

12 Affordable* Digital Content Marketing Tools

A Starter Kit for Nonprofits on a Budget

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*Eight of the vendors offer FREE versions

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Introduction

Trying to make sense of all the *digital content marketing tools* out there just might make you want to forget the idea of self publishing.

Unfortunately, that's what too many nonprofits organizations do. Build a website and then disregard the other possibilities that digital communication offers.

"Why is this important," you might ask?

It's that you have things to say: Things about your nonprofit that are indispensable to differentiating yourself, acquiring new donors or volunteers, and keeping current stakeholders informed.

While tools are not a substitute for well-concieved ideas and effective communication, you do need to select the right channels for your messages. And with all of the hubbub surrounding which tools are the hippest, the selection process can be downright dizzying.

But as Mark Twain once said, "The secret of getting ahead is getting started."

And as it happens, that's the purpose of this eBook—helping you get started.

Each page describes one tool for one specific purpose. No choices. No comparisons. Just the one. And to make things even easier, the tools are organized into three content categories: create, distribute and manage.

In the end, a suggested tool may not be best for your needs. But if you're just starting out, it will be sufficient... it will get you moving in the right direction... and it will be affordable.

Most important, you won't have to seek out and compare an ever-growing menagerie of offerings.

Then, once you become familiar with what these tools do, you will get a better sense of the features and functions you'll need to streamline your own content process.

Finally, a disclaimer: I am not affiliated with any of the tool vendors mentioned here. My choices are my own. I've made them from personal experience, from reviews I've read, from researching feature sets, and from recommendations offered by people I trust.

And finally, finally: Be sure to read the privacy and terms-and-conditions statements on each tool's website. They will inform you of any copyright restrictions as well as any differences between paid and unpaid subscriptions.

And the last finally: All tool prices listed are accurate as of publication of this eBook. If they go up, they go up.

Good luck!

All the Best,

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1

Visual Design

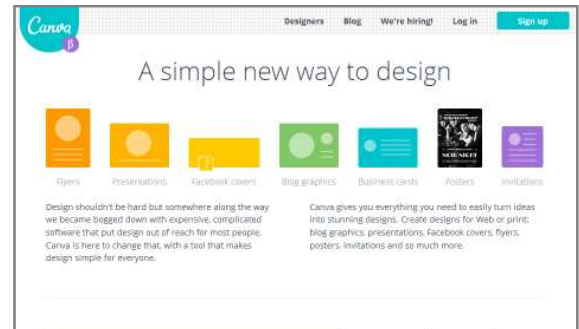
www.canva.com

Name: Canva

Cost: Free

What it does:

This is a design tool for editing photos, and creating one-off web and document graphics. It offers a drag-and-drop interface along with an extensive collection of images and layout templates. The collaboration feature lets you work on projects with others.



Why use it:

A nifty alternative if you're a creative type but cannot justify the higher-priced design or photo software. You can create one-page graphics such as Instagram® and blog images, flyers, posters, and online banners, as well as graphics for document and presentation templates.

Notes:

- Stock image licenses are \$1 each.
- User login is required via a Canva account or Facebook.
- May not be appropriate for creating logos or other images you want to own or resell.

2

Narrated Presentations

Name: Brainshark

Cost: Freemium version called *myBrainshark*

What it does:

Lets you create and share narrated presentations by adding voiceovers to slidesets, documents, videos and photo albums. You can then embed the presentations on your website, export them to YouTube® and distribute URLs via email and social media. Basic analytics track the number of presentation views.



Why use it:

Narrated presentations are simpler to produce than videos and more compelling than slides alone. For example, pull together a 5-minute custom presentation and email it to a prospective customer or donor. Use it to summarize your latest whitepaper, prerecord and distribute a webinar, or communicate to your employees.

Notes:

- User registration is required.
- Packages available for sales, marketing, and training.
- Subscription prices for advanced features can be significant.

3

Video Call Recorder

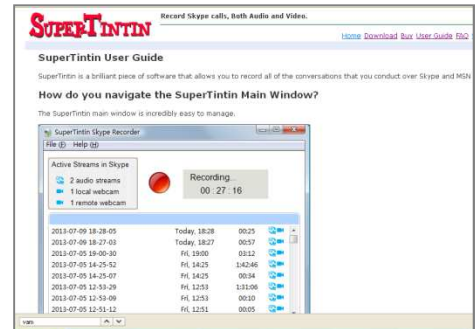
www.supertintin.com

Name: SuperTinTin

Cost: \$29.95

What it does:

This downloadable software application records Skype calls (video and audio) from a Microsoft Windows PC. Records up to 10 participants per call. Offers caller placement options, including picture-in-picture, side-by-side, and single caller. Also offers a choice of video resolution up to 720P.



