



# 11 Ways to Know You're Ready for a Conscious Content Creation Business

A Freelancer's Guide to Growing a  
Consciously Content Creation Business

The challenges for freelance content creators today are manifold.

How do you create a steady flow of clients and referrals that allows you to move beyond surviving in business?

How do you educate clients about the importance of conscious content, rather than simply producing words for the sake of it?

How do you avoid being sucked into the vortex of meeting Google's SEO demands and create content that's integrous?

How do you value yourself enough to charge what your worth without apologizing to clients?

Regardless of the pathway you took to content creation, very few of us are schooled in the tools and techniques required for developing and managing a freelance business that thrives. We somehow have to figure it out along the way, often making classic mistakes like:

- *Taking any work that lands in front of us*
- *Not valuing ourselves and underpricing services*
- *Not having repeatable processes for core business activities*
- *Not having the right (or any) systems*
- *Overworking and not taking time out to recharge and have fun*
- *Not believing in the importance of quality emotional, practical and professional support*
- *Not communicating our own content creation philosophy.*

There is no doubt, producing written content is an in-demand service, and it's likely to remain so, even as artificial intelligence dominates an increasing number of areas in life. The written word, when produced thoughtfully, creatively and consciously, is powerful. We've even been told content is king.

Why then, do so many freelance content creators struggle with developing a business that allows them to do work they enjoy and live well? Contrary to what you're thinking, it's not because there's not enough work or clients or opportunities. In fact, it could be argued there's never been a more ideal time to be a content creator.

Imagine choosing the clients you'd love to work with.

Imagine having a waitlist for your services.

Imagine working within a solid business operating framework.

## Imagine.

I want to reassure you, it is possible it does require work and it's so worth it.

There is another challenge we all face. You – and your clients – are currently overwhelmed with the volume of information 'out there'. While there is a seemingly infinite amount of information, the quality of much of that content is questionable. Empty, meaningless, and frequently written to tick a marketing box (think SEO or hyped up copywriting), content like this does not connect to the heart of the people who matter – the customers or business it's meant to serve.

Although there's never been a better time to be a content writer, there's never been a greater need for content that shares wisdom. You know, content that's written with awareness, deeper thought, and care.

We're more technology connected than we've ever been, yet at a personal level, we're disconnected. For business to engage with its market, there is a need for caring communication, that is, taking what your clients know and 'translating' it into language and values that make sense to market. Most business owners can't do this on their own. They need help – and content creators are ideally positioned to provide intelligent support. As professionals who are integral to marketing and communications, we have a unique opportunity to influence and lead change where it's needed most. But in most cases, we have to work to get our own house in order first. We also have to understand the value of conscious content.

Conscious content is written, audio and visual content that's created with deliberate intent, care and awareness, rather than being produced just for the sake of it. You can tell when content is conscious and so can your customers' audience. It's authentic, meaningful, and reflects who you are. Unlike unconscious content, it takes time, effort and thought to develop. It has a clear voice that resonates with your market. And you and your clients feel proud and excited to share it.

Content that isn't conscious is, well, unconscious. It's vanilla too. Written in a vacuum and usually in a rush with very little thought, it hasn't taken into account your client's why, their most meaningful messages, or their customers. It lacks depth and meaning. It could even sound like OPC - other people's content. Blending in with the other seemingly endless white noise out there, it can't possibly connect with their market at the level it should – that is, at a deeper and more authentically.

Communicating consciously offers the pathway to creating meaningful connections between your clients and their customers - before they've even done business. Conscious communication tells the audience: You understand me. You care about me. Not in a false hyped up marketing way, but genuinely, just as we'd expect in any important relationship. It sets the foundation for all business marketing communications and this makes it possible to create an enriching and enduring relationships. And isn't that what you want? If we care less with our communication, our people - the costumers we deal with - will feel it. The words of Maya Angelou sum it up well: People don't remember what you say or do, they remember how you make them feel. Your words – spoken, in print, or on a screen – have the power to influence feelings, so why not do it consciously?

Are you ready to evolve to a freelance business that creates content consciously?

Let's find out.

# Value and Values: Do you know yours?

The perennial challenge facing most freelance content creators is building a steady flow of ideal clients who pay what they ask. Logically, most people would focus on marketing as the way to solve the problem. Yes, marketing is important, but at the right time. After you've clarified your value and your values. Read on to understand if you're ready for a conscious content creation business.

