Ways to generate information about potential customers:

- **Interview customers** (phone and in person)
    - What do they like about your product?
    - What are their pain points?
    - What kind of content are they interested in?
- **Interview your sales team**: they know your customers best
- **Look through your contacts database for trends**
    - How do your customers find content?
    - How do your customers consume content?
- **Survey your contacts database**
    - Ask them about their role, department, challenges, experience if B2B
- **Research outside forums related to your product**
- **Use a contacts lead form on your website to capture information**
    - What is your company's size? (b2b)
    - Ask to connect to social media accounts

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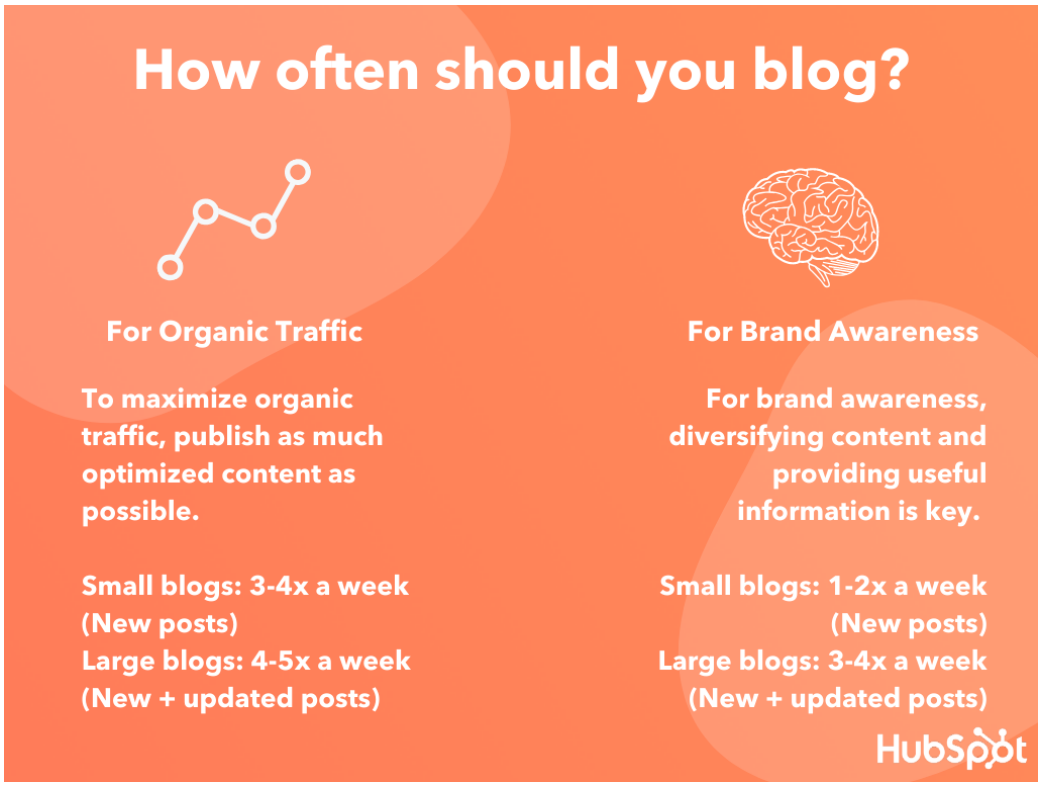
How to get topics for your blog:

- Look at your potential customer's **pain points**
- Come up with one **keyword** and brainstorm topics around it
- Do **keyword research** for your target segment
- Look at **other content** outside of blogs you've created and see if you can publish any of it as a blog
- Ask your **teammates**
- Try **HubSpot blog ideas generator**
- Research **competitor's blogs**