Why use it:

Video interviews can enhance your organization's marketing strategy. This tool allows you to share candid discussions in a one-on-one or roundtable format regardless of geographic location. Consider interviews with subject matter experts, authors, customers and strategic partners. Or with key internal employees such as executives, strategists, technologists and customer service representatives.

Notes:

- **Free** version available with 5 minute recording limit
- Mac users should consider ecamm (www.ecamm.com)

4

Surveys

Name: SurveyMonkey

Cost: Free

What it does:

Lets you build online surveys, share the survey URL with your audience, view consolidated survey data, and analyze results. Offers 15 built-in question types. Results can be viewed in variety of formats: graphs, pie charts, bars, etc. There is also a mobile app for report viewing.

www.surveymonkey.com



Why use it:

Quantitative research helps you better understand issues such as customer/donor satisfaction, organizational challenges, best and worst practices, and trends. Data can be used as a starting point for follow-up qualitative research or to test a hypothesis. Such studies can form the basis for content campaigns that grow your organization's reputation and attract new business.

Notes:

- **Free** version limited to 10 questions and 100 responses.
- Fee-based versions begin at \$24/month and feature unlimited questions/responses and custom branding.
- Pre-selected target audiences available for an added fee.

5

Infographics

Name: Piktochart

Cost: \$29/month

What it does:

This tool is specifically designed to create infographics. After choosing a theme, use the drag-and-drop chart feature to add sections, icons, text, chart types, and images. Data is entered in spreadsheet format, which automatically generates the charts. The final infographic can be published as a graphic file, presentation or print file.

Why use it:

Visual in concept, infographics quickly convey meaning for a variety of information categories such as complex ideas, data visualization, research analysis, processes and procedures, decision-making, comparisons, etc. Infographics are easily sharable and can be used to generate issue awareness, describe how your organization works, or as a summary of other content such as articles and presentations.

Notes:

- Reduced rates when paid on a quarterly or yearly basis.
- Lower rates for nonprofit and educational organizations.

www.piktochart.com



6

Blogging

Name: WordPress

Cost: Free

What it does:

This platform is for creating and hosting blogs. You can choose a design theme from the WordPress library or build a custom theme. Features include automatic sharing of articles to social media and reader comment management. Site statistics include view counts, reader locations, social sharing, and inbound links to each post.

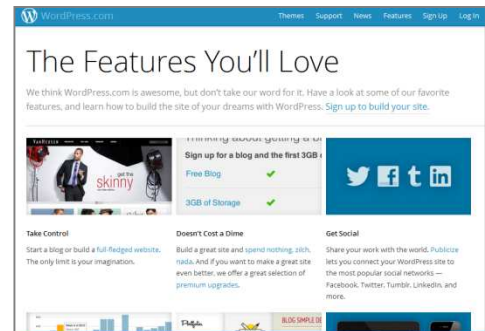
Why use it:

Blogging lets you communicate your ideas, insights, advice and observations on a regular basis. It can be the catalyst for generating inquiries and referrals, establishing your reputation as an expert, clarifying your point of view, strengthening search engine ranking, and building a community. Blogging provides a forum for promoting, explaining and summarizing other content.

Notes:

- WordPress can also be used to build an entire website on wordpress.com or your own web hosting service
- Fee-based options include domain mapping, extra storage space and premium themes.
- Apps are available for creating posts using mobile devices

www.wordpress.com



7

Landing Pages

www.unbounce.com

Name: Unbounce

Cost: From \$49/month

What it does:

Generate, test and deploy website landing pages. Unbounce offers a drag-and-drop interface. You can create your own design or select from the template library. It tracks page views and conversion statistics. And it integrates with a variety of third-party marketing and communication apps. The automatic A/B testing feature lets you see which page design works best.



Why use it:

A website landing page is where you send visitors from sources such as PPC ads, banner ads, emails, blog posts and call-to-action buttons. The page describes an offer or requests an action (e.g., donation) and provides a form to capture relevant information. Landing pages increase conversion by focusing the visitor's attention on the value of the specific offer or action.

Notes:

- Three pricing levels based on visitor count and features
- Landing pages reside on Unbounce's web servers
- Subscription charges begin after 30-day free trial
- Multi-user and private domain options are available

8

Email Service Provider

www.aweber.com

Name: AWeber

Cost: From \$19/month

What it does:

Design, create and send marketing emails to subscriber lists. Use custom HTML designs or select from AWeber's template library. Schedule email delivery in advance. Autoresponder feature lets you send timed, follow-up emails to new subscribers. Tracking feature lets you see who opened emails and clicked through on links. Includes customizable signup forms you can add to your website.



Why use it:

Useful for sending eNewsletters, offers, donation requests, sales promotions, and informational updates. The service handles subscribe/unsubscribe operations and maximizes deliverability by sending email from IP addresses known to ISPs. The autoresponder feature helps nurture new subscribers with additional content.