## 1 You are clear about your value

Many freelance content creators start their business enthusiastically. Inspired to write and create, they're happy just to be 'doing their thing'. However, this approach is no good if you want to create a sustainable business model.

Before doing anything else, it's vital you understand and appreciate your value as a conscious content creator. In fact, more than understand and appreciate your value, you must *know* it. Knowing the true value of your work is *necessary* for success as a conscious content creator. Yes, experience and 'just doing it' helps to overcome dips in confidence, but if you're not quite sold on the value of your work and worth, one of the easiest things to do is underestimate your value. This can cost you financially, personally, and emotionally.

Lurking beneath the surface of not charging enough for your services is a lack of confidence and certainty about your value. Of course, it takes time to become a technically proficient and accomplished content creator, but let's assume you're already that professional. What's harder is articulating the value of what you do in ways that are meaningful for your clients.

One way to overcome this hurdle is to write down the benefits of your service to clients.

Let's be clear about what we mean by benefits. Hint: it's more than "They'll have written content for their business".

It's hugely beneficial (no pun intended) to go through this exercise. Start with ten benefits and work your way up to 100. Here's why. Rather than have some loose idea that your service is helpful to people, you galvanize in your mind, and then embody, that it is. With this kind of understanding, you become unwavering in your certainty about the benefits of your service. You feel more confident too asking for what you deserve. You're also more prepared to let people go if they're not a good fit. So, write them here.

Here are a few lines to get you started:

Benefits of my services to clients:

*E.g. I help my clients to express the essence of who they are, which gives them confidence in their business communication.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

## 2

## You know what you stand for (what your values are)

Unless you've taken time to get beneath the surface of your business, it's unlikely you'll be clear about what you stand for. If you're not clear, imagine how difficult it is for your customers to know. Most times they're left guessing. Yes, they might do business with you, but they don't feel *connected*. If we accept most of us want to be part of something bigger – a tribe, a mission, an evolution – then why wouldn't they want to be part of your 'thing'?

The concept of defining what you stand for isn't for everyone; it's only for content creators who are purposeful about what they do, have a clear mission to share with others, and an intention to make a meaningful difference in the world. If that's you, then it's time to get clear about your values.

Big corporates spend a lot of time dreaming up values that reflect their business. Now there's no need for you to go to the same extent because a lot of that process is disconnected from their market, but it does pay to give some thought to your brand values. More than just words, your values are an expression of who you are. I've found those business owners with a purpose simply can't help but 'be and do' their values. And they are very clear about the values that are important to their customers. They understand people like to do business with people who share

similar values. Understanding your clients means understanding what's important to them in terms of values. For example, Simon Sinek, author of *Start with Why* says that values are verbs (doing words). So, while it's okay to say 'trust' is one of your values, what does that really mean to your customer?

Trust could be explained as 'we do the right thing by you.'

Quality could be explained as 'we do our best with the best'

Community could be explained as 'we're here for you.'

You get the idea. Ready?

Write down your values here and explain them in simple terms too.

My business (or personal) brand values are:

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....
4. ....
5. ....

### 3

## You know what's unique about the content you create

When I ask content creators what's unique about the way they approach their work, most respond with answers like: *I care, I'm reliable, I write really well*. These are all valid responses, but they don't really define your uniqueness. In fact, most conscious content creators would probably say these answers apply to them. What this means is we need to think more deeply (consciously) about how we serve our clients.

Time to do that now. The things that are unique about the way I create content are:  
*E.g. I have a clear process for developing content, which makes it easier for my clients to navigate the creation process.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

It doesn't matter if it's one thing or ten things that make your approach special. What's important is that you know what those things are and can express them fluently to your ideal clients.

## 4

### You have a value-driven pricing model (and you're not afraid to use it)

As content creators, the majority of us start out doing work on an hourly rates basis. After all, we're in the mindset of 'we'll take what we can get'. As we become more conscious in our communication, we do things differently. It doesn't mean we won't do work for hourly rates, but we do less of it, and if we do work that way, we're able to charge a premium for it.

Long term, it makes sense to develop packages of work. This provides more certainty for you and your clients. It allows you to become specialized in particular services and refine the delivery process. Ultimately leading to greater efficiency and better outcomes for you and your people, articulating those packages is a very worthwhile exercise.

