

# The AdSense Guide to Audience Engagement



Google AdSense

# Contents

Introduction.....	1
Help your audience become familiar with your brand .....	3
Design user journeys, not just web pages .....	8
Develop content that resonates with your audience .....	13
Make your content easy to consume.....	17
Share the love with other sites by referring to good sources.....	20

# Introduction

61% of users would quickly move on to another site if they didn't find what they were looking for right away. <sup>1</sup>

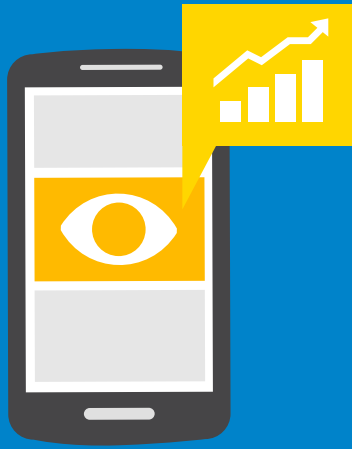
Today, information is at our fingertips and we can access it from anywhere on any device. Just a few taps pulls up millions of websites all competing for our attention. For publishers, engaging with your audience has never been more important or more challenging.

So how do you engage with users in these moments that matter and get them to come back for more? Unfortunately, the answer isn't a clever hack. However, by producing unique content and delighting users with a great experience, you'll be on your way to engaging with your audience like never before. Jim Stengel, former Global Marketing Officer at Procter & Gamble framed it as, **“What we really need is a mindset shift that will make us relevant to today's consumers, a mindset shift from ‘telling & selling’ to building relationships.”**

---

High-quality content is crucial for building a relationship with your audience and driving positive interactions. In this guide, we'll cover a variety of actions you can take now to drive audience engagement with your content. We'll discuss:

- ✓ How to help your audience become familiar with your brand
- ✓ Best practices to design delightful user journeys
- ✓ How to develop content that resonates with your audience
- ✓ Ways to make your content easy to consume
- ✓ Why you should share the love with other sites by referring to good sources



Establish a consistent  
brand presence across  
the many touchpoints  
your brand has with  
your audience

# Help your audience become familiar with your brand

“60% of millennials surveyed expect a consistent experience from brands whether they interact online, in store, or via phone.” <sup>2</sup>

Separate your content from your competitors’ to leave a lasting impression on your site’s visitors. One way to do this is to establish a consistent brand presence across the many touchpoints your brand has with your audience.

## 1 Define your voice

Pick a style and create a distinguishable brand for the messages you’d like to convey. Is your writing style casual, laced with trendy references? Or is it more straightforward and simplistic, using well-researched information to drive points home?

## 2 Be consistent

Once you establish a voice, make sure to be consistent throughout your content so that people recognize and become familiar with your brand and know what to expect when they visit your site, mobile app or even your social properties.



### 3 Relate to users' interests

It's not just important to pick your style, though. You also need to make sure that readers think the topics you pick are important and relevant to their interests.

