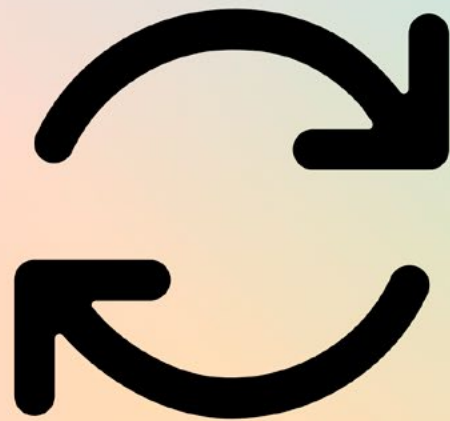


HOW TO DO BETTER CONTENT MARKETING

# Repurposing and Improving Existing Content



Most brands sit atop a mountain of existing content. Yet they continue to crank out fresh pieces every time they “need something new.” Whether they’re scrambling to fill an unexpected gap in the marketing calendar or simply want to stand out against the competition, the directive is “tell the content team to create more.”

Publishing fresh, relevant, engaging content is the core of any successful content marketing program. But the most effective approach isn’t necessarily starting from scratch with every piece.

If your content team feels too much like a “[content vending machine](#),” try repurposing and improving existing content to save time, energy, and resources while still driving impact.

Repurposing content amplifies the footprint of your website, helping you reach new audiences and re-engage audiences who may have gone dark. And most importantly, it maximizes your content team’s efforts rather than starting from square one every time you want to publish something.



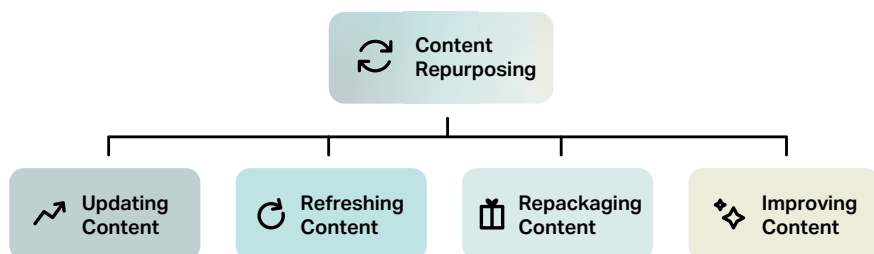
**Remember, it doesn't matter how many times you hit "publish."  
What matters is how much impact your content creates.**

If your team isn't already repurposing content on a regular basis, now's the time to [audit your content library](#) and start leveraging what's already there. Pro tip: Use this [step-by-step guide](#) to perform a content audit and identify what needs updating.

Once you've taken stock of your library and created actionable steps for improvement, then you can get to work "nine livesing" your content. In Part 5 of our [How to Do Better Content Marketing series](#), we'll discuss the specifics of repurposing and improving existing content to create more [evergreen pieces](#) within your archive. Let's get started.

## What does it mean to repurpose content?

Repurposing content means reimagining an existing piece—into new forms, into new channels. Updating, refreshing, repackaging, and improving content all fall under the "[content repurposing](#)" umbrella.



Content repurposing can be breaking up a white paper into a series of 30-second videos, creating a blog post from a well-attended webinar, or diversifying the distribution channels for a successful piece of content—like running those short videos for a paid LinkedIn campaign.

Content repurposing also includes lower-lift strategies, like repackaging pieces into "best of" lists or creating meta-analysis reports.



## The case for repurposing content—and five benefits

Why start from scratch if you can get the same or better results from repurposing existing content? Here's more on why you should start doing this today.

### **Your team has already done the heavy lifting**

More than [50%](#) of bloggers say they spend more than three hours creating each post. When you consider repurposing content, think how much time your team could save. The article is already written, the webinar recorded, the keywords and target audience identified. With all that work done, you'll extend the ROI of the original piece by finding a new way to present the information.

### **Repurposed content fills gaps between campaigns**

The best pieces to repurpose are usually related to [evergreen topics](#), those that garner significant attention long after they're posted. This material isn't tied to a specific news event or short-lived trend, so it can be incorporated into your content strategy at any time—like that month between the product launch campaign and the holiday ramp-up. The goal is to have four or five pieces of repurposed, evergreen content in your library that you can promote at will.

