

by Dylan Tweney • June 2025 • Time to read: 11 minutes

Content creation remains a challenging job.

Far from simplifying the lives of content professionals, generative AI has increased the pressure. The sheer volume of content that GenAI tools pump out makes it hard to be seen and heard. Of the top Google search results, 16.6% use AI content as of May 2025, [according to Originality.ai](#). Two years ago, it was 6.6%.

In this noisy market, marketers say their top content challenge is getting users to take action, according to a [Content Marketing Institute survey](#) from October 2024.

Meanwhile, the content industry is booming—a [\\$32 billion market in 2024](#). Companies continue to list content job openings by the thousands. Content and copywriting skills are among the top areas of concern for marketing pros, [according to Marketing Week](#).

So, how is everyone doing? We surveyed professionals working in content marketing and digital content creation. Their responses paint a unique quantitative and qualitative picture of the state of content in the age of AI.

Top findings and takeaways

❖ **93% of creators** collaborate with others daily or weekly.

⇒ [*Content is a team sport.*](#) (p. 5)

❖ **69% of respondents** collaborate with non-professional content creators.

⇒ [*Working with non-writers is a core skill.*](#) (p. 7)

❖ **89% of respondents** use AI.

⇒ [*AI has become a big part of the job.*](#) (p. 9)

❖ **68% of content experts** complete assignments in two revisions or fewer, compared to 48% of non-experts.

⇒ [*The pros get bigger jobs done with less hassle.*](#) (p. 13)

❖ **Google Docs, Google Sheets, and Microsoft Word** remain the primary tools for both organizing projects and writing.

⇒ [*Most of us stick to familiar tools—for better or worse.*](#) (p. 14)

❖ **The basic challenges of writing and editing remain the same**, even if you're using AI to help you.

⇒ [*The secrets of great content*](#) (p. 17)

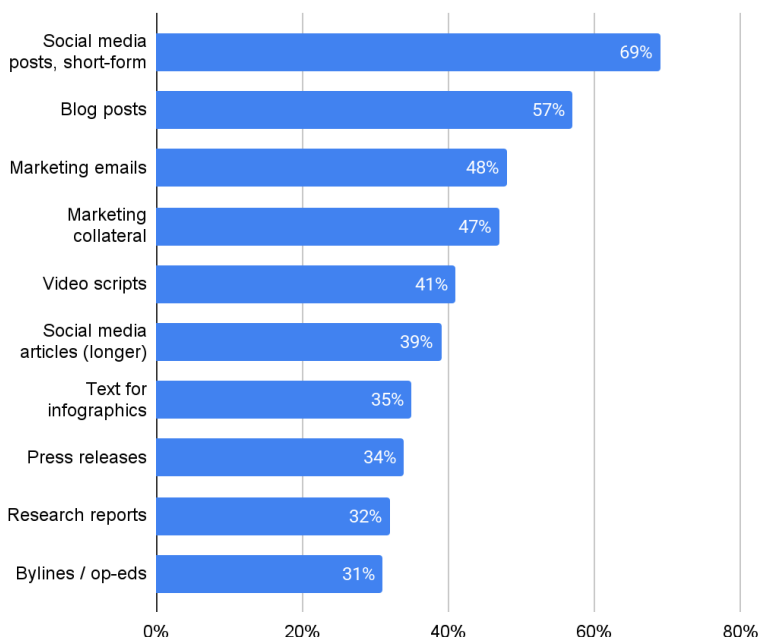
About this survey

Researchscape fielded the survey from March 10 to April 4, 2025. After eliminating suspicious or spurious responses and those who did not qualify based on the screening questions, we analyzed the data from 169 professionals who work with content as part of their job.

Respondents at a glance

- 169 people
- 95% from the U.S.:
Northeast (26%), South (26%), Midwest (26%), West (22%)
- Company sizes range from <10 employees (21%) to 11-499 (50%) to 500+ employees (29%)
- Job levels include individual contributors (18%), middle management (49%), and directors or higher (33%)
- Demographics: 47% men, 53% women; ages 18-34 (39%), 35-44 (30%), 45-54 (13%), 55-64 (13%), 65+ (5%).
- 65% create content as their main job or one of their primary jobs
- **86% create content daily or weekly**
- The most common content types they create are social media posts (69%), blog posts (57%), marketing emails (48%), and marketing collateral (47%)
- Their content is **usually 1,000 words or less** (80% of respondents)

What types of content do you work on with others?



Definitions

We're using a shorthand in the following pages to describe people based on how they answered a question about what their content role is.