#### Use Google Analytics

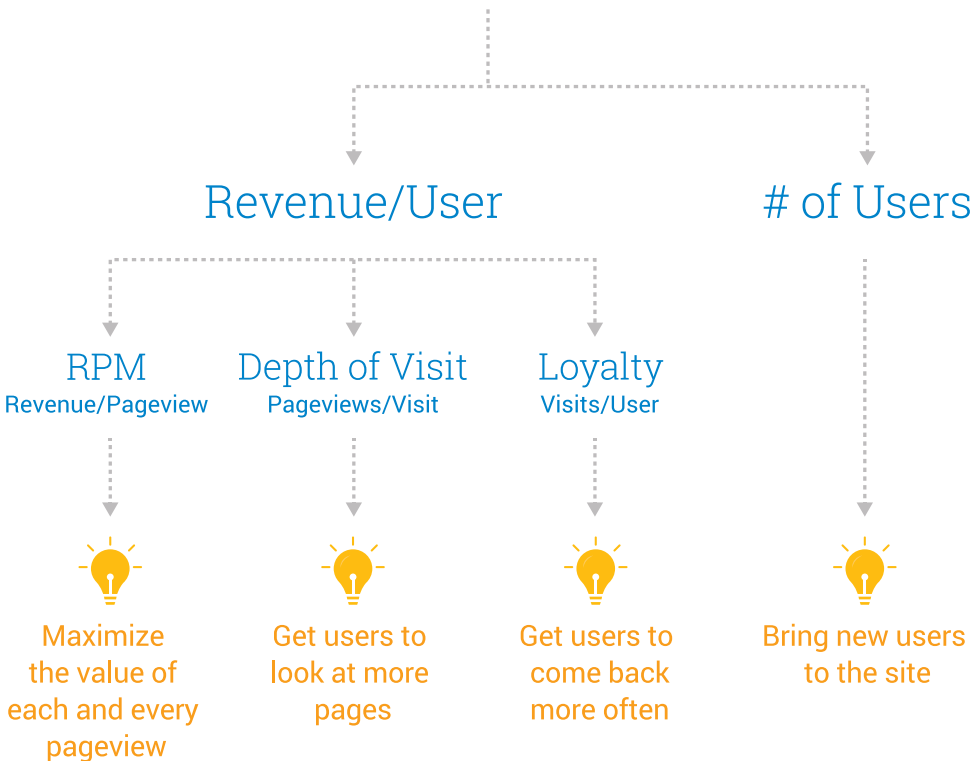
Every user that matters to your brand has their own unique preferences, interests, and needs. These differences matter when he or she is deciding what to read, where to shop, and what to share. Studying your site's analytics can help you determine which topics matter to your viewers, and which don't.



- ✓ Set up a Dashboard that tracks the metrics that matter most to you. This is the first thing you will see when you log into your analytics account and can help you make decisions quickly.
- ✓ Focus on the [The Long-term Revenue Framework](#). It's a simple, but powerful framework to help you understand the four levers that can help you grow your site. With this framework, consider your site optimization efforts in terms of the four levers outlined in the following chart.

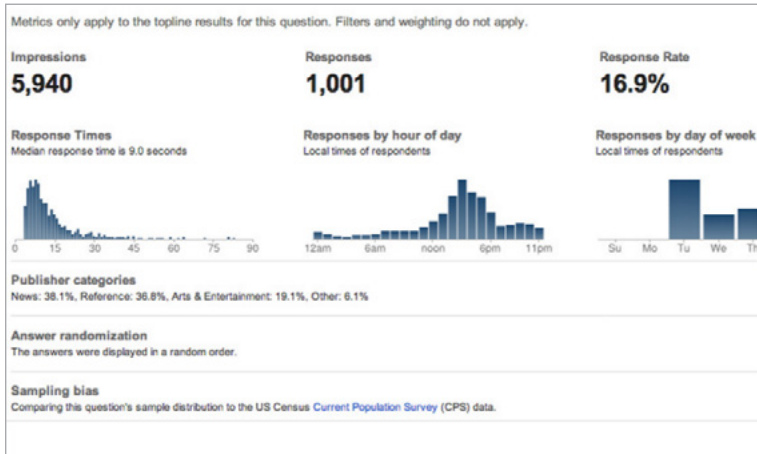
# Google AdSense Long-term Revenue Framework

As a publisher, to grow your revenue you should aim to increase



# Use Google Consumer Surveys

[Google Consumer Surveys](#) allows you to create your own web surveys for gathering data and stats on what people think of your brand, what matters to them, and even what colors work best for your designs.







Having a clear plan-of-action for your various user segments will yield valuable insights, delight users, and increase engagement with your brand.

