



SampleCo Content Strategy

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INTRODUCTION

Effective web content starts with a solid content strategy.

Before we can write compelling content for the SampleCo website, we first need to get clear on a few things. Who are we trying to reach with the website, and what do these people care about? We also need to define our content objectives—what we want to say, and what we hope these words will accomplish.

A content strategy explores all of these things and more. It aligns everyone working the project with common goals, so when it's time to start writing content, we're able to tell a consistent and compelling story.

This content strategy document will:

- Present SampleCo's **business goal**, and how we'll use web content to help achieve this objective
- Establish **target audience** for SampleCo.com, and take a close look at what these people need and want
- Introduce a **core strategy statement** that clarifies the purpose the SampleCo website
- Present **key messages** that serve both our business goal and our target audience
- Establish the **brand personality and voice** for SampleCo.com
- Share the **web writing best practices** we'll use to craft compelling content
- Give **next steps**

This is an internal document that will serve as a guide for writing content for the updated SampleCo website. It can be extended to other communications, too, including social media, email campaigns, sales calls, print materials and in-person interactions.

PROJECT OVERVIEW & OBJECTIVES

SampleCo is an intuitive, web-based employee scheduling and time-tracking app. This SaaS gives companies an easy, reliable, affordable way to streamline and automate their workforce operations.

The present-day website has a healthy influx of traffic, but a relatively low percentage of these visitors sign up for SampleCo. Currently, only about 1% of unique visitors convert to a free trial. To address this, **SampleCo's primary business goal is to improve conversion rates**, while continuing to attract new prospects.

The company has engaged Plumlines and other strategic partners to help maximize SampleCo's potential to convert leads.

Content strategy is just one part of the picture

Improving customer engagement depends on multiple factors, including search engine optimization/keywords, paid search, and targeted email and social media campaigns. Also crucial: A website that's written, structured, and designed to clearly communicate the value of SampleCo and motivate users to sign up. A strategically planned website, crafted with user needs in mind, will work in concert with other tactics (SEO, SEM, outreach campaigns) to drive results.

WEB CONTENT GOALS

To address SampleCo's primary business goal of improving conversion rates, the company's website needs to:

- Clearly communicate how SampleCo addresses common pain points around employee scheduling and time tracking
- Present a compelling case for how SampleCo makes life easier for both employers and employees
- Motivate site visitors to start a free trial
- Motivate free trial users to sign up for paid access to SampleCo
- Employ a website structure (IA) that is intuitive for users to navigate
- Be written in a voice that is user-centric
- Use a "just enough" approach with information, and avoid bogging down users with too many details

TARGET AUDIENCES

The SampleCo website has one primary target audience: employers. Our job is to make it easy for employers visiting the site to quickly understand what SampleCo offers, why it's of value to them, quell any doubts, and even answer questions they didn't know they had. And of course, we want to motivate them to start a free trial and eventually sign up for paid access.

But before we can create content that meets—or even anticipates—the needs of our target audience, we must first understand what makes them tick. Below is an in-depth exploration of employer needs, behaviors, beliefs, concerns and motivators.

A word about employees

Employees are important users of the SampleCo app, but they don't buy it—their employers do. As SampleCo.com primarily serves as sales tool for SampleCo, employees don't have much reason to come to the website.

Employees aren't a target audience for the site, but it's still important for us to understand their pain points and motivators. Companies that buy SampleCo want their staff members to use the app willingly. By proving that the app is easy for workers to use, and that SampleCo resolves employee pain points, we'll help to convince employers that they'll get the employee buy-in and engagement they're hoping for.

Target Audience: Employers

Who are they

This audience includes:

- Operations managers, HR staff and administrative assistants for medium-sized businesses (30 – 200 employees)
- Owners of micro and small businesses (2 – 30 employees)
- Operations managers, HR managers and administrative assistants for large businesses

Many of SampleCo's prospective customers are still using spreadsheets (i.e. Excel or Google Sheets) to create employee schedules and track time. Some employers come to SampleCo site as referrals from BambooHR, one of our integration partners. Most of these audience members are in their mid 30s to late 40s.