- **Creators:** Content is “my main job” (24% of respondents)
- **Professionals:** Content is “a primary job function” (41%)
- **Contributors:** Content is “a secondary job function” (19%)
- **Collaborators:** “I only collaborate with others for whom it is a key function” (16%)

When referring to the first two groups (creators + professionals, 65% of respondents), we use the term **content experts**.

People who said they were not involved in creating content at all were excluded from the survey.

A note from Dylan on AI use: I used NotebookLM and Claude to help extract insights from the raw data, statistical analysis, and crosstabs provided by Researchscape. I used Grammarly to help edit the copy in this report. The words—including all the em dashes—are my own.

“The most important part is getting started. Write the first draft, no matter how bad you think it is. After the first words are on paper, you can refine, rethink, and rewrite until you get the content to a place you're proud of.”

—*Individual contributor, professional services organization, Oklahoma*

Content Is a team sport

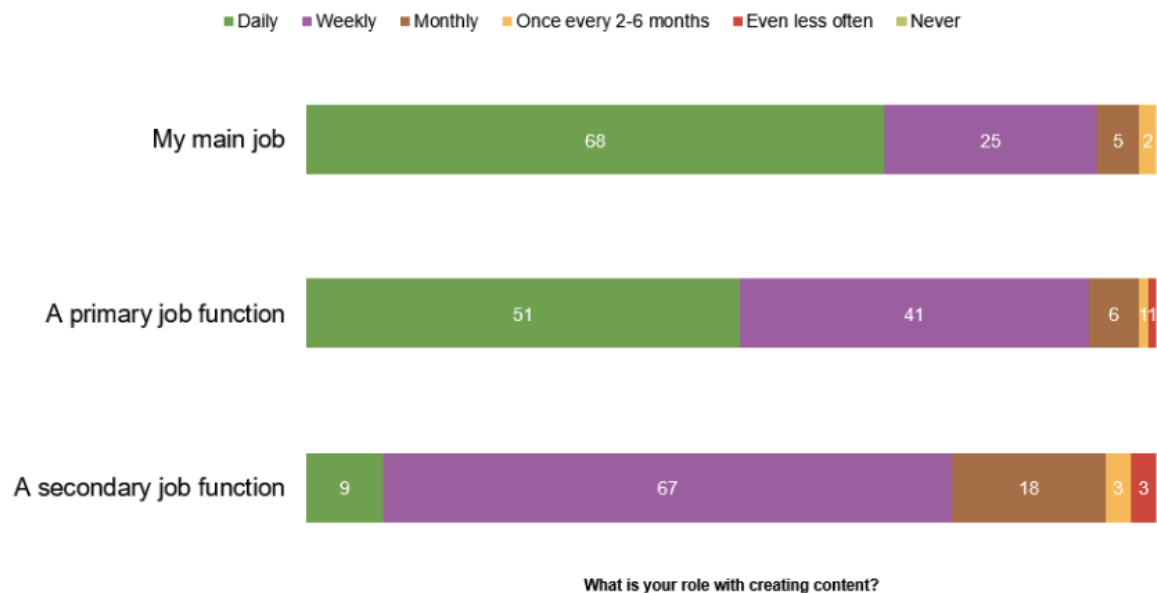
93% of creators collaborate with others on content daily or weekly.

Across all respondents, 86% say their content work is collaborative.

People creating content may do some work by themselves. But the job, by and large, involves working closely with others on a regular basis.

Collaborative writing is the name of the game.

How often do you write or edit content collaboratively with others?



What are some of the biggest rewards, for you, of working on content collaboratively?

"It provides the ability to actually get stuff done. Also, working with the people who aren't professional content creators usually means the technical product team or sales reps in the field, and their input is crucial to creating good content that will actually be relevant, get read, and help our company advance deals."

—Senior manager, technology company, Indiana

"Diversity of thought, gaining perspective, reacting and responding to ideas in a way that allows me to refine our hook or sharpen our strategy."

—Senior director, advertising technology company, Massachusetts

"Communication between colleagues, better content, team building, and friendship."

