

I BATCHING

How to get a bunch of
content written... all at once.
Wham. Bam. Done.

By Melissa Cassera

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New to my world? Read this juicy, behind-the-scenes intro.



(Sordid secrets = inside.)

Hey there!

If we haven't met before, allow me to introduce myself.

I'm Melissa Cassera.

I've worked as a PR, marketing and communication strategist for over 15 years.

I led campaigns for companies in the US, Canada, the UK, Japan, and France, helping my clients to sell products like BOOM and make millions upon millions. I strutted into glamorous conference rooms wearing a sleek blazer, button-down blouse and navy skirt combo with my hair in a very "profesh" bun. I did the whole "corporate" dealio — and I was really freaking good at it.

The only problem was... I didn't love it.

I didn't feel "excitement" or "passion" for my work in the corporate PR / marketing world, and over time, it really started to eat at me.

I did some soul-searching (read: moaning and sobbing into a pint of Ben & Jerry's followed by a Gossip Girl marathon and a phone call with my therapist) and I came to a huge realization.

Here's what I realized:

"It's not my 'work' that's the problem. I love publicity. I love marketing. I love business. I love teaching awesome biz owners how to build communities of raving, obsessed fans. I'm just working with the wrong types of clients!"

Duh-ding! Epiphany.

With that realization in place, I made some changes.

Instead of chasing after big corporate contracts, I started seeking out small, independent business owners. (Consultants, authors, teachers, coaches, trainers, professional speakers, accountants, lawyers, stylists, nutritionists, fitness pros, people rockin' their skills — both online and off — and who needed help attracting more clients and customers.)

Instead of buttoning myself up in a 3-piece pantsuit, I started busting out my hot pink headbands and polka dots.

Instead of trying to appear "professional," I focused on just being... me.

I allowed my natural speaking voice (which is full of trendy buzzwords, slang, xo's and !!!! points) to shine through in my writing.

I dripped salacious Hollywood gossip and pop culture tidbits throughout my blog posts (because that's the kind of stuff that I love to read, too.)

I injected my entire business with 1000% more personality, from the way I worded my email signature... to the invitations on my website... to the way I spoke with clients on the phone... everything went from "beige" to "technicolor."

I found myself attracting a totally different type of clientele (yes!), my earnings

went through the roof (yah!), and best of all, I found myself having SO. MUCH. FREAKING. FUN. doing my work!

That's what I had another light bulb epiphany.

Here's what my (second) realization was:

"If you are NOT having fun doing your work, your clients and customers will feel it. They won't be drawn to you. They will be repelled. Like guests at a dinner party where the hostess is totally frazzled and stressed, they will just want to creep out through the nearest exit, never to return..."

BUT... if you are having a BLAST doing your work, your clients and customers will sense that, too! They will be swept up with your excitement and passion. They will become... OBSESSED with you!"

This realization inspired me to create a full-year training program (called **OBSESSED**) filled with biz owners from all around the world.

Our program philosophy is:

"You can't build an audience of raving, obsessed clients and customers unless YOU are gleefully obsessed with your work, first. YOU set the tone for your biz. If you are having tons of fun, your audience will too."

That's the exact same philosophy behind this free guidebook that you're reading, right now!

In this guidebook, I'm going to teach you a strategy called "Batching" that can help you fall head-over-heels in love with writing content for your business audience, even if "writing" is something that has made you want to stab your eyeballs with a pencil in the past.

By using the Batching technique that I'm about to share, you will have way more fun writing and creating all kinds of content... which means your readers will feel the passion, excitement and joy in your words... which means they'll respond to your words much more enthusiastically... which means they'll be infinitely more likely to purchase from you, too.

Thanks for reading this quick intro story about my life & work. :)

Now, let's get onto the really good stuff...

Turn the page to learn exactly what Batching is and how to do it!

The Miracle of Batching



Or, how I write 52 juicy newsletters for my business audience every year — plus a bajillion other materials — like it’s “no prob.”

Every single week, I write a newsletter for about 30,000 readers called **O.M.G.** (Original Melissa Goodness).

