



Does your water industry writer have these 5 key skills?

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Introduction

Are you looking for a freelance writer?

There comes a time in the life of every business when you realize you need a freelance writer. A time when your key personnel are busy doing the things they do best. The things that build your business and sell your products.

You know marketing today is focused on the Internet as a way to reach potential customers. And the internet is focused on content. You have developed a content marketing strategy. You have worked up a content calendar.

Now you need a freelance content writer. How do you choose the best writer for water industry content marketing? In this article, we explore 5 key skills your content writer should have in spades.

Skill #1: Writing Well

It would seem obvious but the most important skill you want in a content writer is the ability to write well. The ability to write clearly and concisely. But it's more than that, isn't it? The information you need to convey to your prospects is complex. It's scientific. It's technical. And the language used in water industry content to provide this complex, scientific, and technical information is often unreadable. That is- it's hard to understand.

A few things can make it hard to understand. The most likely is because the language isn't simple enough. And that's important because simpler is easier to understand. Albert Einstein said, "If you can't explain it simply, you don't understand it well enough."

How do you know when your content is readable? It's something called the Flesch Kincaid (FK) score. It is a measure of the complexity of the text. The score is derived from an analysis of the length of sentences, sentences per paragraph, and the common nature of the words.

READABILITY

FK SCORE STATS FROM
TEXT ON 10 WATER
INDUSTRY WEBSITES:

HIGH	21.1
MEAN	15.9
MEDIAN	16
LOW	11.2

For clear communication, as you want in your marketing content, an FK score of less than 8 is recommended. In a random sampling of ten water industry websites, the average FK score was 16.

The other important attribute of a readable asset is structure. The content needs to be presented in a logical sequence that draws the reader, your prospect, right through to the end. To the call to action.

The structure is unique to the type of content, which is unique to the audience. And the audience changes as they progress through the water industry sales funnel.

Skill #1, then, for a content writer in the water industry is the ability to write well. The ability to convey complex scientific and technical information in clear concise language.

SIMPLICITY

IF YOU CAN'T
EXPLAIN IT SIMPLY,
YOU DON'T
UNDERSTAND IT
WELL ENOUGH

ALBERT EINSTEIN

Skill #2: Water Knowledge

Another important trait you want in a content writer is water knowledge. You need someone who knows your industry. You shouldn't have to explain the difference between an anaerobic digester and a clarifier. Or the difference between removing oils and grease from effluent and lowering the BOD.

Integrated wastewater management is complex. Wouldn't it be great to find a writer that understood the water industry? Understood water quality? Understood wastewater treatment and use? Understood water quality regulation?

A writer for the water industry must be able to interpret the unique jargon. As with everything else in the water industry, the jargon is complex. There is the language used by academic researchers. There is the terminology used by engineers. There is the semantics of legislation. The writer you need understands and interprets this jargon. And translates it into simple terms.

A writer for the water industry must be able to explain and illustrate large data sets. Graphs, tables, conceptual diagrams, infographics. All these tools can help your audience understand complex information. Your writer must be able to use these tools to accurately relay your data. That's the kind of writer that could deliver powerful, persuasive content for the water industry.

JARGON

WORDS AND PHRASES USED BY PARTICULAR GROUPS OF PEOPLE, ESP. IN THEIR WORK, THAT ARE NOT GENERALLY UNDERSTOOD.

CAMBRIDGE
DICTIONARY

Skill #3: Understands the Water Industry Audience

A key skill crucial to being able to write persuasively is the ability to understand your audience. In the water industry, the sales funnel is long. There are many people involved in every purchase.

Your writer needs to understand who your prospects are and how their personas change through the funnel. At each stage of the funnel, these people have different information needs. Different pain points.

Wouldn't it be great to find a writer who knows your prospects and their pain points? Pain points that your products and services help alleviate. Things like:

- Water supply – quality and cost
- Wastewater - quality vs. disposal costs
- Compliance with water quality discharge standards.

Water quality is important to your prospects. It influences how the wastewater is treated and how it can be used. Water quality determines wastewater discharge options. Water quality impacts the bottom line of your prospects' business.

AUDIENCE

WHEN YOU TRY
TO TALK TO
EVERYONE, YOU
TALK TO NO
ONE

OLD MARKETING
SAYING

But there is something else about your prospects that's harder to pin down. It's their desire to do the right thing. To be involved in managing water sustainably. To be contributing to our environmental resilience.

There is no reason why your prospects should not be seen doing the right thing. You want a writer that understands that. A writer that can weave that story of resilience and sustainability into every white paper, every case study.

Finding a writer that understands your audience may be difficult, but you will be glad you did.

Skill #4: Research Skills

As we have gone through critical skills for writers there is one you may not have thought about. Research skills. You need a writer able to find the background information that supports your solution. Information may be in:

- Refereed journal articles
- Conference proceedings
- Industry publications
- Industry blogs.

You need a writer that can synthesize and summarize all that information. Someone who can take complex ideas and explain them simply.

Your prospects don't really want to know all the intricate details. They do want to know that the technology is proven. They want to have it explained clearly and simply.

A water industry writer needs to be able to find the evidence that proves your process. Who stays abreast of the latest developments in the scientific literature. Who can take complex ideas and explain them in clear and simple terms.

Skill #5: Planning Skills

Writers have a dubious reputation when it comes to planning and project management. You need a writer who can plan your content project and carry out that plan. You need to know your content investment, which may be significant, will provide a good ROI.

You need to make sure that your efforts are focused on achieving business objectives. It's not about the content. It's about the business results that the content can achieve.

What should be in the plan?

- **Goals:** Ensure the content will align with your content marketing goals.
- **Audience:** Be clear about your target audience.
- **Content asset:** Make sure the type of content is right for the target audience.
- **Call to action:** Identify what you want the prospect to do after accessing the content.
- **Keywords:** List keywords your target audience is searching for.
- **Research:** Describe sources for further research.
- **Overview:** Outline a high-level overview of the content.
- **Review:** Streamline the review process by identifying all reviewers in the plan.



Each content asset must be planned. You should find a writer that appreciates the importance of planning. A writer who can help you plan the project and then can execute that plan.

Conclusion

We have explored 5 key skills your water industry writer should have:

- Skill 1: Writing well. *Able to convey complex scientific and technical information in clear concise language.*
- Skill 2: Water knowledge. *Able to explain and illustrate large data sets using graphs, tables, conceptual diagrams, infographics.*
- Skill 3: Understands the water industry audience. *Knows your prospects' pain points and understands how your audience can change through the sales funnel.*
- Skill 4: Research skills. *Able to find the evidence that proves your process and translate complex jargon into plain language.*
- Skill 5: Planning skills. *Able to plan and execute the project effectively and efficiently.*

If you want to build awareness of your products and services, you must publish quality content. Of course, your company is full of talented people. They all work hard in their core areas. Pulling people out of productive roles to write content may not be cost effective.

In that case, hiring a freelance writer is the best option. Finding a writer is easy. Finding a good, much less an excellent one, is tough.

So, next time you're looking for a freelance writer, be sure to check for the five skills we've looked at here.

To keep these key skills in mind, download and print the handy infographic:

[INFOGRAPHIC] 5 Key Skills You Want in a Water Industry Writer

<https://www.watercopy.com/landing-page-water-industry-writer-infographic/>

Contact WaterCopy for all your content writing requirements.

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