—Marketing director, retail company, North Carolina

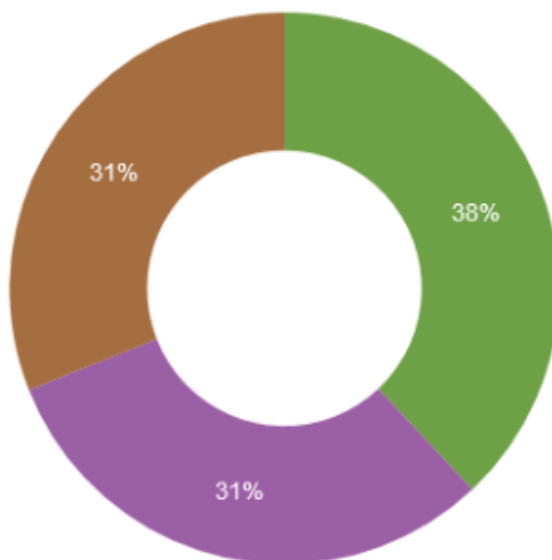
Working with non-writers is a core skill

69% of respondents create content together with non-professional content creators, either exclusively or in tandem with other content pros.

For content experts, helping non-experts understand the best practices of content creation is a big part of the job.

Respondents acknowledged that it can be frustrating to work with non-writers. But educating and coaching others is also one of the ways that content professionals continue to make themselves indispensable.

- I primarily work with people who are not professional content creators
- I primarily work with professional content creators
- A mix of the two



What are some of the biggest challenges or difficulties you face with collaborative content creation?

“People who don’t understand content expect to manage it according to the dictates of subject matters they do understand. For example, doctors may think SEO content should be written according to medical journal standards, or managers may be mystified when a social media post filled with jargony buzzwords that convey no actual meaning fails to produce engagement.”

—Creative director, agency, Massachusetts

“The skill level is uneven throughout the organization. I am often brought in to raise the level of the content, even if it isn’t strictly part of my job.”

—Content manager, healthcare non-profit, Massachusetts

AI is a big part of the job

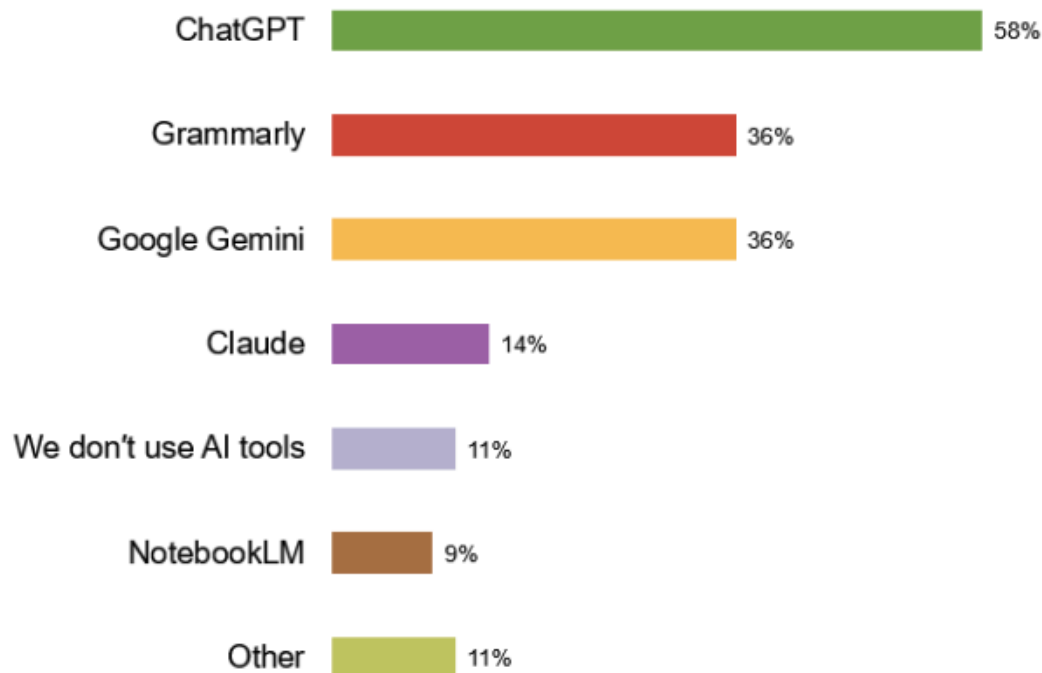
89% of respondents use AI to help with content creation.

AI shows up in various ways, from brainstorming to outlining to copy editing, especially with more complex projects. The leading AI tools are ChatGPT (58%), Google Gemini (36%), and Grammarly (36%).

A few are using Claude and Google's NotebookLM.

Only 11% of respondents say they don't use AI tools at all.

What kinds of AI tools do you use when creating content?



Where have you seen AI provide the greatest benefits?