The present-day SampleCo website has landing pages for employers in 14 different industries. But a May 2018 audience analysis revealed that the lion's share of SampleCo's customers come from just four market segments:

- Services (41%)
- Retail (17%)
- Health care (11%)
- Hospitality (11%)

Going forward, instead of trying to reach employers in 14 industries, SampleCo will prioritize three areas: Services, Retail, and Health & Wellness.

What employers want and need:

- A reliable, easy way to create work schedules and track employee time

Concerns, questions, beliefs and behaviors this audience may have:

- How is SampleCo better than the spreadsheet I currently use? My system isn't perfect, but I'm used to it. It would be a hassle to switch to a new system.
- I'm busy. I'm not sure I have time to learn a new system.
- Why should I pay for an app when I can use my spreadsheet for free?
- How can SampleCo save me time and money?
- How much does SampleCo cost?
- Does this work with the HR tools I already use?
- How is SampleCo better than the other scheduling and time-tracking tools out there?
- I need approval from my boss before I can sign up for SampleCo.
- I want to set up by BambooHR or Gusto account first, then I'll start the SampleCo trial.
- We don't have the budget to pay for full access to SampleCo.

Employers come to SampleCo website to:

- Learn what SampleCo has to offer, how it works, and how much a subscription costs
- See how SampleCo has helped people like them (i.e. testimonials)
- Start a free trial of SampleCo
- Sign up for paid access after a free trial ends

After visiting the SampleCo website, we want employers to:

- Start a free trial of SampleCo
- Sign up for paid access after a free trial ends
- Help spread the word about SampleCo

Audience: Employees

Who are they

This audience includes:

- Employees of small and medium-sized businesses
- Primarily people in service jobs, retail, and health & wellness roles

As stated a couple of pages back, employees aren't a target audience for the website. But they will be using the SampleCo app that their employers purchase. They'll access the app to clock in and out, request schedule changes, trade shifts and find shift replacements, and request paid time off.

Employees work with the scheduling and time tracking systems their employers have in place, which are varied. They may need to check an emailed Excel doc or Google sheet to find out when they're scheduled to work. They may track time on a weekly timesheet, or an old-school punch clock. Some employees have used time tracking and shift scheduling apps before.

What this audience wants and needs:

- An easy way to clock in and out
- A simple way to see their upcoming shifts, request shift changes and time off, and find replacements for shifts

Concerns, questions, beliefs and behaviors this audience may have:

- Filling out timesheets can be a pain.
- If there's an easier way to track my time, I'm all for it.
- If there's an easier way to request shift changes and PTO, I'm all for that, too.

CORE STRATEGY STATEMENT

A core strategy statement is a single sentence that clearly expresses what your web presence offers, to whom, and to what aim. It marries your business goal with audience needs. This brief statement helps to unite the entire project team around a common vision, so everyone can move forward together.

While a core strategy statement primarily serves as the guiding light for a website, it can often be extended to other communications including email campaigns, social media, print materials and in-person interactions.

Core strategy statement for SampleCo.com:

To motivate prospective customers to sign up for SampleCo, the website will acknowledge pain points around employee scheduling and time tracking, and present SampleCo as the solution to those problems.

KEY MESSAGES

Key messages are the main ideas we want website visitors to absorb. Ideally, these statements blend user needs with business goals, for a win-win. Sometimes, key messages can be used word-for-word in website copy, but more often, they're merely used as guide for writing user-facing content.

There are a lot of persuasive things we can say to employers to convince them of the power of SampleCo—and we will. But given what we know about our prospective customers, there are three overarching ideas we want to be sure they take away from the SampleCo website:

1. SampleCo makes employee scheduling and time tracking easy
2. SampleCo saves you time and money
3. SampleCo is better than spreadsheets

Expanded key messages

The statements below elaborate on the three overarching key messages, and present additional user benefits.