Take some time now to consider the services you could develop into packages of work. You might consider websites, blogs, internal business documentation, email campaigns, or book writing. It really doesn't matter. What is more important is that you give thought to how you can bundle your services into a package of work which you can market and deliver to customers with greater ease.

Use the space below to capture your thoughts.

Package	What's included	Rough price

## Customer Relationship Management

A while back when I change hear to heard customer relationship management (CRM), I used to think of fancy software programs that promise an awful lot and don't necessarily deliver what freelance content creators need. The truth is, there's more to CRM than capturing the details of your client and adding them to your email list.

Relationships are two-way streets. However, many freelance content creators find themselves in relationships with customers they don't like and who treat them badly. There's no doubt it cuts both ways, but we're talking about upskilling content creators to become conscious in their business, so stick with me. To do that, it's necessary to get very clear about who your people are and what are your boundaries for business with them.

5

### You know who your people are

It's one thing to know your value and values, but it's altogether different to know your audience. In simple terms, you must 'know your people'. In marketing parlance, this is defined as your ideal customer – or avatar. So, who is yours? For the record, my experience is most businesses have two or three ideal customers, rather than just one, so don't be limited by thinking there's only one for yours. Here are some questions you can ask to become clearer about your ideal customer:

- *What broad characteristics describe your ideal customer?*
- *What do they like/dislike?*
- *What's important to them?*
- *What are their values? If you look closely, you'll probably find they're very similar to your own.*

Now use the table below to describe each of your ideal customers in more detail. Don't get lazy. Care enough to describe them in detail. Remember, the clearer you are about these aspects of your ideal customer, the more likely you are to produce content for them that resonates directly with them at an intellectual *and* emotional level. It will add depth and integrity to the way you work together.

Customer 1	Customer 2	Customer 3

Now it's essential you keep this person (or people) front of mind when developing your conscious communication business. As much as possible, you want to consider your services from the perspective of the audience, that is, your customer, rather than just from the perspective of you or your business. In doing so, keep in mind what is most important to them (remember they want their problems solved and relief from their pain). When you do this, it's a demonstration you've considered their needs (you care), a big factor in your 'customer's decision-making process. It's also the heart of conscious communication.

## 6

### You have clear terms and conditions

Because we often don't value ourselves as content creators (and then take whatever work we can get), our boundaries around work arrangements can blur. Sometimes they even dissolve. This makes for unsustainable business and can become incredibly stressful.

If we teach people how to treat us, we're teaching our clients it's okay to treat us badly – and get away with it. With your value now clear in your mind – and well and truly embodied – it's time to toughen up on your boundaries, otherwise known as your terms and conditions.

Terms and conditions should specify:

- *The responsibility for content inputs and technical accuracy (who does what)*
- *Timeframes for delivery of content (what is finished by when)*
- *Expectations for reviews and amendments (turnaround times and number of iterations)*
- *Pricing (fees) and payment terms (how much by when)*
- *Work scope (specifying what's included and excluded).*

If you haven't already, it's essential you draft your terms and conditions to include in quotes and proposals provided to customers. To get you started, make a list of terms and conditions you feel are the bare minimum for what's required:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

With a clear framework within which to work, it becomes easier to define which clients are in and which are out. Some existing clients you've been too relaxed with may not like the new operating parameters, but that's okay. You're working more consciously now, and you'll be attracting more conscious clients as a result. Many of us have stayed in (professional) relationships with clients for too long and it rarely ends well when we know the use-by date on the arrangement has expired. Let them go and create the space. Or at least get ready to create the space until you have enough courage to let them go.



## You have clear guidelines for working together with clients

Most freelancers don't even think about this, however it's absolutely essential you define what you will and won't accept from clients when working together. Things you may wish to consider in your guidelines are:

- *Reviews (turnaround times)*
- *Feedback (how it's delivered)*
- *Timeliness and punctuality (expectations around online and in person meetings)*
- *Communication (during projects and beyond)*

- *Payment (how much, by when)*
- *Decision making (who is responsible on the client side) and how decisions are communicated.*

Having these details laid out transparently before work has even begun makes it very clear you're serious about your business, and that your customers should be too. It sets the tone of the relationship right from the start.