"It's always easier to edit than to create from scratch.

Giving GenAI a very loaded and robust initial prompt can get you 80% to final in a first shot if done right and thoughtfully. That is a MASSIVE time savings."

—CEO, marketing agency, California

"We've cut down our research time by a lot. Now, we just let AI do the research with the prompt we've built. Then, when including stats from the research report, we fact-check if the stats are correctly cited or if we need to go deeper to cite the original source."

—Marketing manager, IT company

"Great source of historical information—e.g., I was writing a speech in which an executive painted a picture of a future-ready professional in his industry. We used the extended metaphor of a hologram (creating an image where there was no physical reality yet), and AI was terrific in giving me just enough scientific information to use the metaphor effectively."

—Founder, professional services consultancy, Washington

AI works best on specific tasks

The top use cases for AI are copy editing (48% of respondents), doing research (46%), and brainstorming (45%).

While generative AI can produce content quickly, it hasn't eliminated higher-level challenges, like figuring out how to connect with an audience and how to create truly engaging content.

This echoes a [July 2024 study by Brafton](#), which found that generative AI “has solved very few actual content creation challenges.”

AI is most helpful as an assistant, either on the front end, helping to generate ideas and comb through research, or on the back end, as a quality control tool.

A few respondents were clearly unimpressed with AI altogether, though.

If you use AI to assist in creating content, what tasks does it help with?



What advice do you find yourself most often giving to people who are writing, editing, or creating content?

“Lay off the AI tools. The way to become a better writer, editor, and content creator is through repetition and practice. The more you do this on your own, the better you will be at it in the future. Speed and accuracy don't happen overnight.”

—Account director, agency, Massachusetts

Where have you seen AI provide the greatest benefits?

“AI can be a jumping-off point to get the creativity flowing — often finding fault with the AI output, which sparks original ideas faster.”

—Vice president, marketing agency, New York

“AI is not that good, but whatever.”

—Manager, education company, California

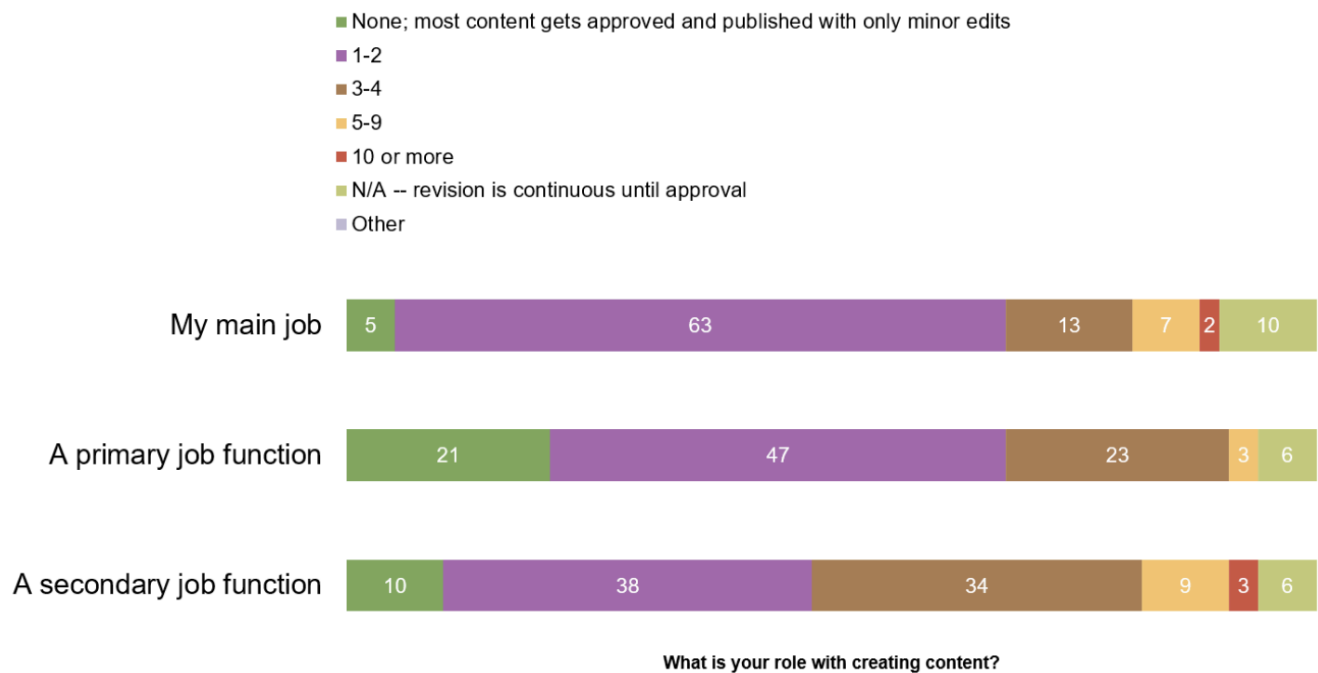
The pros get bigger jobs done with less hassle

68% of content experts can get typical assignments completed in 2 revisions or less, versus 48% of those for whom content is a secondary job function.