# Design user journeys, not just web pages

“Only 9% of users will stay on a mobile site or app if it doesn’t satisfy their needs (for example, to find information or navigate quickly).”<sup>3</sup>

We’ve pointed out that high-quality unique content is a key ingredient to drive visitors and shares of your content. But what about the user experience?

Rather than designing web page destinations for your users, try designing user journeys. Cohesive messaging and user focused site design delivers greater results for both your audience and your business.



## 1 Create a moments map



A **moments map** is your solution to identifying the set of user moments you absolutely want to win or can’t afford to lose.

It lays the foundation to implementing a delightful user experience and encourages site design to focus on the flow in which your users engage with your content.

91% of smartphone users turn to their phone for ideas while doing a given task. Create a moments map; you'll anticipate your users' needs and be useful for them in fulfilling those needs. <sup>4</sup>



Examine and map out all phases of the user journey for your brand, and look for the moments when people want to find inspiration, learn about something you're reporting, make a social statement, or anything in between. Then determine the best format to share your content while meeting the time limitations of various visitor types. For instance, are they killing time? Looking to purchase something? Or, are they comparing your products to your competitors? Understanding user motives before you begin conceptualizing your website design helps you create a delightful user experience catered to the ways different types of visitors utilize your site as well as the time they are willing to spend there.

- 2 Make it easy for users to reach your desired outcome, in as few steps as possible.

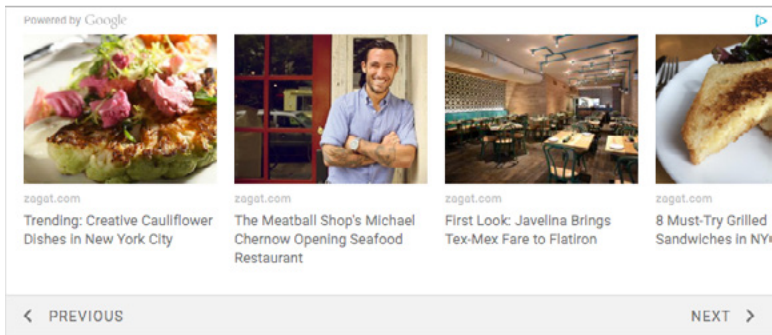
**Example:** Gain user insights with gated content

Gating exclusive, desirable content behind forms, prompting newsletter signups or asking survey questions can be extremely useful strategies for gathering user insights. User insights help you better understand your audience's demographics and produce more targeted content that is catered to their interests. Make it easy for users to receive the content they requested, research shows that 67% of users will switch if it takes too many steps to purchase or get desired information. <sup>5</sup>



**Example:** Drive page views by recommending relevant content.

**Matched content** is a free content recommendation tool for AdSense publishers that promotes the content from your site to your current visitors. You can benefit from Matched content's contextually relevant and personalized article recommendations to further engage users.



### 3 Create clearly defined, interactive calls to action

These can include bold "sign up" buttons and casual prompts directing viewers toward specific content or pages, and are excellent ways to move users to action.



Get into the minds, and  
hearts, of your target  
audience.

# Develop content that resonates with your audience

“68% of users share [online content] to give people a better sense of who they are and what they care about.” <sup>6</sup>

Users are visual, compulsive sharers and they expect personalized curation. Get into the minds, and hearts, of your target audience. Put yourself in their shoes; what do they want and need in terms of relevant information, ideas, inspiration and entertainment?

Content that carries emotion is more likely to relate to your audience.

## 1 Develop content that’s likely to evoke an emotional or relatable response.

Be relevant to their interests:

People share content they are interested in.



Be relatable and provide practical guidance:

You’ve already established a voice that users can relate to. Now use it to give them guidance they can actually use.

Tell stories to draw them in and keep them engaged:

People respond better to stories that are contextualized. People are more likely to share stories, not information.