SampleCo makes employee scheduling and time tracking easy

Instead of juggling multiple spreadsheets and countless emails, handle all of your scheduling and time-tracking tasks from one powerful dashboard. Access SampleCo from any computer or mobile device. Set up SampleCo and start using it in minutes. SampleCo is user-friendly—no training required.

SampleCo saves time.

SampleCo helps you dramatically reduce the time you spend creating employee schedules and managing timesheets. SampleCo automates tasks that you currently do by hand, which saves you hours every week.

SampleCo saves money.

Time is money, and you already know that SampleCo saves you that. But there are other ways SampleCo helps you cut costs. Use SampleCo to accurately forecast traffic and sales, so you can schedule the right number of employees for each week. Book only the staff you need, so you don't end up paying for surplus staff.

Still using spreadsheets? It's time to switch.

Manually scheduling shifts and tracking employee time on a spreadsheet is time-consuming and error prone. SampleCo lets you manage all of your scheduling and timekeeping in one online location. See at a glance who's at work and who's late. Adjust schedules with just a few swipes. Once you switch to SampleCo, you'll never look back.

SampleCo works with the tools you already use.

Our app plays well with others. Easily integrate SampleCo with your existing HR, payroll and point-of-sale tools. Use with BambooHR, Gusto, QuickBooks and more.

Your employees will love SampleCo, too

SampleCo makes life easier for everyone. From their smartphones, employees can easily clock in and out, request shift changes, ask for time off, and more. Smart features prevent "buddy punching" and ensure that staff can only clock in and out when they're actually at work.

Try SampleCo for free.

Start your free 14-day trial of SampleCo. No credit card required.

Need support? We're here.

SampleCo customer service is available 24 hours, 5 days a week. Get support immediately via chat or phone. Or send us an email and we'll reply within minutes, not days. If your employees need help with time tracking, help is just a click away. Customer support is always free.

BRAND PERSONALITY AND VOICE

The content on SampleCo.com is written in a voice that is:

- **Friendly and conversational**, yet professional.
- **Helpful**, anticipating user needs and questions.
- **Down to earth**, using a just-enough approach with information and terminology.
- **Concise**, not exhaustive.

After visiting SampleCo.com, we want prospective customers to feel:

- Empowered
- Reassured
- Confident
- Enthusiastic

CONSISTENT TERMINOLOGY

Synonyms can help keep messaging fresh, and in general it's fine to use them. But when we're referring to key elements of SampleCo, it's important to use consistent terminology.

Ideally, we use this terminology across all SampleCo communications, including the website, social media posts and user-facing emails. This list of terms is still growing, and we can add to it as needed.

Term	Notes
Log in	When used as a verb/CTA, it's two words: Log in When used as a noun or adjective (login page) it's one word: Login Another example: Log in with your login and password. Yes: Log in to SampleCo Enter your login and password No: Sign in to SampleCo
Sign up	Yes: Sign up for SampleCo No: Buy a SampleCo subscription

	Subscribe to SampleCo Become a member Buy a membership
Start your free trial	Yes: Start your free 14-day trial of SampleCo No: Sign up for a free trial

SITE ARCHITECTURE (IA)

A well-structured website makes visitors feel like they've come to the right place. A site with great IA quickly and clearly directs users to the information they need. The current SampleCo IA is a bit confusing to navigate, and could be organized in a more user-centric way.

I think we should work together to make adjustments to the sitemap. Here are a few questions to kick off that collaboration:

- Could the Scheduling and Time Tracking pages live under one page called How it Works (which would provide an overview of SampleCo as a whole)? Or do you feel it's important to keep these two separate pages in the top navigation?
- Can we pull the Blog up into the top navigation?
- Should some of the Features pages (like Facial Recognition Time Clock and PTO) live under Time Tracking or Scheduling? The way these features are presented makes them seem like unique apps.