

# How To Build Your Authority Status



# How to Build Your Authority

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Authority is defined as the power to influence others. When someone is an authority it's assumed that they have extensive or specialized knowledge on a subject. They're an expert. And here's the truly important thing on authority – people buy from those that they consider to be experts. We buy from companies and people that we believe to be authorities in their industry.

As a business owner, building your authority status can have a tremendous impact on your bottom line. It not only motivates purchases, it also attracts prospects to you and it allows you to charge more for your products or services.

Think about it like this – would you buy a book on commercial real estate from Joe Smith or Donald Trump? If you truly want to learn about commercial real estate, you're going to buy from the known expert and authority in the industry.

You don't have to be a celebrity to have authority status. In fact, many business owners are quite skilled at positioning themselves as authorities. And you can, too. This report is dedicated to helping you create and grow your position as an authority in your niche. We'll walk you through ten different steps to go from an unknown to an industry leader.

Some of the steps are easy. Others will take time, attention, and deliberate planning. No one becomes a recognized expert overnight. Use the information in this report to create a plan. Set goals and track and measure your results. Your bottom line and your business will thank you. So, let's get started.

## **Present Yourself in a Professional Way**

In order to be an expert, you have to both look and sound like an expert. That means presenting yourself professionally. No one is going to give you authority status unless you claim it and own it. Presenting yourself professionally is accomplished in a number of ways.

1. **Social media.** Make sure your social media posts are professional and business related. Even if you have a personal profile, you still want to maintain a professional image. It's a small world and you can bet your business followers will find your personal page. Make sure to use professional language and don't overshare. If you wouldn't want a customer to know it, don't share it.
2. **The language you use.** Whether you're responding to an email or talking on the phone, it's important to use professional language. To be clear, that means no cursing, no slang, and taking it easy with jargon or tech speak. You want to make sure that whomever you're communicating with understands what you're saying.
3. **Your photos and images.** Any photo that you share, publish, or include in your marketing materials should portray you in the most professional light possible. You don't necessarily have to be wearing a suit in your photos, but you should be dressed professionally.

Beyond these hopefully apparent essentials of professionalism, consider also:

- Being friendly – Introduce yourself to people. Get to know who they are and what they're about. Make connections.
- Taking initiative – Put yourself in situations where you can learn, grow, and meet new people. Take advantage of opportunities to present yourself professionally, to help others, and to grow your business.
- Be a problem solver, not a bragger – Instead of spending your time telling people what you do and what you know, learn what they know. Ask them questions and uncover their problems. Once you know what they're dealing with, you can then take steps to help them out and to be a problem solver. It may be as simple as connecting them with the right person, or offering your products or services.

Chances are you're already doing many of these things and you're conscientious about being professional and presenting yourself in the best light possible. However, most people can always use a little reminder because it makes you step back and consider your actions. Take a look at your communications and look for ways you might present yourself a little more professionally. How can you exude authority?

Next, we'll take a look at the concept of transparency and authenticity as it relates to you personally. We'll talk about being humble and honest and why those are both important factors to establish authority.

## **Why It's Important to Be Honest, "Real" and Humble**

There are two types of authority figures. There are those that may hit it big for a while before their fame and fortune falters. They're the shooting star authority figure. You can probably think of someone that you know who may have been a big deal in their industry for a short time but they lost favor after a while.

The other type of authority figure is someone who builds their authority over time and retains it. They are respected in their industry for decades.

There are many things that separate a shooting star from a steady and solid authority. Two of these differences are authenticity and transparency. The two words have been marketing buzzwords for a few years now. What they mean, however, and what they provide will never go out of style.

### **The Meaning of Authenticity and Transparency**

In the case of establishing yourself as an authority figure in your niche, authenticity and transparency are virtues.

- Authenticity – This means that you are 100 percent yourself. You don't fake your personality or create a persona. You're not someone different when you're at work than you are when you're home or in your personal life. This is important for many reasons.

One reason is that it's much easier to connect with someone if they're being "real." Fake people often seem awkward or uncomfortable and people generally pick up on that.

Additionally, authenticity is easier to maintain. If you create a persona you may not be able to maintain it for decades. Eventually you're going to get tired of it or you'll get found out. People will learn that you're not who you make yourself out to be. When that happens, your credibility and authority will plummet.

- **Transparency** – Transparency means that you are honest about who you are and what you know. Transparent authority figures are okay with telling people when they don't know the answer. They don't need to know everything. However, many industry authorities are passionate about their industry and will quickly dig up knowledge when they don't know the answer.

Another component of being real, humble, and honest is that you're able to brand your personality. If you're a tax geek, for example, then you can embrace that personality characteristic and use it to connect with others who are interested in learning more about taxes or who may want to use your services. There are more benefits and opportunities when you embrace and share your real self rather than to make up a persona.