## 8

### You have a process for filtering opportunities

While it may not seem possible yet, as a conscious content creator you will be turning work away. For this reason, it's necessary to have a process for filtering opportunities that present themselves. This allows you to decide if the opportunity meets your 'go' requirements.

You might consider the following:

- *Delivery timeframe (urgent/not urgent/can you physically do it?)*
- *Purpose of the work (win business, build profile, build content library/gain experience/ make cash quickly)*
- *Whether the client has clear communication guidelines around their business/brand*
- *Budget expectations*
- *Decision maker (who)*
- *Care factor for conscious content.*

Write down at least five questions you can ask prospective clients before agreeing to submit a proposal or quote for work.

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....
4. ....
5. ....
6. ....
7. ....

8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

In keeping with the idea that you want to bring some systems to your business, can you transfer this into a standard operating procedure or email format? If you can, then put this on your to do list.

## 9

### You have a process for creating conscious content

Most clients often don't have a clear understanding about the process for producing content. They're even less aware of the process for producing conscious content. This means it's up to us – the conscious content creators – to show them the way. It's upon us to educate and raise awareness about the value of this process and the benefits of sharing their most meaningful messages and core content to connect with their audience, whoever it is.

There's no doubt you'll have a way of doing things, but have you taken time to break it down into steps that allow you to explain what you do in detail so your customers understand it and see the value? If you haven't, now is the time to start. By doing this you have a method you can bring to each project, allowing you to be more effective in your work, and help customers evolve their communication.

Write notes about your process here.

Step 1:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Step 2:

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Step 3:

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Need more steps? No problem. Grab yourself more paper or a whiteboard and sketch it out. Take the time to articulate your process. Ultimately, it becomes part of your marketing communication and your own business lexicon. Linking it back to conscious communication makes this an even more valuable exercise as it helps you gain clarity about your messages and the tone and the language in which you'll communicate them. This is not just for now. It's a long-term investment and will pay dividends into the future.

A clear process builds confidence in your service and what it provides to clients. Rather than feel uncertain and apologetic about what you do, you'll *know* there is huge value for your customers – and their customers too.

10

## You have templates and systems for frequently completed tasks

The creative within us might resist the need to bring order and systems to our business, however a little known fact is that discipline is a precursor to creativity. Ironically, it provides the space for us to be more creative in our work. You know you are ready for a conscious content creation business when you develop these templates and systems and use them.

Templates can be used for any written or verbal communication you share with your customers.

Maybe you have these already, but here are some examples:

- *The follow up email or phone call script*
- *The referral email or phone call script*
- *Emails for each stage of a project*
- *Emails for content handover to clients and other service providers*
- *Emails for invoicing and payment reminders*
- *Instructions for content reviews and providing feedback*
- *Follow up emails or phone calls at the completion of a project*
- *Project specific emails, for example, developing the content for a business website*
- *Content style guide*
- *Formats for blogs, email campaigns, websites, etc.*

Standardizing your internal processes is handy too. While you might be fluent in how you do things, what happens when you need to engage support? What then? Conscious content creators take time to develop their priority processes to create more freedom in their business. Some examples could be:

- *Your **sales process**, outlining the steps from initial contact to conversion.*
- *Your **project delivery process**, outlining how you progress from one project stage to the next. This can be linked to revenue and cashflow projections for your business.*
- *Your **customer communication process**, how you stay in contact with customers once the immediate project is completed. Over time, this becomes a valuable asset in your customer database.*

Never contemplated developing your own internal templates and processes? Great! Now is the perfect time to start.

Write down one template and one process you can develop in the next week.

One communication template I will develop is: .....

It will be used for .....

.....  
.....

One process I can standardize is: .....

It will be used for .....

.....

.....

## 11

### You have a content creators' hub

Contrary to popular belief, even though we're freelancers, we're not really 'flying solo'. Most of us work within a virtual (and sometimes) physical hub of fellow freelancers and larger businesses. Instead of thinking that we're in this alone, conscious content creators know they're 'in this thing together' with many others.

Content is often the pivot point upon which other work is built. A website needs content to be designed and developed. A video needs storyboarding and scripting to be filmed. A brochure needs content to be designed. An email campaign needs content to be constructed. However, content is often the afterthought when it shouldn't be.

