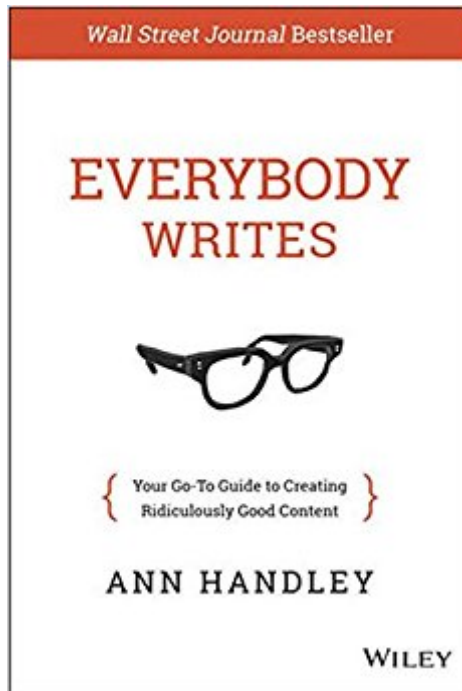


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# Everybody Writes: Your Go-To Guide To Creating Ridiculously Good Content



## Synopsis

Finally a go-to guide to creating and publishing the kind of content that will make your business thrive. *Everybody Writes* is a go-to guide to attracting and retaining customers through stellar online communication, because in our content-driven world, every one of us is, in fact, a writer. If you have a web site, you are a publisher. If you are on social media, you are in marketing. And that means that we are all relying on our words to carry our marketing messages. We are all writers. Yeah, but who cares about writing anymore? In a time-challenged world dominated by short and snappy, by click-bait headlines and Twitter streams and Instagram feeds and gifs and video and Snapchat and YOLO and LOL and #tbt. . . does the idea of focusing on writing seem pedantic and ordinary? Actually, writing matters more now, not less. Our online words are our currency; they tell our customers who we are. Our writing can make us look smart or it can make us look stupid. It can make us seem fun, or warm, or competent, or trustworthy. But it can also make us seem humdrum or discombobulated or flat-out boring. That means you've got to choose words well, and write with economy and the style and honest empathy for your customers. And it means you put a new value on an often-overlooked skill in content marketing: How to write, and how to tell a true story really, really well. That's true whether you're writing a listicle or the words on a Slideshare deck or the words you're reading right here, right now... And so being able to communicate well in writing isn't just nice; it's necessity. And it's also the oft-overlooked cornerstone of nearly all our content marketing. In *Everybody Writes*, top marketing veteran Ann Handley gives expert guidance and insight into the process and strategy of content creation, production and publishing, with actionable how-to advice designed to get results. These lessons and rules apply across all of your online assets — like web pages, home page, landing pages, blogs, email, marketing offers, and on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and other social media. Ann deconstructs the strategy and delivers a practical approach to create ridiculously compelling and competent content. It's designed to be the go-to guide for anyone creating or publishing any kind of online content — whether you're a big brand or you're small and solo. Sections include: How to write better. (Or, for "adult-onset writers": How to hate writing less.) Easy grammar and usage rules tailored for business in a fun, memorable way. (Enough to keep you looking sharp, but not too much to overwhelm you.) Giving your audience the gift of your true story, told well. Empathy and humanity and inspiration are key here, so the book covers that, too. Best practices for creating credible, trustworthy content steeped in some time-honored rules of solid journalism. Because publishing content and talking directly to your customers is, at its heart, a privilege. "Things Marketers Write": The fundamentals of 17 specific kinds of content that marketers are often tasked with crafting. Content Tools: The sharpest tools you

need to get the job done. Traditional marketing techniques are no longer enough. *Everybody Writes* is a field guide for the smartest businesses who know that great content is the key to thriving in this digital world.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 320 pages

Publisher: Wiley; 1 edition (September 15, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1118905555

ISBN-13: 978-1118905555

Product Dimensions: 6.3 x 1.1 x 9.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (198 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #4,822 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #37 in [Books > Business & Money > Skills > Communications](#) #43 in [Books > Business & Money > Marketing & Sales > Marketing](#)