Notes:

- Pricing includes unlimited emails.
- Higher rates for subscriber counts above 500
- Discounts for advanced payments (six-month or yearly)

9

Live Webinars

www.anymeeting.com

Name: AnyMeeting

Cost: \$18/month for 25 attendees

What it does:

Broadcasts live presentations, including the ability to share documents and presentation slides, conduct polls, answer questions and distribute presentation copies. Attendees can listen via computer or phone. Support for post-webinar surveys and access to webinar recordings. Includes attendee registration.



Why use it:

Webinars offer a convenient way to bring together geographically-dispersed audiences. Useful for conducting sales, marketing and training events. Also to make product/service announcements, introduce new research or promote related content. Webinars help generate awareness and demand as well as enhance communication with customers, sponsors and partners.

Notes:

- **Free** version is available, but displays paid advertising on webinar and registration pages.
- Pro versions are ad-free and include live support.
- Subscriptions can be paid on a monthly or yearly basis

10

Keyword Research

www.wordtracker.com

Name: Wordtracker

Cost: From \$27/month

What it does:

Returns up to 1,000 relevant keyword alternatives based on your initial search. For each alternative, Wordtracker displays its competitive level, effectiveness index, and a set of “long tail” alternatives. This information helps determine the cost/benefit tradeoff for each keyword option.

Why use it:

Keyword research is an essential component of search engine optimization (SEO). It lets you discover opportunities for keywords and subject matter that are relevant to both your business and your intended audiences. You can then place keywords in web pages, digital content, and pay-per-click (PPC) advertising.

Notes:

- 7-day free trial is available.
- Higher-priced plans return more alternatives per query.
- Must purchase a minimum three-month subscription.

With **Wordtracker**, you're going to get **better results** from your SEO efforts

Here are four reasons why:

1

Simply put, Wordtracker's vast database gives you more keywords

So you have more opportunities to attract new customers or discover fruitful new markets.

2

Wordtracker takes the pain (and the spreadsheets) out of keyword research

By helping you easily organize your information, you can access your data from any connected computer or device, at any time, anywhere in the world.

11

Social Media Management

www.hootsuite.com

Name: HootSuite

Cost: From \$8.99/month

What it does:

Centralizes control of multiple social media accounts. Schedules updates according to time, geography and language. Listens for keywords and mentions over time. Segments follower lists. Creates analytic reports for analyzing ongoing activity.



Why use it:

HootSuite consolidates activity across multiple social media platforms. Whether or not your organization is proactively engaged in social media, it offers the ability to gather intelligence data relevant to your organization, industry, competitors, partners, customers and influencers.

Notes:

- **Free** version with limited capabilities offers a good starting point and may be sufficient for some businesses.
- Mobile apps are available for Apple and Android.
- Social network support includes Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+, and foursquare.

12

Website Measurement

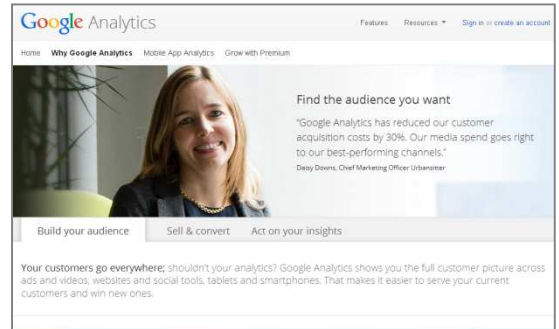
www.google.com/analytics

Name: Google Analytics

Cost: Free

What it does:

Captures and displays statistics showing visitor interaction with your website, including how they got there, what content they viewed, and how long they remained. Keeps track of visitors' locations and how often they return. Useful for conducting A/B testing on pages, tracking content downloads and assessing individual campaigns.



Why use it:

Measure and analyze how well your website and related content performs against business objectives. You can observe the paths and actions that visitors take and use this data to optimize your site layout, content, offers and purchasing/donation process. In addition, you can assess the impact and ROI of marketing campaigns, promotions, PPC ads, social sharing and SEO on purchases, registrations or other types of visitor conversions.

Notes:

- Must install JavaScript code snippet into every page you wish to track

About Michael Selissen

I focus exclusively on helping nonprofit organizations create visual stories that inform, inspire and engage.

Using a combination of documentary photography, writing and digital marketing processes, you get campaigns that:

- Acquire and retain donors
- Grow brand awareness
- Strengthen community engagement
- Keep board members informed

I have more than 15 years of marketing experience, with eight as an independent consultant, plus 25 years as a photographer. I've had numerous photographic exhibits and my writing has appeared in executive blogs and national trade publications.

To find out how you can communicate your mission more effectively, read about my [Visual Storytelling Services](#) for Nonprofits.

And you can connect with me...

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- ✓ By email: michael@casemountain.com
- ✓ On LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/mselissen