutions:** Other solutions that would either be the next or previous logical step in a process or of similar interest.
 - a) *Ex. How-To Choose A Telephone System as a related solution to How-To Understand Telephone Systems; How-To Choose A Cell Phone as a related solution of How-To Choose A Pager*
- 6. Solution Rating:** The average evaluation score given by users as to how helpful the solution was for them.
- 7. Message Board:** Area for users to communicate amongst themselves.
- 8. Feedback Form:** Method for users to send the company complaints, praises or further questions regarding that particular solution.
- 9. Poll:** Interactive feature surveying users on a related question.
 - a) *Ex. On a solution regarding advertising techniques, a question asking which method of advertising - television, radio, newspapers, e-mail, etc. - has proven most useful.*
- 10. Other Resources:** Further sites, books, etc. for finding information on the topic at hand.
- 11. Glossary: Definitions of related terms.**
 - a) Word defined will be bold.
 - b) Words that appear in definition that also appear in the glossary will be hyper-linked.
 - c) Pronunciation will only be used in special cases for difficult words, e.g., SCSI pronounced "Scuzzy." The pronunciation will be worked into the first sentence of text.
 - d) Sample sentences and parts of speech will not be given, as sample sentences will likely be redundant and most glossary terms will be nouns.
 - e) Pictures - when necessary or adds to creative. This will depend on space issues per Steve.
 - f) Category the definition appears in is listed at end of definition in parentheses.
 - g) Abbreviations will follow full word (e.g., Interactive Voice Response (IVR)).
 - h) Multiple definitions will be numbered.
 - (1) *Ex: 1. Port - An access channel in telephone systems and voice mail, ports are used to connect phone lines, extensions and/or voice mail. Multiple ports allow for multiple activities to happen on a system (transferring a call, leaving a message, etc.). When one activity is happening, it uses one port. (Telephone)*
 2. Port - A heavy, sweet dessert wine.
- 12. Case Studies:** Accounts of actual related incidents.
 - a) *Ex: In a human resources solution on firing an employee, several accounts of inappropriate firings that led to repercussions.*
- 13. Articles:** Further information on the topic at hand, only more topical and not in solution-form.
 - a) *Ex: In a marketing solution, an article on the most recent innovations in E-mail marketing.*

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Note: Although the site is be completely redeveloped soon, you can see content examples at www.How-To.com