### **Repurposing content builds on the original engagement**

No matter the level of engagement the original content already has, repurposing it will only improve its performance. Consider your popular content, like that one blog post that consistently drives significant traffic month over month. If it's clear people find the information engaging, instead of simply posting it to your social channels every few weeks, use the main points to create something new in a channel you're trying to grow.



## **The bigger your library, the more nimble you are**

Your archive is extensive, you've covered a lot of topics. Something in the news will make one of those topics ultra-relevant—and you'll be ready. For example, *The New Yorker* did a long-form piece on U.S. Navy SEAL Chris Kyle. A few years later, the movie [American Sniper](#) hit theaters with actor Bradley Cooper playing the sharpshooter, driving an [unusual uptick in traffic](#) for the article. *The New Yorker* maximized the moment by promoting an already-written piece across new channels they weren't using when the piece debuted.

## **Experimentation is less risky with repurposed content**

Your audience's preferences can quickly change. That's why it's important to always try new things, experimenting with different ways of communicating. Testing can be risky, though; so when your team's resources are on the line, try repurposing a successful piece of content for a more predictable win. Working with existing material draws fewer resources away from other projects while still allowing you to experiment with new formats and channels you can promote at will.



## How to determine repurpose-worthy content

Repurposing content is clearly a valuable practice to add to your marketing team's toolbox. But how do you find the best pieces to repurpose? And what do you do to improve them?

Start with a [content audit](#).

A regular content audit helps you determine which pages, posts, and articles could benefit from more attention and which might resonate better in an alternate format. Here, having a [content analytics system](#) in place can help with frequent, lower-lift content auditing/reporting.

While you're looking for out-of-date references, low-performing pieces, and broken links, assign repurpose-worthy content a label and a specific action item. If you've followed the steps in our [content audit guide](#), the pieces labeled **update** are the ones you should repurpose.

Here are the four basic steps to follow when choosing pieces to repurpose.

### Step 1: Prioritize your library

Some sites have hundreds, if not thousands of posts. To determine which pieces to repurpose, prioritize your top 100 blog posts, white papers, and gated content pieces that drive a key success metric you want to focus on, like organic search rankings, [conversions](#), or [engaged time](#). Paring your archive makes repurposing more manageable and ensures the top pieces impact your strategy.

Prioritize current top-performing content based on a key metric to help you capitalize on popularity in a new channel. Or prioritize content that once drove that metric but hasn't lately, say, in the past six weeks. Give your content a few weeks to build some traction, though. Don't worry about repurposing a relatively new piece that's performing well so far.

### Tip #1 for experimenting with repurposed content

#### Increasing conversions:

Reformat previous posts in your content marketing system (CMS) to test functionality and UX options. Try different call-to-action language and compare it against how prior CTA language performed.



## Step 2: Conduct a ROT analysis and a technical SEO audit

Perform a [ROT analysis](#) to find content that is, well, *rotting* in your archive, providing little to no value to you or your audience. This is even more important than finding high-performing content to repurpose—rotting content hurts your business.

Perform the ROT analysis to identify:

- Outdated blogs, resources, data, and web copy
- Low-performing pages
- Web accessibility compliance
- Broken or outdated links and redirects
- Posts that need tags or categories updated, new meta descriptions, etc.

Also, perform a [technical SEO audit](#) to identify pieces that need updating to meet SEO guidelines, such as the length of post, incorporation of images (with [alt text](#)) or video, and keyword placement in headers and meta descriptions. Implementing fixes now will boost the original post.

## Step 3: Filter and isolate groups of content for context

Make sure you can filter your content archive by content type, specific tags, and engagement metrics so you can provide context to data you have for each piece.

Sorting helps you identify pieces that can easily be repurposed together. For example, if you filter by topic, you might find several blog posts on different aspects of a product feature that, together, could be repurposed into a downloadable guide.

Filtering by more than one parameter helps you understand why a piece is over- or underperforming. Looking only at a post's high traffic in isolation won't give you a full picture or guarantee it's worthy of repurposing. Your audience might show low engagement on a page despite high traffic numbers, indicating they didn't find the content particularly valuable or interesting. Use several parameters to help you clearly identify pieces that need a boost.

