The SEO content brief

Nine fields. The difference between content that ranks and content that gets buried on page 3.

This is the brief we use internally at SEO Sandwich, the productised SEO content writing service from Matter Solutions. We have been briefing writers since April 2000. These nine fields are the difference between a writer who guesses and a writer who can do their job.

1. **Target audience**
2. **What you sell, and what you don't**
3. **The action you want the reader to take**
4. **Tone of voice**
5. **Search intent**
6. **Internal links to include**
7. **Examples to include or avoid**
8. **Brand voice quirks**
9. **Deadline**

The brief, in full

Steal this for any writer you hire. Adapt to suit.

1. Target audience

Be specific. Job title, company size, buying stage, expertise level. "Office managers at 20-50 person professional services firms in Brisbane buying a commercial coffee machine for the first time" beats "small business owners". Tone, depth, examples all flow from this one field.

2. What you sell, and what you don't

Write down exactly what is in scope. More importantly, write down what is NOT in scope. Writers fill gaps with assumptions. Spell out the products and services you do not sell.

3. The action you want the reader to take

Every piece needs an exit. Not "get in touch". Be specific: "Book a 15-minute consultation to discuss machine sizing." Secondary action too if you have one.

4. Tone of voice (with examples, not adjectives)

"Professional but friendly" describes 95% of business writing. Instead: name 2-3 writers, brands, or publications whose tone you want to copy. Examples beat adjectives every time.

5. Search intent

If you have done the SEO work: list the target query and label its intent (informational, commercial, transactional, navigational). If you have not, leave this for the writer to fill in based on a real SERP analysis.

6. Internal links to include

List 3 to 5 URLs on your own site you would like the article to link to. Writers do not know your site map. Without this, every article becomes its own island and your internal linking strategy never improves.

7. Examples to include or avoid

Real customer stories you can cite. Competitor product names you DO want mentioned. Topics or competitors you do NOT want named. Claims you cannot legally make.

8. Brand voice quirks

The small rules that make your writing yours. "We never use em-dashes." "We capitalise our product names." "We never call ourselves a 'leader' or 'best-in-class' or 'world-class', banned phrases." Every brand has 5 to 10 of these.

9. Deadline (be realistic)

Real timelines for a good 1,500-word article: 1-2 days research, 1 day outline, 2-3 days drafting, 1-2 days revisions, 1 day SEO polish. So 6-9 working days end-to-end. If you brief Friday and need it Monday, you get speed-typed content, not your best content.

Want us to do this for you?

SEO Sandwich is the productised SEO content writing service from Matter Solutions. Pick a sprint package online from $1,200 AUD. We send you the brief inline at checkout, then get straight to work. SEO structure in, expert filling, SEO polish out.

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