## Customer Reviews

Writing has been my job and passion for twenty-five years, but I needed some "how to" advice that the author promised in her introduction: "... part writing guide, part handbook on the rules of good sportsmanship in content marketing, and all-around reliable desk companion for anyone creating or directing content on behalf of brands." She delivers everything she promised and more. I found the author's style to be entertaining and insightful as well as practical. One mere example among hundreds is her formula for judging the impact of your writing: "Utility  $\times$  Inspiration  $\times$  Empathy = Quality Content." Her point: you have to perform well in all three areas; if you score a zero for any one of these factors... well, you can do the math. Part I reviews much of what I already knew about the process of writing. She covers not only the key steps in the writing process, but also offers detailed insights into refining and improving your copy. Part I contains great advice for people who don't know how to approach the task of writing, and it's laid out in a way that's easy to understand and remember. Part II, about grammar and usage, offers lots of "Do this" and "Don't do that" advice. If you're a good writer already, then you'll find this section a refreshing, funny reminder about all the ways that we can go wrong with words. But if you're not as good a writer as you'd like to be, you'll learn a lot about giving your language more impact and power. Part III is the briefest section, but with some powerful advice about crafting a great story. Part IV contains lots of practical advice about what to write and how to write it.

Content, we know you are king, but it is time to meet your queen: Ann Handley. From small blogs to mammoth corporations, Ann Handley has reigned them all. With her eye for empathetic material that is easy to understand and implement, she is justified in her sovereignty. Handley's latest book, *EVERYBODY WRITES*, continues her double-decade trend of sharing techniques to cut the mush and filler and create what your reading clientele yearns to see: an attractive and informative message. The book has everyone's favorite--short chapters!--that are organized in an accessible manner: how to write better; grammar rules; story rules; publishing rules; things marketers write; and, content tools. Note from that list: writing better and grammar are two different things. Both are helpful; both stand alone. One of Handley's most helpful pieces from the section "how to write better" is her writing GPS. She refers to it and expounds upon it throughout the book. In a nutshell, here it is: 1. Goal--what is it? 2. Reframe for the reader 3. Seek data and examples 4. Organize 5. Write to one person 6. Produce the Ugly First Draft (TUFD) 7. Walk away 8. Rewrite 9. Give a great headline or title 10. Have someone edit 11. One final look for readability 12. Give the reader a "what now" As for grammar, Handley explores shibboleths such as avoiding Franken-words and the shaming of adverbs (thumbs up for the numerous Steven King ON WRITING quotes). On one hand it is unfortunate that content creators have to be told the difference between "its" and "it's"; on the other hand it is unfortunate Handley says, "I'd say don't worry about it" about the differences between "that" and "which".

Here are four reasons why anyone who creates content on behalf of a brand -- from the CEO to a blog writer -- should keep a copy of *Everybody Writes* at their desk. 1. All of the answers. All in one place. A day in the life of a content creator is full of questions. Do I capitalize this? Is this active voice? How long should this subject line be? What should I title this post? Will this appeal to my audience? As a content creator myself, sometimes I Google the answers to these questions or scour the Internet for best practices. Other times, I ask the questions aloud, hoping someone sitting nearby might be the definitive source on well -- everything. (Kudos to my colleagues who always try their best to answer my questions, especially the software engineers, who, I'm sure, are largely uninterested). Enter *Everybody Writes* -- a book that really does have all the answers. Problems with grammar? Check Chapter 37. Wondering what the ideal length for a blog post is? Chapter 60. There's even a full list of words to avoid because they simply aren't real. (Spoiler alert: contrary to popular belief, "amazeballs" is not a real word.) 2. Learning doesn't have to be boring. We've all taken a course in writing at one time or another -- whether it was freshman

composition in high school or an advanced business writing class in college. This means weâ™ve seen the basic writing textbook, packed with rules about paragraphs, grammar, spelling, tone of voice, style etc. Although useful, these books are boring. Everybody Writes has the same utility as these textbooks, but is far from boring. At times, itâ™s even laugh-out-loud funny. One of my favorite lines in the book comes when Ann applies the phrase âœYou canâ™t rush artâ• to the writing process:âœBut forget that mantra.

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