Although this difference is not statistically significant in this sample, it strongly suggests that expertise has a significant impact.

60% of all respondents say it takes a week or less to complete a typical assignment. Content experts are somewhat more likely than non-experts to take two weeks—perhaps reflecting the complexity of their projects (they’re also more likely to work on longer pieces, over 500 words in length).

How many times does a typical piece of content return to the content team for revision?



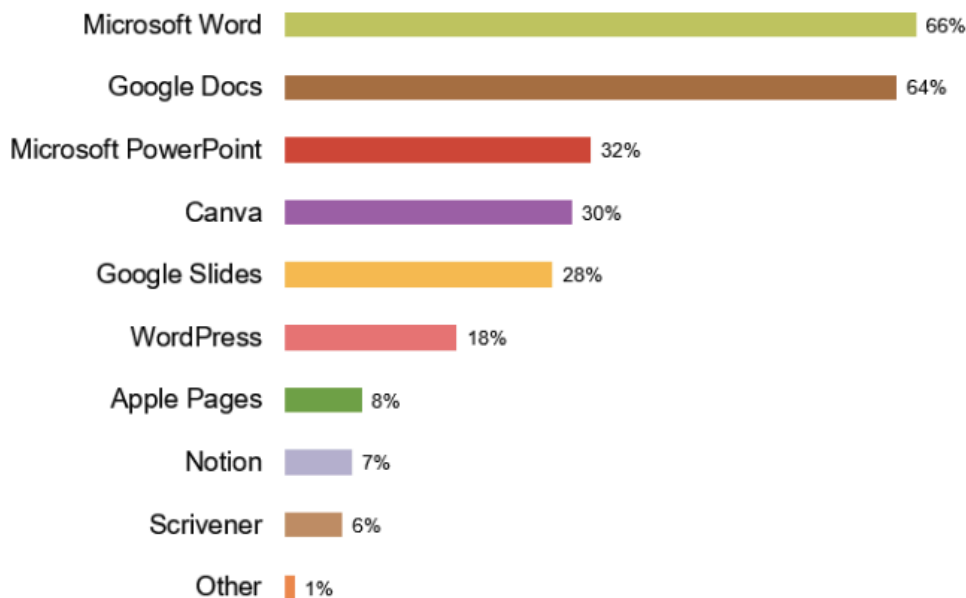
Most of us stick to familiar tools

Google Docs, Google Sheets, and Microsoft Word remain the primary tools for both organizing and writing.

For writing and editing, it's a toss-up between Microsoft Word (66%) and Google Docs (64%).

Interestingly, Google Docs is less likely to be used by people for whom content is their main job (46%) than it is for professionals and contributors (71% and 75%, respectively).

What tools do you use for the actual writing and editing?



Project management: Room for Improvement

For organizing content projects, Google Docs is the leading choice (64% of respondents). A little less than half use spreadsheets for organization.

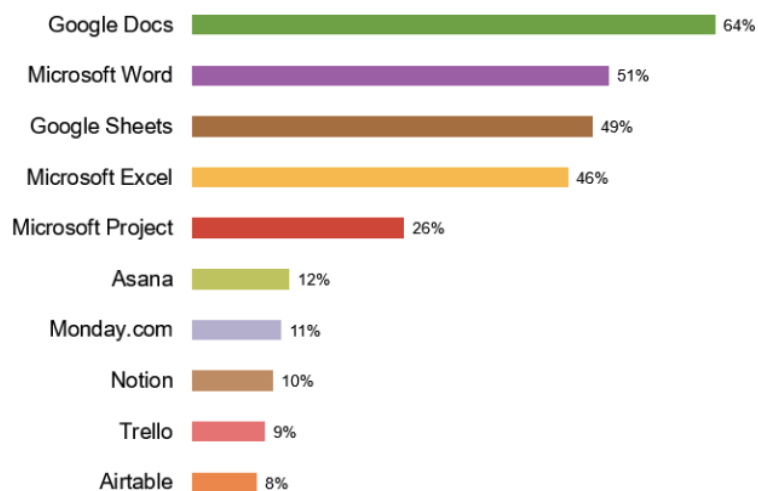
Relatively few respondents use project management tools like Microsoft Project (26%), Asana (12%), or Monday.com (11%) to organize their content projects.

