# Content Calendar Planning Framework

How to build a content calendar, the stages every row moves through, the six calendar types and a weekly health check.

## 01 Build one in five steps

1. **Set a cadence you can sustain**
   Pick the frequency you could hold through a bad month. One solid piece a week beats five rushed ones.

2. **Gather topics from demand**
   Keyword research, questions from sales calls, repeated objections, and gaps competitors already rank for.

3. **Map topics to real dates**
   Give every piece a publish date, then work backwards to the brief, draft and review deadlines.

4. **Assign one named owner per row**
   Unassigned content is content that never ships.

5. **Reserve a refresh slot**
   Book one slot in four for updating pages that are already live.

## 02 The stages every row moves through

| STATUS | WHAT IT MEANS |
|---|---|
| **Idea** | Working title and the question the piece answers |
| **Briefed** | Owner has written audience, keyword, angle and outline |
| **Drafting** | Draft deadline set backwards from the publish date |
| **Review** | Six rows stuck here for two weeks: review is the bottleneck |
| **Scheduled** | Finished piece is in the CMS or scheduler |
| **Live** | Published, with the live URL added to the row |
| **Updating** | A booked refresh of an older live page |

## 03 Six types of content calendar

### Editorial (blog)

- Articles, guides and landing pages
- Planned a month or a quarter ahead

### Social media

- Posts by platform, often by day and time
- Short lead times, many small rows

### Email and newsletter

- Each send, its segment and featured content

### Campaign or launch

- One launch or event, planned backwards from a fixed date

### Integrated marketing

- Every channel in one view, lined up by week

### Creator

- Video or podcast work
- Recording, editing and publishing dated on one row

## 04 The rule to remember

> *Nothing gets a date until it has an owner. A row with a date and no name is a wish.*

## 05 Calendar health check

- ☑ Every row has one named owner and a real publish date
- ☑ Each row names the question it answers, written out in full
- ☑ One month planned in firm detail, the next quarter looser
- ☑ One slot in four booked for refreshes
- ☑ Each repurposed cut has its own row and date
- ☑ Weekly: next three rows checked, slipped rows moved
- ☑ Monthly: a new block of rows added
- ☑ Cadence matches what you manage in your worst week

## 06 Plan the calendar for AI search

1. **Source rows from questions**
   Split a buyer question into the narrower ones an assistant searches, such as cost and comparisons. Each can be a row.
2. **Brief the answer first**
   A one- or two-sentence answer directly under a heading worded like the question.

3 **Plan clusters**
A pillar page and its supporting pages as linked rows. This shows where two pieces would compete for one question.

4 **Add a Cited column**
Record whether assistants cite each live page. Bing Webmaster Tools reports Copilot citations.

5 **Refresh cited pages first**
Assistants favour pages that look current, so cited pages get the refresh slots.

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Full guide: **mustardseedmt.com/learning-center/what-is-a-content-calendar**

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