Frequency of Posting

As a general rule once a week or a few times per week is a good starting place



Types of Content

- **Infographics**

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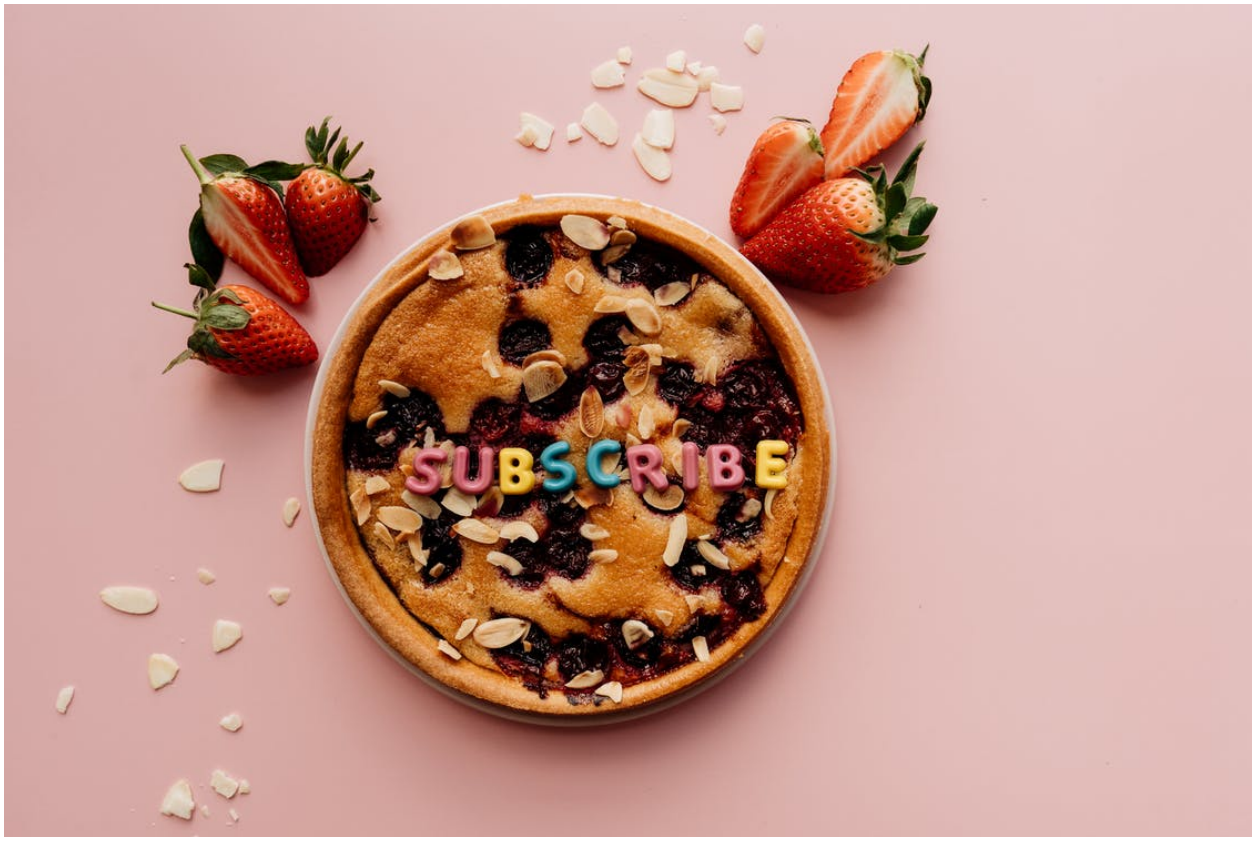
- **How-Tos**
- **Lists**
- **Newsjacking**
- **Slideshares**
- **Editorials**

Over time analyze which format performs best and tailor your strategy toward those analytics. Try lots of formats to begin with.

Growing your Blog Subscribers



- **Automated Emails:** set up subscriber emails so that when a new post is published your subscribers automatically get an email sent to them with the new post. Make an email template that links to your posts and curates your scheduled content. Optimize your subscriber emails for CTR and conversions.
- **Subscriber Forms:** set up forms on your main blog page and CTAs in your posts to enable people to subscribe with their emails
    - Be sure to be clear about how often your subscribers will be contacted
    - Recommend: no more than weekly or monthly emails
- **Legal requirements:** you're required to give anybody you email the option to unsubscribe from your mailing list.