## Tip #2 for experimenting with repurposed content

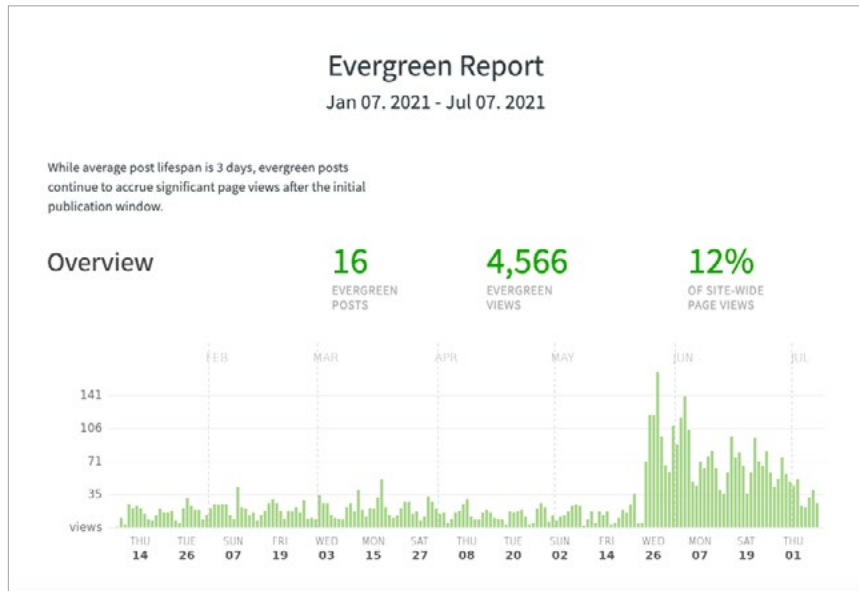
### Increasing engagement:

Run design experiments to impact a number of engagement-related KPIs ([engaged time](#), [returning visitors](#), recirculation rate). Even small design and copy changes can lead to big improvements in how deeply your audience engages with content.



## Step 4: Determine the lowest hanging fruit

Use a tool like [Parse.ly's Evergreen Report](#) to identify pieces that have extended their shelf life into [evergreen status](#). These pieces are already getting consistent organic engagement, so they're great repurposing candidates.



## How to repurpose and improve existing content

There are many reasons to repurpose content: boosting the original engagement of a great piece to triaging failing content that is actively hurting your business. Even simply providing quick content air coverage during your upcoming vacation.

And the [WordPress VIP](#) content team certainly practices what it preaches here in repurposing and improving our own existing content.

Let's look at how we repurposed [Part 4 of our How To Do Better Content Marketing series](#).

## Tip #3 for experimenting with repurposed content

### Increasing organic search:

Expand a piece to be more comprehensive, or pivot its keywords based on how search trends have changed since the piece was originally written. Improve pieces that routinely rank right on the cusp of page 1 or page 2 of search engine result pages.





## Step 1: Identify a need for content

When we planned this series of longform, how-to guides, the goal was for Part 4 to explain how to measure content and campaign performance through engagement data from a content analytics solution.

This is a topic we know matters to our audience. It's what Parse.ly is built for, and we've fielded requests for specific, step-by-step guides for doing content analysis. So, we felt confident moving forward with this idea.

## Step 2: Find an appropriate piece to repurpose

With a topic and a general goal for this piece of content agreed upon, we started considering how to make it happen. First, we looked in our content archive for any content on the topic created before any of us joined the team.

We found a few blog articles that touched on the specifics of how to do content analysis—e.g., questions to ask of your content data—but nothing in terms of depth and comprehensiveness. We considered compiling some of those blogs into a longer, more detailed piece, but we decided to look elsewhere first.

Finally, we stumbled upon a rough, unpublished draft about “content auditing.” Bingo! That was our repurposing candidate of choice.

## Step 3: Gather data on the topic to inform updates

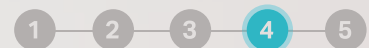
Next, we needed to back up our gut instinct with data. We began keyword research and content analysis on the topic of “content auditing” to understand search intent, audience interest, and our historical performance for content on the subject.