It's wise then for conscious content creators to form a hub of like-minded creators with whom they can build mutually enduring and enriching professional relationships. Within your team, you might already have the following:

- *Graphic designers*
- *Videographers*
- *Web developers*
- *Email marketers*
- *SEO marketers*
- *Social media marketers*
- *Photographers*
- *Content writers (yes, you may need to work with other content writers).*

Identify any gaps in your team and write them in the space provided. You can make a note of when you'll contact them too.

My conscious content creation crew needs:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

## 12

### You follow the 7 principles of conscious content creation

There are many ways to produce content, however there are certain principles which are worth pursuing if it's conscious content you want to create. It's important to get a handle on these as you work with other business owners in the evolution of their business content.

Rate how you approach content development for your clients in the column on the far right.

Principle	What it means	Yes, I do this / No, I don't do this
Principle #1 - Your content resonates with your customer and their market	This means, at a deeper level, more than very superficial marketing speak, your content looks, sounds and feels like your customer's business. This is congruency and will only happen if you've taken time to get clear about important things like their most meaningful messages, language, tone and 'voice'.	
Principle #2 - Your content is true	This might seem to be a no-brainer, but you'd be surprised. With so much content available, much of lacks substance and accuracy. From a purely ethical perspective, creating content that is true is vitally important.	
Principle #3 - Your content make sense	Your content should be meaningful and purposeful. It's not just written for the sake of it. It can't be non-sensical – that is, it must be grammatically correct, be spelt correctly and so on. And the big one – it must make sense to your customer's audience. Care enough to express meaningful content in language that makes sense to the intended audience.	

Principle #4 - Your content tells stories	Everybody loves a story. Stories are memorable, sticky and they make business human, relatable, and personal. There are many ways stories can be told, with the style and tone varying in accordance with the business.
Principle #5 - Your content informs design	Before your customers proceed with design for their website, brochures, landing pages, or email campaigns, they need content first – not the other way around. You educate your customers this is the ideal way to get the best outcome for any content-related material.
Principle #6 - Your content is SEO-savvy	Whether we like it or not, our online content (including written and video content) needs to reflect sound search engine optimisation. Written just for SEO and it will be empty and vanilla; written without SEO your customers miss out on opportunities. You strike a careful balance between substance and SEO.
Principle #7 - Your content is integrated	The content you create for businesses should be integrated and intelligent, not disconnected and reinvented for every new platform. You create content that works and can be repurposed to support your customer’s business development.

How did you go? If you’ve identified areas where you could improve the way you create content, what do you consider the priority? Write it down here and make a commitment to bring this to your content creation from this point forward.

The priority area for me to focus on is: .....

.....

I will bring more of this to my content creation process by: .....

.....

## What’s it like being a conscious content creator?

Producing conscious content is not for everyone, but it is for freelancers who want to connect with their market in meaningful ways.

We live at a time during which people are technology connected, but increasingly disconnected personally and emotionally. If you're like me you see this play out every day of the week, everywhere around the globe. It is especially prevalent in the business arena where we've been conditioned to keep emotion, feeling, and connection out of the equation. But what if this conditioning no longer serves us or our customers? What if we could connect with them by awakening our inner communication genius and become empowered to enjoy more connected, enriched business and relationships? What if we no longer accepted the artificial separation between business and heart-centred communication?

There is much to be said for integrated, intelligent communication.

Feeling appreciated and valued is the essence of all meaningful relationships but it's almost entirely overlooked in communication and marketing, where it should really form an integral part. Just think of the intent behind most marketing, which is designed to cultivate a sense of lack and need in us. What if we flipped that and connected with people, inspired by a purpose to solve challenges and enrich people? Increasingly, there is a need for communication in business that is conscious, that is elevated beyond vanilla to valuable.

If you're a content creating freelancer who believes in what they do and is striving to make a difference, now is the ideal time to evolve the way you communicate with your market and the way your customers communicate with their market. This translates as caring communication and it is at the heart of all relationships, including business relationships.

Are you up for it? Are you a freelancer with an intentional purpose? If you are creating content, why not do so consciously? Yes, conscious content creation requires work – but it is so worth it.

Thank you for investing in yourself by downloading this workbook. And for caring enough about your clients to raise their awareness about developing their content consciously. Be sure to keep an eye on your inbox. I'll be sharing other valuable insights and actionable steps that will help you develop a business around conscious content creation. The good news is, you're not travelling solo on this evolution. Stay with me and we'll walk it together.

We've got this!