Next, we'll take a look at how you can use criticism and negative feedback to actually help build your authority and turn it into something that's positive.

## **Turn Criticism into a Positive**

Everyone receives criticism. Even the smartest, coolest, and most on-the-ball people in the world get negative feedback. In fact, if you don't get any negative feedback or criticism then you're not doing something right. Maybe you're not taking big enough risks. At any rate, you can turn negative feedback into a positive with a few savvy steps.

1. **Monitor your brand.** Make sure that you know what people are saying about your brand. That means monitoring social media and setting up alerts so you know when people comment on your blog or on any guest blog posts.
2. **Does it deserve a response?** Not all criticism deserves a response. Sometimes people just complain to have something to do. Some folks are looking for a fight. Don't engage. However, if the comment is valid, interesting, or it's an issue that can be resolved, take immediate action.
3. **Extend a hand.** When someone makes a complaint or leaves negative feedback, you can immediately begin to change the situation by reaching out personally to them. Introduce yourself, empathize or apologize, and give them a next step to take. This next step may be to contact you personally or to offer a solution.
4. **Be professional and empathetic.** Put yourself in their shoes. If you keep the conversation public, for example on social media, then you can resolve the issue in front of your audience and the world. It's an opportunity to be of service and to help someone out while building your authority and your brand.

5. Get people involved. Ask questions, invite comments, and ask people to share their story. Let your happy, and not so happy, customers provide you with opportunities to engage and to share and connect with a larger audience.

You won't make everyone happy but you can take advantage of some complaints and negative feedback and showcase your professionalism and authority by solving their problem.

Sometimes the best word of mouth comes from previously unhappy customers. Stay on top of your brand and respond as quickly as possible when it's useful.

You can also use negative comments as a spot check. See if there's any validity in those comments. See if there's something you can do differently. See if your book/product needs tweaking. Keep an open mind.

## **Make Use of Industry Specific Networking**

Have you ever noticed that some people seem to be everywhere? They're on television, they're in the newspapers, they're online, and they're in magazines. Oprah is a perfect example of this. She's everywhere. Why does this happen and how can you make it happen for you?

We attribute credibility and authority to those who are associated with other credible experts.

For example, if you are on the Oprah show then people all around the world instantly know who you are and you're given a certain degree of credibility.

You can capitalize on this phenomenon by networking with others in your industry and in complementary industries and niches.

For example, let's say that you're striving to build credibility in the fitness niche. If you connect with and network in the sports nutrition niche and partner with authorities in that industry, you can build your reputation and awareness for your business. And if you partner with other authorities in your niche, for example Bob Harper, then you'll be able to enjoy the Oprah effect.

Look for potential opportunities:

- By forging Joint Venture (JV) partnerships
- By networking within your niche
- By guest blogging on authority blogs and websites
- By publishing in industry magazines and publications
- By networking in complementary niches

Sometimes it is both what you know and who you know that can make a difference. And if you're worried about "using" people to help build your authority and your business, don't be. You'll be able to pay it forward when you achieve authority status.

Additionally, you can make it worth your partner's time by offering a benefit for helping you. You might send them referrals or market their products or services in exchange for a helping hand.

Part of establishing credibility by association is getting press and publicity for your interactions. For example, no one will know you met with Oprah unless you take a picture with her and share that picture, right? Next, we'll talk about public portfolios and using the press to help build your authority.

## **Public Portfolios - Use the Press to Help Build Your Authority**

It takes more than simply being an authority to establish yourself as one. You actually have to make sure that other people know you're an expert in your industry. However, it's not kindly looked upon for you to simply tell people you're an expert. It's viewed as bragging.

What you can do, however, is use public information sites and services as a tool to help spread the word. Let's take a look at two relatively simple to use public tools - public portfolios and press releases.

What Is a Public Portfolio?

A public portfolio is exactly what it sounds like; it's making your portfolio public. There are a number of ways that you can do this.

You can create a LinkedIn account, for example, and upload your resume or CV and your portfolio on LinkedIn. You can also create a link to the information on your blog or website.

And depending on your specialty, there are often industry-related associations or portfolio sites where you can upload your history. For example, a writer can upload their writing history and samples on industry writing association websites, membership sites and even on freelance job sites if they're interested.

It's about making your work history, experience, and knowledge public.

What about Press Releases?

You have another opportunity to publicly share your authority status, without bragging, by issuing press releases. Each press release you issue needs to be newsworthy and have a goal and real information. However, it will also have what's called a "boilerplate," which is a short paragraph that explains who you are and why it matters.

Press releases are formal documents with a specific structure. They can be used to build authority because they include news and quotes from you or your customers. Additionally, when the press release is picked up by other agencies, it helps establish you as an expert.

Both portfolio sites and press releases provide you with an opportunity to share your knowledge without appearing like you're bragging or asking for attention. They position you as an expert by sharing your experience in a structured format.