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Overall Design:

- **<u>Have a Main Page where you:</u>**
    - Share information about your blog
    - Link recent posts
    - Include a search feature
    - Include an archive of past posts
- **<u>Choose a color scheme for all pages</u>**
    - Use your brand colors as a base
    - Add a few accent colors
- Match your blog's design with the rest of your site
- Use a template for each blog post so that you have the same general layout for all posts
- Link to pieces of content that will nurture your visitors down the funnel
- Make sure to add publishing dates to all your blog posts

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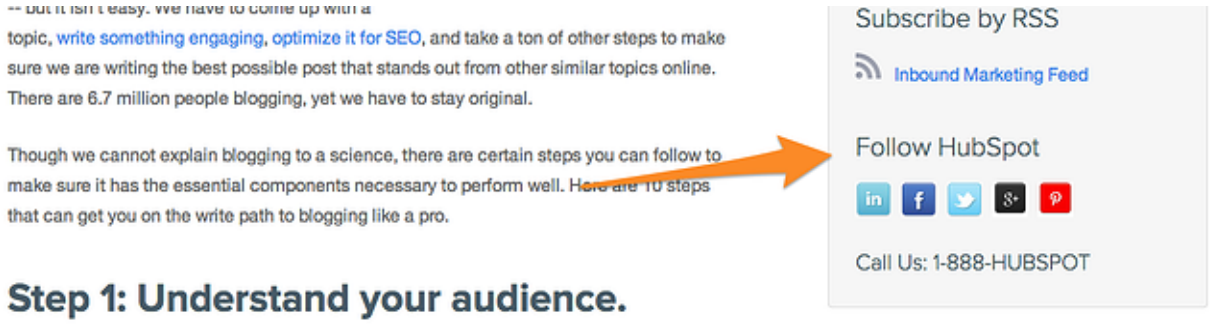
Calls to Action:

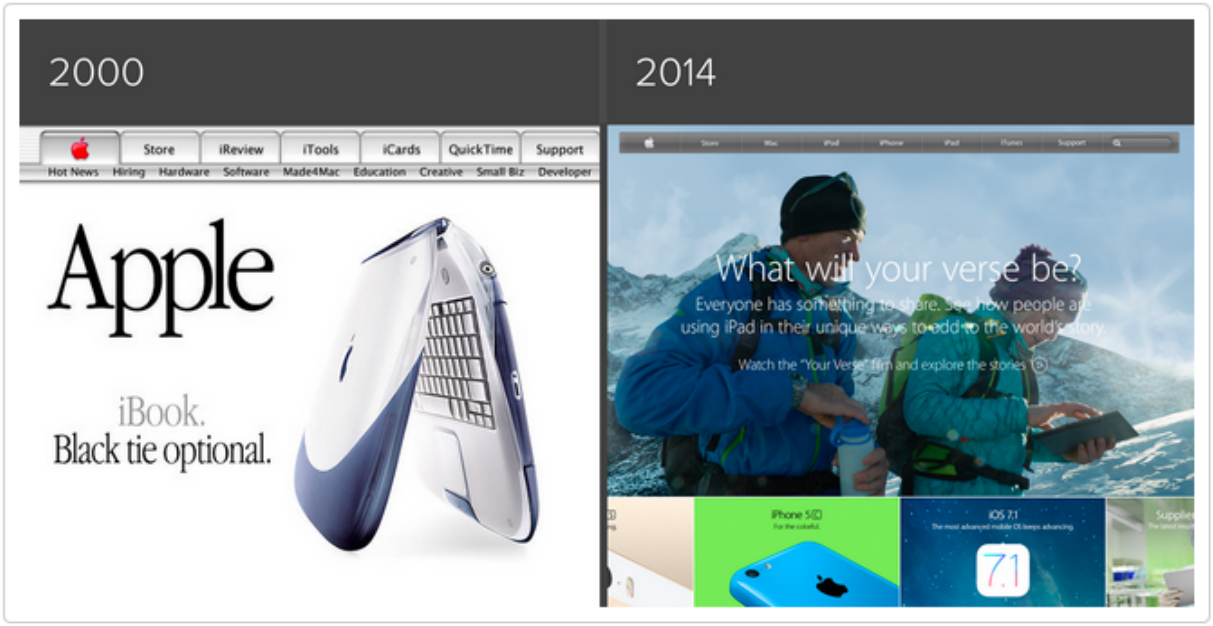
- **Smart CTAs:** Your users see customized CTAs based on where people are in their buying process so that they can see the call to action most relevant to them
- **Connect on Social:** Links to connect with your company on social media



Step 1: Understand your audience.