We found good search volume for the keyword and consistent engagement on blogs we'd published on content auditing and related topics. It looked like we were on the right repurposing track.

## Tip #4 for experimenting with repurposed content

### Launching a new channel:

Rework existing material whenever testing a new social media channel, but don't go all in until you know the platform is a good fit for your brand. Experiment with repurposed content to see what works.



#### Step 4: Implement updates to content

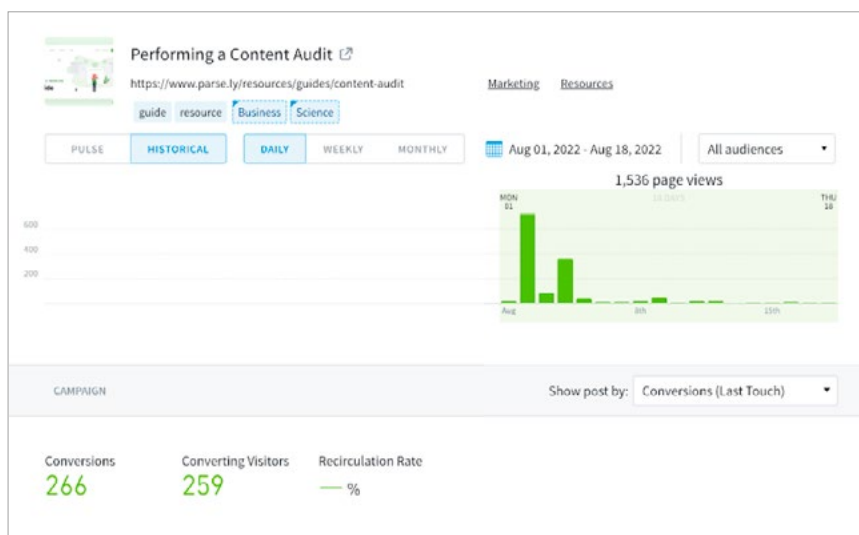
Now, we needed to decide our angle for updating and improving the rough draft. Considering search intent data and trends we saw in our top performing blog articles tagged “content analysis,” we found that our initial instinct was correct. Our audience *is* looking for specific, step-by-step advice on how to analyze content data and implement improvements accordingly.

With this in mind, we laid out a plan for weaving this advice throughout the draft content auditing piece. Our goal? Connect doing a full-fledged, yearly content audit with performing less-involved, more frequent content analysis.

Once we implemented these approaches, we had a piece that both capitalized on the search volume and audience interest around content auditing, and showcased our unique value as a content analytics solution provider.

#### Step 5: Launch and learn

Finally, we published our new piece as Part 4 of the series, launched our promotion efforts, and sat back to watch and learn from the results. This piece ended up being our most successful chapter in the series to date, with nearly twice the amount of engagement and conversions in the first 24 hours compared to the rest.



#### Tip #5 for experimenting with repurposed content

##### Repurpose strategies on larger content projects:

Test a new feature of a social media platform or contribute an article to an external publication using pithy snippets, interesting findings, or hot takes from your larger campaigns. With all the effort that went into the original piece, repurpose it to realize greater ROI.



## Quickly surface repurposing content opportunities with Parse.ly

Creating every piece in your content calendar from scratch can be needlessly time-consuming. The same is true for keeping track of all your content data. Parse.ly makes it simple to establish an ongoing process for content auditing and reporting, so you can find hidden gems that need just a little polishing. For example, eliminate the guesswork of which content performs consistently well with the [Parse.ly Evergreen Report](#), where you can easily filter by parameters that are meaningful for your goals.

Want to learn more about how content analytics helped inspire and inform our entire *How to Do Better Content Marketing* series? Schedule a demo to see how Parse.ly can save you time deciding what content to repurpose by quickly and efficiently surfacing insights from your content archives.





### **About Parse.ly**

Parse.ly is the analytics platform built for content creators.

Parse.ly gives creators, marketers and developers the tools to understand content performance, prove content value, and deliver tailored content experiences that drive meaningful results.

With Parse.ly, your writers and marketers don't have to turn to the analyst team for answers—they can be data-driven themselves.

[Learn more about Parse.ly](#)