This may be why respondents expressed so many frustrations around process issues, such as managing stakeholder feedback and review cycles. It also suggests why, according to [Braffton's study](#), keeping up with content calendars is tied as the top challenge for content marketers.

In short, there is a widespread challenge with project management. Perhaps relying on general-purpose office software for planning and organization is not the best choice.

Do we need to adopt better project management tools and use them more effectively? Or do the available tools simply not suit the needs of content experts?

What tools do you use for planning and organizing content projects?



What are some of the biggest challenges or difficulties you face with collaborative content creation?

“Executive whimsy and availability. Leaders want to be in the review cycle and set aggressive timelines and often aren’t available in a timely manner, and often ‘blow things up’ by not being clear in the original brief or by changing their mind once they see a solid draft.”

—CEO, marketing agency, California

“Multiple people feeding in, with edits contradicting each other, or people inserting long comments that are difficult to resolve.”

—SVP, PR agency, Pennsylvania

What advice do you find yourself most often giving to people who are writing, editing, or creating content?

“Trust the pros — or the folks assigned to work on the project. Too many cooks in the kitchen spoil the broth. Not *everyone* needs to provide input.”

—Self-employed consultant, Ohio

The secrets of great content

Despite the advances of AI, the fundamental challenge of writing is understanding and connecting with an audience of readers. A closely related challenge in content marketing is getting that audience to take some kind of action: Click on a link, respond with a comment, make a donation, or download a product information sheet.

- One piece of advice frequently given by respondents is the necessity of understanding the audience well. Content pros start by defining the audience and figuring out what they want. The story that will grab that audience comes first; key messages come later.
- The pros also know how to use storytelling structures, phrasing, and voice in ways that provoke emotional responses and encourage engagement and interaction.
- Having a solid writing process is crucial to generating good output. Multiple respondents emphasized the importance of starting with a rough draft, then improving it through multiple rounds of feedback, editing, and rewriting.

Top words respondents use in advice about writing, editing, or creating content



Top advice from the content experts

“Think about the audience you’re writing for. While the overarching message provides a guiding light, you need to tailor it for each audience. Writing for a CEO will have a different message than writing for a tech professional, etc.”

—VP, PR agency, Massachusetts

“The value of a shitty first draft is enormous. Get it out on paper, then edit. It will never be perfect the first time, so don’t stress or waste time trying to make it perfect initially.”

—Director, agency, Oregon

“Don’t fall in love with the words. The point is to get people to do something. Big pictures, small words.”

—AVP, educational institution, Massachusetts

“Define your niche, know your audience, create high-quality content.”

—Director, finance company, New Jersey

“Read more fiction.”

—CEO, agency, California

“Never stop learning. Stay curious and do thorough research. Always keep your client’s voice, tone, and audience top of mind.”

—VP, agency, Virginia

Collaboration and connection

Creating content was never easy, and generative AI is making it increasingly difficult for content marketers to stand out.

But at the same time, the AI explosion means it's more urgent than ever for human content creators to demonstrate their true value.

Content creation is a collaborative effort. The best content experts lean into that by sharing best practices, explaining how to make content more effective, and bringing content projects to a conclusion that all team members can be proud of.

AI can be a powerful tool for research, brainstorming, and copyediting, but it's not a replacement for good ideas, strong storytelling, and a sense of style.

Creators and professionals in the content business will be in demand as long as they can bring authenticity and a collaborative spirit to their work.

What is the purpose of content, after all? **It's not just to communicate, but to connect.**

- ➡ Forging connections with readers is the key to turning them into subscribers, fans, and customers.
- ➡ Forging connections with coworkers is the key to turning them into friends and valued teammates.

It all comes down to creativity, connection, and good editing.

In the words of one survey respondent:

"Be creative, follow your heart, and always proofread."

—Content creation team lead, publication, Florida

For more Information

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[Tweney Media](#) is a leadership communications consultancy run by Dylan Tweney, an award-winning journalist, writer, and editor. A former newsroom leader with *WIRED* and *VentureBeat*, he's spent most of the past decade helping executives and top tech brands tell their stories. He also publishes a [blog about the writing life](#).

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