- **Tweet This CTA:** Great for data, infographics and other knowledge tidbits. These are links that when clicked will automatically tweet your post from their account.

2) Apple



Remember the iBook? Colorful, customizable -- I'm talking back when Elle Woods was rocking a cotton candy pink one in *Legally Blonde*. As Steve Jobs once said, "We made the buttons on the screen look so good you'll want to lick them." Which version of Apple.com would you rather lick? If Steve had it right, you'll want to lick both. Tweet about Apple.

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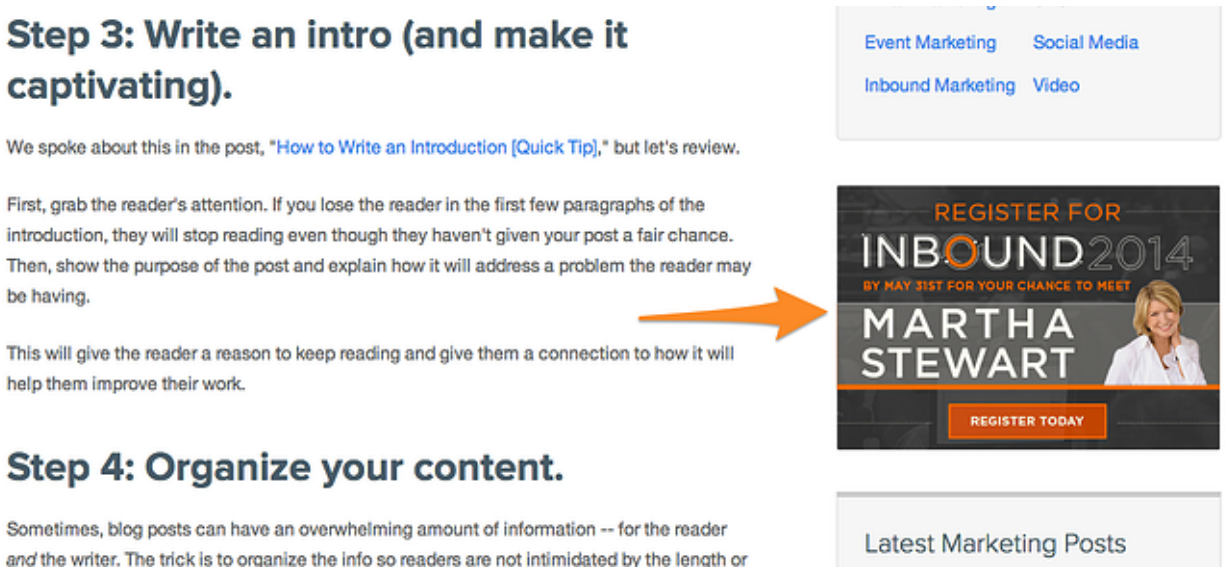
- **Blog subscription CTAs:** Great for increasing your blog subscriber base. Make sure the button is clear and easy to find. Only ask for them information your need to increase the chance of people filling out the form.

- **Comment CTAs:** You can ask for general comments “comment below to share your thoughts on this blog post” or you can ask them a question based on the topic.
    - Make sure you have a plan for how to handle comments: will comments be allowed all the time or just for a short period? Who is responsible for responding to comments?
- **Slide-In CTAs:** As your visitors scroll down your blog post a CTA slides in the bottom right corner when you are almost at the bottom of the page. This is better than an intrusive pop up CTA.
    - Slide-in CTA vs. the static CTA at the bottom of each post: the slide-in CTA had a 192% higher CTR and generated 27% more submissions
- **In-Line CTAs:** A link within your blog post that provides more information (hyperlink)
- **Sidebar CTAs:** Great for CTAs that are relevant to your company but aren’t key to the content of your post.