## 2 Take a diversified approach to your content strategy

Evergreen content:

Evergreen content is content that is still relevant no matter when it's accessed. If you're blogging about the San Francisco foodie scene, content about this summer's trendiest food trucks is not evergreen. A recipe for a Mission district inspired carne asada burrito, though, is. Since your audience is interested in food, each of these content types are extremely relevant, however the latter is more likely to remain relevant over time. Evergreen content is always being searched for, and will continue to grow in usage. Dig through your archived content and don't be afraid to reshare what's evergreen with your social media audience.





## Trending content:

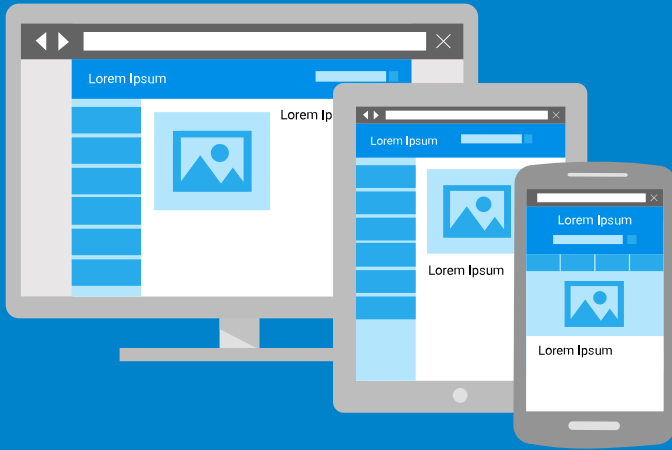
Back to our example, content about this summer's trendiest food trucks fits into trending content. Tap into the wealth of information on [Google Trends](#) to help you find out more about what people in your region are looking for. And if your users are from an area that is unfamiliar to you, you could use the [Google Almanac](#) to help you identify holidays and events that are happening near them to give you that inspiration.



## In-depth content:

It's known that users often turn to Google to answer a quick question, but [research suggests](#) that up to 10% of users' daily information needs involve learning about a broad topic. Following these [best practices](#) along with our [webmaster guidelines](#) helps our systems to better understand your site's content, and improves the chances of it appearing in the in-depth set of search results.



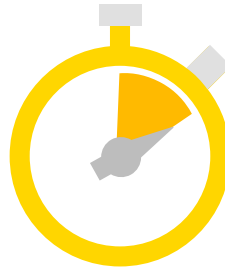


Visual content is  
**more than 40X more**  
**likely to get shared** on  
social media than other  
types of content. <sup>7</sup>

# Make your content easy to consume

Engaging your audience is all about telling the story that users are looking for, in a unique and creative way. Sometimes that means going beyond words, and using media. As a publisher, it's your role to make it easy for people to consume content. With short attention spans, it's important to create content that can keep users engaged and entertained.

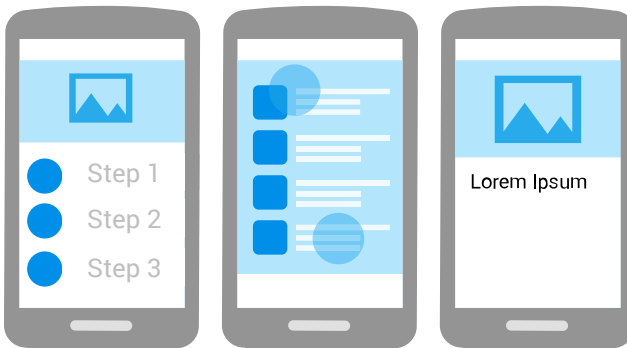
- ✓ A Tweet is 140 characters
- ✓ A Snapchat is 10 seconds
- ✓ A Vine is 6 seconds
- ✓ A Share is a click
- ✓ A Tinder match is a swipe



## 1 Incorporate lists, infographics, images, GIFs, and videos

Visuals, and other forms of online media, direct users' attention to your key messages. They're easy for audiences to resonate with and encourage social shares.