In my weekly newsletter, I deliver advice on things like...

- ♥ How to introduce yourself to potential customers without feeling like an icky, pushy sleazeball.
- ♥ How to turn curious website visitors into raving fans who snatch up all of your products and services and sing your praises across the land.
- ♥ How to make all of the steps that go into running your business — from invoicing to blogging to launching a new product — feel like a total guilty pleasure.

Every time I hit “send” and blast off a newsletter to the peeps on my mailing list (who are mostly women, and mostly small business owners, including quite a few peeps who are focused on running “online” or “virtual” businesses) I get loads of messages back from my readers.

Personal messages filled with hearts and exclamation points and so much appreciation.

Messages like these:

“Thank you for being my FAVORITE girl when it comes to copy and staying fresh and honest. I love your style and you’re one of my select few whose emails ALWAYS get opened and read (like even before my moms!).”

“It is like you scribble out biz crack sprinkled with skittles and I am over here happy to devour each delish morsel.”

“Love these! Your emails always arrive at the most opportune moments. It’s like you’re psychic!”

“I just wanted to let you know that I ADORE you, and your newsletter is one of the few newsletters I race to open and read. I just think you’re brilliant!”

When I read messages like those, I grin so hard I practically break my face. Delighting my fans and customers is my EVERYTHING.

I’m completely devoted to my business community. They look forward to my weekly newsletter and delivering this content to them, each and every week, rain, shine, sleet, or snow, is a non-negotiable part of my business. They expect it. I deliver it.

Over the years, the peeps who read my weekly musings have started to wonder — and ask — what my “secret” is.

My readers are business owners, too, and they wonder how I manage to write my weekly newsletter AND create free guidebooks (like this one!) AND create materials for classes AND post witticisms on social media AND handle all of my other responsibilities as a biz owner (like giving personalized feedback to my **OBSESSED** students, all year long). Oh, and write three original TV pilots filled with steamy drama.

The general question is:

“WTF, Melissa? **How can you possibly have time to write all this stuff?** Do you ever sleep? Do you eat? Do you pee? How do you do it?”

It’s an understandable question, because so many business owners, coaches, and consultants profoundly struggle to crank out high-quality content for their audiences on a regular basis.

Writing usually feels like a “chore” or a stressful “hassle” that gets put off to the last second, not something fun and pleasurable that’s easy to do.

Readers have said to me (and I quote):

“I’m always scrambling to write my newsletters or blogs and then I freak out and just don’t and then I haven’t gotten in touch with my list for months! Help!!!”

“I have a reallllly hard time creating awesome content consistently. gahhhh!!!!”

“I feel like my content has no voice — no personality. It feels so dry and boring. It sounds like everyone else. I suckkkkkk forever.”

If this sounds like you... take a deep breath.

How about one more deep breath? Yeah. I figured two would be good. ;)

Here’s the thing: I haven’t always been a content machine. It’s something I’ve had to work on, just like anybody else.

Ten-ish years ago, when I left my high-paying corporate gig and decided to open my own agency, I had no idea what the frack I was doing and I made all the classic mistakes — like procrastinating until the last possible minute with writing projects, neglecting my blog for months on end, then scurrying to try to crank out a bunch of content on topics I didn’t even care about, leading to boring, stale, forgettable drivel

that I hated to write — and that nobody wanted to read.

Over time, though, through trial and error and experimentation, I discovered a technique that (literally, no joke) changed my life.

A technique that allowed me to whirl out copious amounts of content in a relatively short amount of time — content that was really freaking good! — while actually enjoying the process!

That technique?

It's called... **Batching**.

In this mini-guidebook, I'm going to walk you through exactly how to do it.

Follow these simple steps for success.

Then... Batch It, Baby!

What is “Batching”?



The term “Batching” has been around for eons.

To quote bestselling author Michael Hyatt:

“Batching is simply a form of time management that allows a person to maximize concentration and decrease distraction. As a result, it increases your productivity, creativity, and mental sharpness, while decreasing fatigue, procrastination, and stress. Batch processing is the grouping of similar tasks that require similar resources in order to streamline their completion.”