Next, let's talk a little about networking with your audience and how to make that work for you.



## Network Where Your ‘Audience’ and Target Customers Are

Where do your customers and prospects hang out? Different demographics have different preferences. For example, you’ll find an abundance of middle-aged folks hanging out on Facebook, ladies on Pinterest, and millennials on Instagram.

Determine where your audience hangs out and then go there. Network. Ask them questions. Answer their questions and really get to know your audience. Once you befriend them you can begin to capitalize on your connections in a number of authority-generating ways.

- Be a problem solver. Many times business owners just post and link. They don’t connect, comment, or offer solutions. Or if they do offer solutions to a problem, the solution is found at their website, on a sales page. You’ll build better credibility if you genuinely solve problems – even if your solution doesn’t generate a sale for you.
- Be a connector. You can connect people who can help one another. For example, if you’re a personal trainer and someone posts about protein fasting, you might connect them with a sports nutritionist that you trust. You’re helping your audience and connecting them with useful information. It positions you as an authority because you’re connected with other specialists.
- Be a learner. Your audience has a lot to teach you. Learn from them. Engage in conversations and ask questions. Show them that you care and assimilate the information you learn into your content.

Finally, be sure to respond to comments on your blog and to follow and participate in conversations on other industry blogs. When you are present where your audience hangs out, you’ll begin to build a connection with them. That’s powerful authority building, and business-boosting access.

Next, let’s talk about the concept of preselling and why building authority is preselling yourself.

## Building Authority Is about ‘Preselling’ Yourself

Affiliate marketers are very familiar with the concept of preselling. They spend their time crafting informative and value-driven content - content that is designed to ultimately drive traffic to the websites of the products or services they represent.

The foundation of preselling is to provide value to your audience. And there are, as you probably know, many different types of value. For example, entertainment has value. If you make someone laugh, and that’s what they were looking for, then you’ve provided value.

Service providers can provide value in their content by helping their audience solve their problems. For example, a website designer might provide value by creating content that shares the elements of successful website design. They might write about plugins, design languages, colors and more.

A retailer can provide value by creating content that also solves problems. For example, a home organization store may have an endless amount of valuable content if they talk about how to organize, offer tips, tactics, and suggestions.

Providing this type of value can also help build your credibility. As you create value-driven content, you're sharing what you know, solving problems, and educating your audience. Preselling means to promote a product or services without actively selling it.

As a service provider, this means you're promoting yourself without selling your services. Positioning yourself as a credible and knowledgeable source of information builds trust with your prospects.

And again, we buy from people we trust and consider to be experts. As a product-based business owner, you again presell your products by positioning yourself as a source of information and knowledge.

Content is the foundation of preselling yourself and building authority. Let's take a closer look at the role of content to build your authority.

## **Creating and Marketing Your Brand - Using Content to Build Your Authority**

Content is one of the best tools you have to consistently and creatively build your authority. One blog post can reach thousands of people and help establish you as a credible expert in your niche. There is also an abundance of opportunities to create, share, and publish authority-boosting content.

Let's take a look at the options.

1. **Blog.** Create a blog that regularly shares top quality content. Share what you know, answer questions, talk about industry news, and provide solutions for your audience. Blog as often as you can while controlling for quality and value.

2. **Guest blog.** Find reputable industry blogs to create value-driven content. Create a byline that includes a call to action and a bit about yourself so readers will click through and visit your blog.

Make sure that the blogs you guest post on also have a reputation for quality and are authorities in their respective niche. Also make sure it's a relevant and complementary niche. A fitness expert isn't going to reach their audience if they're guest posting on a software blog, for example.

3. **Create a fantastic email newsletter.** Establish an email newsletter and build your list. Make sure that each issue of your newsletter, whether it's delivered weekly, bi-weekly, or even monthly, contains authority-building content. Invite your subscribers to share the newsletter with friends and also consider allowing them to reprint the content on their own blog or website.

4. **Consider other forms of content.** We've talked about print content but there are many other formats to consider. You might create a video channel and share weekly videos. You can

podcast or create infographics. Exploring other types of content will help you establish your credibility with a larger audience.

5. Publish a book. Digital publishing has never been easier. Don't wait any longer to take advantage of this opportunity. Start brainstorming a book and writing it. If you just don't have time to write it, create your outline and then hire a ghostwriter to do the legwork for you.

6. Blog comments. Your comments on your blog and on other industry blogs are also an opportunity to create quality content. Make sure anything you say in a comment is something that you'd be proud to publish. Make sure it positions you as an authority and represents you in a positive way.

7. Use social media. Social media provides an abundance of opportunity to create and share content. You can share facts and tips on Twitter and you can share brand new content on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Medium.