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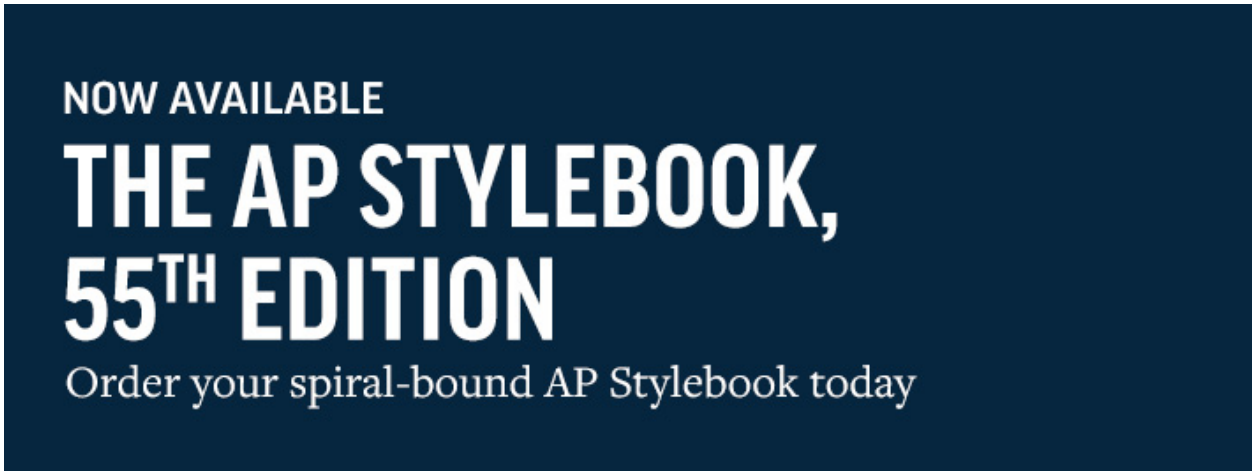
Editorial Standards



You need to have guidelines for your blog for things like grammatical principles, citation guidelines and capitalizations. Most blogs use **Associated Press Stylebook.**

Keywords and Google Rankings

Keyword Research: rank for keywords that your target audience is searching for. Design your blog based on the keywords you're trying to rank for. Use these keywords to brainstorm and tailor your posts.

- Look for long-tailed, niche keywords with low competition to start.

STEPS:

1. Make a list of important and relevant topics based on your value prop (5-10)
2. Find out the topics monthly search volume.
3. Decide on subtopics.
4. Enter the keyword in google in an incognito window (or go onto moz and do a SERP analysis)- see what kinds of content show up and copy the format (i.e. steps, videos, how tos, editorials)
5. Use keyword research tools like Moz, Ahrefs, SEMrush, Ubersuggest

How to choose good keywords consider:

1. Relevance- are you providing value or an answer to searchers
2. Authority- do you have what it takes to get backlinks on this topic? Is the topic filled with powerful websites that you can't compete with to begin with?
3. Volume- measured by MSV(monthly search volume)- number of times the keyword is searched per month
4. Consider long-tail keywords
5. See how competitors are ranking for these key words
6. Use Google's keyword planner and google trends

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How to implement into your blog:

- Make sure you're optimizing your meta description, page title, keywords, URLs, etc. for the keywords you're trying to rank for.

How to Promote Your Blog

- **Social Media:** Promote the launch and blog posts on your social media accounts- use images and videos
- **Paid Campaigns** on social media platforms
- **Press Releases** to get more backlinks on launch day

Tips for writing the post

- Make it **skimmable** by using:
    - Images
    - Bullets

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    - Lists
    - Short paragraphs
- **Plan out** your promo for launch
    - Social channels
    - Email
    - Paid promotions
- **Images:** colored images make readers 80% more willing to read a piece of content
    - Graphics
    - Videos
    - Tools: canva, stock photos, powerpoint
- Link to other websites with **hyperlinks**-
    - 1. Makes you credible by citing your sources.
    - 2. Link to other pages on your website to keep people on your domain

Analytics

- Page views
- CTR
- Sources of traffic
- Leads and customers gained from blog over time

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