Here’s my translation:

Batching means working on a series of similar projects in one long uninterrupted burst — like baking a batch of two dozen cookies all in one go instead of individually baking twenty-four cookies, separately, on twenty-four different days.

Batching = more content in less time (with less stress).

What is “Content”?



When I use the word “Content,” I mean:

Materials that you create for your current clients and customers — as well as your future / potential clients and customers — to savor and enjoy.

If you're a finance expert and you produce a weekly podcast filled with smart money tips, your podcast is a piece of “content” that you are delivering to your audience.

If you're a personal stylist and you release a monthly “style guide” on your blog filled with trendy color palettes to know about, accessorizing ideas, and so forth, each style guide is a piece of “content” that you are delivering to your audience.

Blog posts, e-books, e-courses, podcasts, audio guides and audio meditations, videos, social media blurbs, helpful graphics, charts, checklists, and illustrations, digital desktop wallpaper and iPhone background paper, quizzes, apps, recipes, the newsletter that you send to your mailing list... all of these are different types of “content” that you might choose to create and give away to your audience.

If you've ever heard the term “Content Marketing,” it basically means:

Make awesome free content for your business audience, give lots of it away for free, give people a chance to get to know you better by devouring your content, and soon enough, they will adore you and trust you enough to buy from you!

Makes sense, right? “Content marketing” is essentially the same principle as “Try a free sample of our latest coffee blend” (... except it's so good that you simply have GOT to buy a whole pound of coffee beans.)

It's a very effective (and non-sleazy) way to get people excited about your products and services, because it's rooted in generosity.

Give free goodies away... first.

Invite people to hire you or buy your stuff... later.

“OK, Melissa. I get it. I need to create content for the people in my biz audience. But what if I just totally suck at writing?”

Here's my very brief reply to that (oh so common question):

Get over it.

I mean that in the most loving, encouraging way possible.

The fact is, if you want to run your own business or be a self-employed service provider — of any kind, in any industry — you must learn how to communicate effectively.

Warmly greeting your clients... writing appreciative “thank you” notes after a session... bundling lists of tips and resources together... pouring your insights into books, blog posts, pamphlets, instructional guides, and other kinds of written materials that your customers can savor from home... none of this is “optional.”

As a business owner, you've GOT to communicate. You've GOT to speak. You've GOT to write — and you've got to do it well.

So rather than telling yourself “I suck at writing” or “I've never been a good writer” or “writing just isn't my thing,” try telling yourself:

*“Sharing my stories, ideas, insights, tips and advice with people who hire me – or might want to hire me – is **TOTALLY** my thing. I can do it & I can do it with a smile.”*

Are we good? Cool. Let's move on to... how to start Batching!

How to get yo' Batch on...



in 5 breezy steps.

When you Batch a bunch of content, it means you are going to churn out a whole bunch of content in one “go.”

You're going to be focused and undistracted. You're going to be in the flow. You're also going to have unfair amounts of fun.

Here's my recommended process to get it done...

STEP #1. TEST DRIVE DAY!

Block out one FULL DAY if possible — or one morning, or one afternoon, whatever time frame is doable for you.

Protect this time like it is a crucial doctor's appointment. No phone calls. No interruptions. No kids. No dogs. No spouses. No bleeping texts on your phone. No Wifi, if that's a major distraction for you.

Just you and your work in a space that makes you happy — like your favorite hotel lobby, a cheerful coffee shop, your office with great music playing, wherever you feel most “in the zone.”

For this Test Drive Day, don't set any rigid goals for yourself.

Don't say to yourself, “I am going to write ten blog posts today OR ELSE!!”

Just settle into your seat, get focused, and tell yourself, “Cool. I’ve got 8 hours of uninterrupted time stretching in front of me. Hmm. Let’s see what I can create...”

Then: get to work!

Sprinkle breaks throughout the day for delicious food, walks, window-shopping, fitness, and so on.

Then: get back to work!

See how much content you can realistically create in one day without pushing or straining yourself.

At the end of the day, lean back with pride and take stock of what you’ve created.