Sites which include video have on average an extra 2-minute dwell time compared to sites which don't. <sup>8</sup>



## 2 Break up long-form content with images

Digestible content doesn't always need to be short sound bites. Long-form content can be successful when you break up the copy with visuals like charts and graphs to keep visitors from tuning out.

## 3 Blend social proof into your content

Incorporate easy-to-engage-with actions within your content, to showcase positive social proof. Social proof can be achieved through the visual display of information to help influence a user's decision.

Here are examples of easy to engage with actions:

### *Like actions*

- Like, love, heart, thumbs up, up-vote, etc.
- Display the number of "like" actions for each piece of content



### *Sharing actions*

- Make it easy to share the content
- Display the number of social shares the content has received

### *Custom actions*

- Testimonials, badges, influencer endorsements, subscriber counts, ratings, reviews, etc.





80% of consumers said authenticity of content is the most influential factor in their decision to become a follower of a brand.<sup>9</sup>

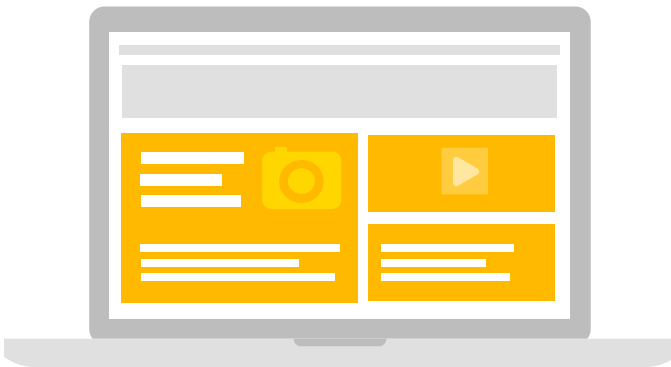
# Share the love with other sites by referring to good sources

80% of consumers said “authenticity of content” is the most influential factor in their decision to become a follower of a brand.<sup>9</sup>

Establishing your site as a go-to source for fresh content doesn't always mean that you have to be the subject-area expert. It's possible to increase your site's credibility as a reliable source of information by directing your visitors to helpful resources or interesting perspectives on hot topics. Offering friendly shout-outs strengthens your content and puts your site on the path to receive love and attention from fellow community members.

## 1 Give credit where credit is due

If you're sharing content or a story that was original to another publisher, it's a best practice to link back to the original content owner. This creates a backlink or inbound link, and if the original content owner notices in their analytics, they may return the favor.



## 2 Generate links to your content

Keep in mind, other publishers and social network users are happy to share good, relevant content to their audience. When you create good content, you increase the chance of other sites including links back to your site. Inbound links that are merit-based and freely volunteered as an editorial choice, are a positive signal search engines retrieve about your site's quality.

Thank you for engaging with AdSense. We'd love to hear feedback, so please share feedback with us on [Google+](#) and [Twitter](#) using #AdSenseGuide. Until next time.

## References

- 1 **Source:** <https://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/research-studies/what-users-want-most-from-mobile-sites-today.html>
- 2 **Source:** SDL, Channels are irrelevant <http://www.sdl.com/ilp/cxc/five-future-truths/channels-are-irrelevant.html>
- 3 **Source:** <https://think.storage.googleapis.com/images/micromoments-guide-to-winning-shift-to-mobile-download.pdf>
- 4 **Source:** Google/Ipsos, Consumers in the Micro-Moment study, March 2015. Based on the online population n=9598.
- 5 **Source:** <https://think.storage.googleapis.com/images/micromoments-guide-to-winning-shift-to-mobile-download.pdf>
- 6 **Source:** <http://nytmarketing.whsites.net/mediakit/pos/>
- 7 **Source:** <https://blog.bufferapp.com/infographics-visual-content-marketing>
- 8 **Source:** <http://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/video-marketing-statistics>
- 9 **Source:** Salesforce, Pardot: 5 engagement questions answered <http://www.slideshare.net/MathewSweezy/5-content-engagement-questions-answered>