

How To Build Pillar Pages and Topic Clusters That Drive Traffic

Since the way people search for information has changed, search intent has changed as well. With voice-to-text, smart speakers, and devices making search queries more conversational; people are able to pinpoint exact information on search engine results pages (SERPs).

It's rare for a search engine to reward one-and-done efforts. As search updates its algorithms and recommended practices multiple times a year, your strategy has to be able to adapt to these changes.

That's where pillar pages and topic clusters come into play.

While there's no surefire way to game the system and rank #1 for all your pieces, a slow and steady approach will likely give you good returns.

In this guide, we will walk you through the steps of creating your pillar page. You'll identify your core topic and cluster topics, research, and outline your pillar so you can become an authority in your industry.

Let's get started!

First: Choose Your *Core Topic*

Pillar pages focus on one main topic that can be divided into many subtopics. Your selected topic should be specific to your industry, including your product or services, and be top-of-funnel in the buyer's journey.

Ex. - The Beginner's Guide to Content Strategy

What is your selected core topic? _____

Solve a problem or answer a question.

Your content should include information people are searching for. Run a search query on the topic.

Tip: Look for places within your pillar content where you can answer search questions. These are prime opportunities for rich snippets, featured snippets, and the knowledge box to use that content.

What are pain points, problems, or questions you can answer?



Focus your pillar page on keywords.

Research one primary and several secondary keywords most valuable to your industry.

Tip: Your keyword research should account for both keywords typed in on a computer or mobile device and keywords that are likely to be spoken into devices like smartwatches and phones.

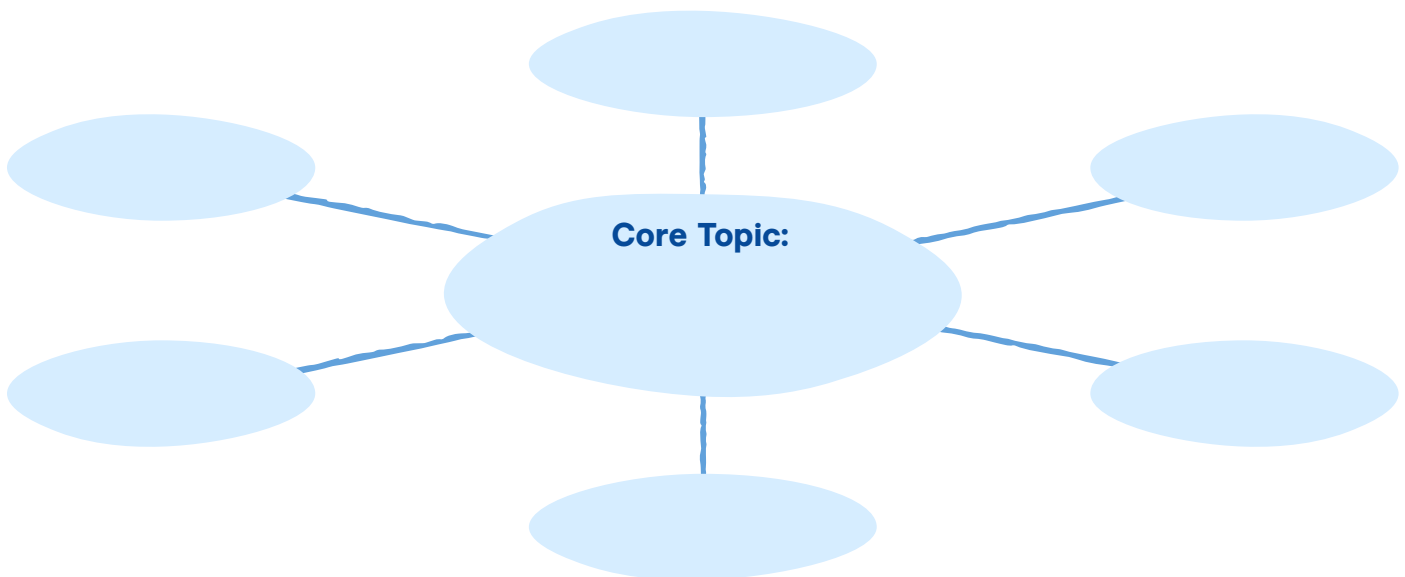
What primary keywords and secondary keywords did you uncover in your search?

Next: Identify *Topic Clusters*

Topic clusters work best when incorporated into a pillar page strategy. Once you have established your pillar page topic, identify topic clusters that relate to it. You can link back from these topic clusters to the pillar page using the keyword you want to link to. Place your core topic in the center bubble and then begin identifying your topic clusters in the surrounding bubbles.

Ex. - Creating Personas, Keyword Research, Ideation.

Topic Cluster:



Did you know: Topic clusters help your SEO by helping your site rank better, avoiding content cannibalization, and serving your target audience with information.



Next: Outline and Write Your *Pillar Page*

Now that you have established a core topic and topic clusters, you can start writing your pillar page. Remember that your pillar page will take time to create and be longer than your standard blog post.

Outline your pillar page so you can strategically place the cluster topics within the piece.

Title: Core Topic

Description: Overview of the pillar

Anchor-Link your Table of Contents: Incorporate your cluster topics and keywords

H1: Introduction:

Tip: To maximize your snippet opportunity, make sure your first sentence answers a commonly asked question about your topic.

H2: Subtopic: Begin to incorporate cluster topics

H2: Subtopic:

H2: Subtopic:

Conclusion/CTA:



Internal Links:

External Links:

Note: This outline can be expanded according to your research. It's a starting point to map out the direction.

Remember to take your time

A highly technical pillar page with lots of supporting documentation and internal/external links could take 20 hours or longer.

Once the page is written, you'll also need to set aside time to regularly update the page in your ongoing content creation process. **Check for:** broken links, outdated information, new keywords that fit into existing content, and additional topic clusters.

You might rank for keywords you didn't intend to, which is OK. Take notes to see how you used those keywords in your pillar piece and continue to develop your pillar page.

Last: Promote, Share, and Track *Performance!*

Now that your pillar page has been published, it's time to share and promote within your channels.

You can share your pillar page:

- on social media.
- in email marketing.
- in related blog posts.
- with your sales team.
- on ads in search.

While the process of creating a pillar page takes time, it's a great investment in the long term.

Need experts to create your pillar page? Our strategic services follow industry best practices ensuring your brand gets the content it needs - efficiently, consistently, and at scale.



Talk to a Content Specialist:

sales@clearvoice.com