Did you wind up writing 3 newsletters? 2 blog posts? Scripts for 4 podcasts? Less? More? Tally up what you’ve created so that you’ve got a nice “ballpark.”

Test Drive Day = complete.

Now you know what you are realistically capable of creating in one Batch Day.

STEP #2. COUNT IT UP.

Looking forward across the next year or so, how many pieces of content do you need to create? What have you promised your audience, if anything?

For example: if you’ve promised your business audience that they can expect to receive a newsletter every week plus a seasonal guidebook in spring, summer, winter and fall, that would be...

52 newsletters

4 guidebooks

... total.

Those are your “content promises.”

Your next step is to take your list of “promises” and multiply each one by “time required to complete it” so that you can...

STEP #3. ESTIMATE HOW MANY BATCH DAYS YOU NEED.

Using the info you gathered from your Test Drive Day, count things up and then estimate how many Batch Days you need to schedule in order to get everything done and fulfill all of your promises.

For example: If you know that you are capable of writing about 4 newsletters in 1 Batch Day, then you will need to schedule 13 Batch Days over the year in order to create 52 newsletters, total.

If you are freaking out because... “OMG! I have totally overextended myself! I have promised too much! There is no possible way I can schedule all of these Batch Days and get everything done”...

Guess what? You are the boss.

It’s always ideal if you can keep the promises you’ve made to your biz audience, but if you need to scale things back to preserve your sanity, you are allowed to change your mind! Businesses evolve all the time. Yours can, too.

Maybe it’s time to switch from blogging 3 times per week to just 1 time (quality over quantity).

Or maybe nobody cares about your 50-page guidebooks (which take forever to write) but people FREAK over your quick 5-minute rant videos (which take, like, 5 minutes to record on the fly), so you want to focus on making those instead and ditch the “dead weight” projects.

Wiggle the numbers (and adjust your promises) until you arrive at a point where you can relax and say, “Yesss. This, I can do.”

STEP #4. SCHEDULE YOUR BATCH DAYS IN ADVANCE.

Once you’ve figured out how many Batch Days you need in order to create all of the content that you intend to create, your next move is to... SCHEDULE those puppies on your calendar just like any other vital, must-not-miss appointment.

I recommend scheduling a few “bonus” Batch Days just to give yourself some extra wiggle room if certain pieces take longer than expected, or, in case inspiration strikes unexpectedly and you realize, “I wanna write a book this year!” or something like that.

The main thing to remember is: when you schedule time to batch, don’t break that appointment. Show up for yourself and for your community.

Like The Night’s Watchmen guarding [the Wall in Game of Thrones](#), allow NO ONE and NOTHING (not even undead zombie-soldiers) to penetrate this precious fortress of time that you’ve set aside for yourself. Guard it with your life.

STEP #5. MAKE EVERY BATCH DAY FEEL LIKE... A HOLIDAY!

THIS is quite possibly the most important step of all!

You do NOT want to schedule your Batch Days and then wind up fearing and resenting them. (“Ugh, THIS again?”) The whole point is to look forward to them and enjoy them!

This means setting yourself up for success by making each Batch Day feel like a luxurious “work-cation” (aka: “working vacation.”).

Nourishing food, music, ambience, fragrances, the whole nine yards.

Think: “guilty pleasure” not “crushing punishment.”

(The French writer Colette, who wrote novels like Gigi and Cheri, used to work from her bed in her Paris apartment while sexy male — and occasionally, female — suitors brought her croissants and cups of hot chocolate to help “inspire” her... ahem. Whatever your “workday fantasy” is, you can create it!)

Turn the page, and I’ll share a few pieces of inspiration to get your pleasure-wheels turning...

Batch-spiration!



How to make your next Batch Day unfairly pleasurable and fun.

What kind of “workspace” or “workday” or “working style” will unlock your highest levels of creativity?

What kind of “Batch Day” sounds unfairly pleasurable and fun — to you?

Everyone’s answer is slightly different, but the following guidelines might trigger a few ideas.

You might want to consider...

INSPIRING SPACES

Everyone’s ideal setting for content creation is different.