8. Hold live events. Consider holding live events like webinars and seminars to provide information to people who are interested in learning more. These live events work much like a published book to establish you as an authority.

We naturally give authority to people who are published and to people who "teach" and speak in public. Hold an event and provide value to your listeners and you'll take huge steps in creating your authority status.

9. Create an information product. Beyond publishing a book you can also create home study courses. These courses can be delivered online via an autoresponder. You can also simply make them available as downloads or create a tangible product that you can ship to their home.

10. Produce white papers and case studies. These are more formal documents that you can create. These papers can be made available on your blog or website as downloads. You can also share them with your prospects as a tool to help solve their problems.

Finally, don't overlook the opportunity to publish articles in traditional publications like magazines and newspapers. Content provides an abundance of opportunity to establish yourself as an expert. It allows you to connect with your audience solve their problems, and share your knowledge, experience and information in a valuable way.

One way to both strengthen your content and further position yourself as an expert is to make sure that your content is well written. That means that it's conversational but also informative.

Your personality can play a large role in the connection you make with your audience. Next, let's talk about how to integrate your personality into your brand, content, and communications with your prospects and customers. You can be likeable and authoritative!

## **How to Leverage Your Personality to Build Authority**

Your personality is part of your brand. As you communicate with your audience in conversation and with your marketing tactics, if you allow your personality to come through it can help brand your business and build your authority.

We've talked about sharing your voice in your content and how that can help build and communicate your authority. There are other tools and tactics that you can leverage to showcase your personality as well.

### Your Photo

A professional headshot or photograph of you can, and often should, be used on your website and marketing materials. Using your own image (instead of a cartoon or an icon) helps people connect with you as a person and an authority figure.

When you create information products, for example a free report, case study, home study course or even a white paper, you can create a digital cover template that includes a photo of you. This helps create consistency with your brand and it helps build your personal authority when you're part of the brand image.

People respond to faces with an emotional connection. If your photo makes you appear like the professional industry authority that you are, you'll help build that image with your prospects and customers.

### Audio and Video

There is an abundance of opportunities to connect and market with audio and video. You can create video content and share it on your blog and on sites like YouTube and Vimeo. You can also create video and audio podcasts and publish them on iTunes or other podcast publishing sites.

Another way to use audio or video is to create welcome messages on your blog or website. Greet your visitors with a short, one minute or less, message. This helps new visitors immediately connect with you and it gives a personal feel to your business. This can be an effective tactic for a service-based business.

Both audio and video are powerful tools to help you leverage your personality. Video gives you the ability to share your voice and your image with your audience. How you speak can have an impact on how your audience views you. And we've already talked about why it's useful to share your face and image with your audience.

While audio doesn't provide you with the ability to share your smiling and authoritative face and appearance, you do have the ability to share your voice with your audience - and that can be a powerful thing.

As you consider your marketing and content efforts, look for opportunities to share your personality. Your writing style, your voice, and your image can all be used to help boost your authority and build your business.

Finally, let's be honest and say that no one will believe you're an authority if you don't believe it yourself. Let's wrap this up by talking about how you can begin to feel like an authority figure and exude confidence.

## Be a Leader, Not a Follower

Do you believe that you're an authority in your niche? Do you feel like you have valuable experience, knowledge, and information to share with your audience? Can you impact the lives of others and help them solve their problems?

If you answered anything but a resounding "Yes!" then your confidence may need a little work. If you want others to view you as an expert, you have to believe that you are.

1. Read, learn, master – Create a strategy that allows you to consistently learn and stay at the top of your field. Learning helps you feel more confident in your existing knowledge and gain new knowledge and self-assurance.
2. Network and listen – Reach out and connect with others. Networking gives you an opportunity to listen to other people. Ask questions and listen to the answers. You'll uncover opportunities to help others and as you begin to change lives, your confidence will soar.
3. Educate – Create information products, publish books, articles, and online learning materials. As you begin sharing your knowledge and experience, you'll receive positive feedback from others. This feedback will help you realize that you really do know what you're talking about. It's a great confidence booster.

Finally, take some risks. Push your comfort zone and make mistakes. As you learn more about what your limits are, you may be surprised that you're capable of much more than you think.

You are an authority and once you believe it, you'll be in a better position to share and communicate your experience and knowledge to others.

You now have ten steps to go from a virtually unknown expert to an authority in your niche. Take them one at a time. Some of the steps will be easy and intuitive. You may already be taking them. Other steps may require some careful thought and planning.

Each positive step you take toward building your brand and positioning yourself as an authority in your niche is one that will ultimately increase your opportunities and your bottom line.

# SUCCESS TOOLS FOR YOU

If you think you can use some tips and strategies to help your home or small business produce more results, check out my Success Tools Page:

<http://www.articlewritingdoctor.com/content-marketing-tools/>

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*Remember, nothing ventured, nothing gained!*