For me? I enjoy locking myself away in a swanky hotel room with a smorgasbord of room service. Or tucking myself into remote spaces like a cabin in rural Sweden. Or visiting quirky cafes and coffee shops for ambient noise.

For others it could be the beach. A park bench. A rented office space. A cozy corner of their home.

What’s your ideal setting?

Got an idea? Jot it down.

Not sure? Ask yourself, “Where have I felt most creative? What would feel like a magical space to create?”

Test out some different places and see what feels most pleasurable to you.

DISTRACTIONS

In order to create content efficiently, you must cut down on distractions.

Try to eliminate absolutely everything that might jerk you out of your flow. Phone: off. Door: closed. Wifi: off (unless you absolutely need it in order to do your work). Celebrity gossip: bookmarked for later.

You can schedule in “pleasure breaks” throughout the day, of course, to briefly indulge in one of your favorite pieces of mind-candy. (Highly recommended!). But when you’re in work-mode: just work. Try to minimize interruptions.

Sooo much better for your brain and creative output. Trust me. And science.

PLEASURE BREAKS

Your brain is not designed to “power through” the entire day, nonstop, without resting.

Your brain is a muscle, and like every muscle in your body, it is capable of doing amazing things — but it also requires periods of rest to reboot and recharge.

I call these “pleasure breaks.”

Batch Days are for getting shit done, but not at the expense of burnout. So take regular breaks when your body is feeling crampy or brain foggy.

Go stretch. Binge an episode of something juicy ([UnREAL](#) is my latest obsession!) Take a stroll. Eat some chocolate. Just give yourself mini pleasure breaks to refresh throughout the day.

SURROUND YOURSELF WITH GOODIES

Once you've selected your magical Batch Day workspace, you may need a few "extras" to get your inspiration churning.

This could be pretty notebooks from [Ban.do](#).

Or gorgeous crystals.

Or Tarot cards.

Or glossy magazines.

Or steamy mugs (or pots) of coffee.

Whatever feels pleasurable for you.

SOUNDTRACK

Do you require absolute silence in order to write? Do you need a little ambient noise, like birdsong or cars rushing by outside? Maybe the gentle clattering of a coffee shop? ([there's an app for that](#). No, seriously.)

Personally, I love writing to epic, dramatic music because it makes me want to write something worthy of that score.

My current favs:

Film scores:

♥ [The Great Gatsby](#)

♥ [Transformers](#)

Artists:

- ♥ [Florence and the Machine](#)
- ♥ [Hozier](#)
- ♥ [Sia](#)
- ♥ [Birdy](#)

If you use Spotify, a streaming music service that many of my friends swear by, check out their collection of music playlists designed to help you focus.

- ♥ [Deep Focus](#)
- ♥ [Peaceful Piano](#)
- ♥ [Brain Food](#)
- ♥ [Perfect Concentration](#)

FRIENDS OR SOLO?

Some people get their best ideas whilst “co-working” with friends.

Other people can't focus if there's any chattering in the room.

Figure out what works for you.

Personally, I prefer to keep my Batch Days a “solo affair.”

I might meet up with girlfriends or biz colleagues a few days BEFORE a scheduled Batch Day to bounce ideas, talk, and get uber-excited.

But when it's time to actually sit down and write, I prefer to be “alone,” even if I'm in a semi-public setting like a coffee shop.

We're all wired differently, so again, I encourage you to see what kind of Batch Day ambience and experience is going to light your creative brain aflame.

If you do choose to bring friends along as part of your Batch Day extravaganza, try designating specific “chit-chat hours” and “quiet hours” where everybody bows their head down and gets to work. That’s an approach that works well for most groups, ensuring that the day is filled with just the right balance of Ben Affleck gossip AND delicious content creation. :)

Batch Day is coming up.



**Wondering what to create?
How to choose the BEST EVER topics to write about.**

You've figured out how much time you need to schedule on your calendar for Batch Days (check!)... you've scheduled your Batch Days like a pro (done!)... you've dreamed up a delectable setting mood, ambience, and music playlist...

The big, hanging question is:

"But what am I gonna WRITE about?"

Here's my fav technique for generating tons of hot topics and concepts that you will LOVE writing about... and that the peeps in your audience will LOVE reading about!

It's called...

WRITING FROM THE HEAT

To unlock your best writing, you've got to find topics that fire you up.

Topics that make you feel frustrated, angry, even furious, or electrified with excitement.

Topics that trigger strong feelings and un-wishy washy opinions.

These kinds of topics take you to a "hot zone" where your ideas flow without effort.

You can't help it. You've just GOT to speak up.

This zone is called... “the heat.”

Throughout the days and weeks leading up to your scheduled Batch Days, build a list of your “heat” ideas.

Bring those to your Batch Day, or feel free to write about something different if inspiration hits.

If you're completely blank with ideas, here are a few prompts to get the wheels turning...

1. Think about your industry (fitness, art, music, coaching, whatever you do). What frustrates you? Why?
2. Think about your clients or customers. What are some things that they do that make you think, “Ohhhh no. Don't do that, sweetheart. There's a better way.” What are those no-no's?
3. What are some of your biggest turn-offs — in life and / or business?
4. What are some of your biggest turn-ons — in life and / or business?
5. Is there something you're hiding? Something you've never felt “safe” revealing in a public setting? What is it?
6. What is something that just flat-out pisses you off?
7. What breaks your heart?
8. Who or what has changed your life and why?
9. What is your secret dream?
10. When was the last time you really pushed yourself or did something you didn't think you could do? What happened?

RECAP

Here's a whittled-down version of everything we just covered:

PHILOSOPHY

In business, it's gotta be fun — or don't bother.

If you're miserable, stressed, or resentful while you're trying to write a blog post (or newsletter, or book, or anything else) **your readers will be able to feel it**. They won't be turned on. They won't be excited. They won't feel compelled to purchase your work. Period.

Get into a relaxed, passionate, excited, “guilty pleasure” kind of place... and create from THAT space. This changes everything. For you AND for your fans.

BATCHING ROCKS

Because it allows you to find your “flow state” and create copious amounts of content in a relatively compressed, focused amount of time. Countless studies have proven: **this is how our brains work best**.

BATCHING IS SIMPLE

- ♥ Do a Test Drive Day to figure out what you can realistically churn out in a single day. Don't put pressure on yourself. Just get focused and see what comes out.
- ♥ Figure out how many pieces of content you intend to create this year, then pre-schedule enough Batch Days to cover everything, plus a few extra for wiggle room and unexpected bursts of inspiration.
- ♥ Make your Batch Days feel like a work-cation, a guilty pleasure, a fabulous escape ... so that you look forward to them and enjoy them to the max!

WRITE FROM THE HEAT

Always choose topics that make you feel fiery, excited, angry, frustrated, even heart-broken. Topics that rile you up. THESE are the topics that will unlock your best-ever writing... and stir up your audience, too.

Collect your “heat topics” in the days and weeks leading up to your next Batch Day so that when it’s time to sit down and create content, you’re not staring at a blank screen. You’re heated up and ready to roll.

LAST BUT NOT LEAST

As a screenwriting mentor told me once over lattes in LA...

“Good work always gets found.”

If you feel “invisible” or “unsuccessful” because you don’t have zillions of adoring fans and a seven-figure business (“uggh, whyyyyy???”)... breathe. Try to relax.

Rather than obsessing (in an unhealthy way) about what you don’t have and how much it sucks, focus on finding new ways to serve, inspire, motivate and delight your fans and customers.

Focus on writing. Focus on podcasting. Focus on whirling out exciting free courses and challenges. Focus on sharing advice and resources with no strings attached. Focus on giving your best ideas away. Focus on building a reputation as THE gal / guy to know.

Before long, people will sit up and take notice. People will say, “Holy glitter balls! Where has this genius been all my life and where can I get more?”

Sooner or later, generous, passionate business owners always get noticed — and rewarded.

Keep creating. Don't quit on yourself or your dreams. Don't quit on the people you feel called to serve.

Good work always gets found!