

North Dakota Department of Transportation

# DBE NEWSLETTER

— April 15, 2026 —

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## Advertisements

**Advertisements are not required. The Bid Opening Sign-In System and Advertisement System have been disabled until further notice.**

The North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT) will consider every request for reasonable accommodation to provide:

- An accessible meeting facility or other accommodation for people with disabilities.
- Language interpretation for people with limited English proficiency (LEP)
- Translations of written material necessary to access NDDOT programs and information.

To request accommodations, contact Heather Christianson, Civil Rights Division, NDDOT at 701-328-2978 or [civilrights@nd.gov](mailto:civilrights@nd.gov) TTY users may use Relay North Dakota at 711 or 1-800-366-6888.

# Upcoming Bid Letting Meeting

[Click Here](#) to access the NDDOT website where you will find the link to join the next meeting.

[Click Here](#) to view the slides from the March 23 DBE Industry Update Meeting.

[Click Here](#) to view the slides from the April 6 DBE Industry Update Meeting.



# Announcements...

## Submit Your PN and PNW by May 31, 2026

North Dakota DBE firms certified prior to October 3, 2025 are encouraged to submit their Personal Narrative (PN) and Personal Net Worth (PNW) statements as soon as possible to complete the required reevaluation under the [DBE Interim Final Rule \(IFR\)](#). These documents are essential for determining continued eligibility in the DBE Program.

Firms that do not submit their PN and PNW by May 31, 2026 will become temporarily ineligible to be counted toward DBE participation on federal-aid projects nationwide.

The DBE Directory will reopen on June 1, 2026, and only firms that have completed the reevaluation and been found eligible will appear when it goes live.

Submitting early ensures that your firm remains active and visible when the updated Directory is published.

Once ready, please upload your documents to the open Q&A section of your Certification Record in the Certification and Compliance System.

### How to Access the Q&As in the Certification and Compliance System:

- To complete the Q&A from the email link, here are some steps you can follow:
  1. Login
  2. On the left menu, click 'View' >> My Certifications
  3. Click the 'Respond' Link to the right of your application (the bottom of the Applications section of Cert List)
  4. Click on the Q&A tab (located at the top of the screen), then the 'Answer' link
  5. Enter an answer in the "Answer" text box
  6. Click on the 'Attach File' button
  7. Click Browse >> double click on your document >> click Attach File button >> and Close Window
  8. Select a document format
  9. Click on Next/Review and Submit
- To access the Q&A if you don't have the link from the email (from the Dashboard):
  1. Go to *My Certifications*
  2. Scroll down to Applications
  3. Find the latest ND Application and click *View*
  4. At the top of that page should be tabs one of which is Q&A
  5. Click the Q&A tab to see the latest Q&As from NDDOT

**If you choose not to proceed with reevaluation,  
please submit a written withdrawal to [civilrights@nd.gov](mailto:civilrights@nd.gov).**

### Subcontractor Prequalification Reminder

Ensure your subcontractor prequalification is complete in the CSS. You can do that [Here](#).

This is required to bid as a subcontractor since the DBE program is on hold.

## Subcontractor Registration

SUBCONTRACTOR REGISTRATION is required annually (expiring December 31) for contractors who wish to be approved as a subcontractor and are not currently pre-qualified to bid as a prime contractor or certified as a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE).

SUBCONTRACTOR REGISTRATION Application

Search Registered Vendors

# CONTENT MARKETING 101

In today's hyper-connected world, where consumers are bombarded with information at every click and swipe, many companies are finding that content marketing can offer a powerful addition to modern marketing strategies that enhances the impact of existing advertising material and helps build relationships between companies and customers. In this article, we'll look at what content marketing is, why it's valuable, and what you can do to incorporate it into your business's marketing strategy.



## What is Content Marketing?

Traditional advertising focuses its efforts on offering reminders of the existence and value of a company's products. Content marketing, in contrast, focuses on providing content that is valuable to customers and relevant to issues that business can help them solve with the intention of creating a connection with those customers. For example, while a company selling reusable water bottles via traditional advertising might put out a commercial talking about their bottles' affordability and quality craftsmanship in the hope that customers will see the value they offer, a company selling those bottles via content marketing might develop an article explaining the damage that plastic water bottles do to the environment and the ways in which that damage can end up impacting readers' quality of life.



## The Value of Content Marketing

The fact that the company using content marketing in that example doesn't focus on the fact that they're selling reusable water bottles makes it easy to wonder what the point of their article is as a marketing strategy. To understand how it's effective, it is necessary to understand the way content marketing creates value. The goal of content marketing is to generate revenue through relationships, trust, and loyalty.

Creating valuable content on a regular basis positions your company as a voice of authority, drives engagement by positioning your marketing material as a useful addition to customers' lives instead of a noisy interruption, and improves your SEO so that your company is more likely to appear when customers look for information about your market. The point of the example article, at least in terms of advertisement, is to create brand awareness and trust. It might not say much about the company's bottles, but it says a lot about the importance of those bottles. The article positions the company as a source of trustworthy information and value to the consumer and then uses that relationship to create sales by being a likely result when customers look up information on the topic or the product online and linking their content to their storefront. Content marketing creates additional value due to its relatively low cost. Because content is generally housed on preexisting websites or archives and relies on word of mouth and search engines to generate views, it can be significantly cheaper to produce than traditional advertising material.

It's also important to recognize that the two approaches described are not mutually exclusive, they can, and should, be used in tandem. If someone reads an article about the damage caused by plastic bottles and then sees an advertisement about how great your reusable bottles are, they are more likely to make a purchase because the two approaches combine to present your company as a voice of authority and a source of high-quality goods.

## How to Create a Content Marketing Strategy

Content marketing strategies can vary wildly from business to business, so there isn't a single best way to develop your strategy. However, the rest of this article will provide a simple guide with steps that you can follow as you decide what content marketing looks like for your business.

- 1. Define your Audience:** Because content marketing is all about gaining and maintaining the attention and loyalty of your audience, the material you create needs to be generated with that audience in mind. Before you begin developing content, develop an image of the audience you want it to appeal to. A great way to do this is to create a profile for a hypothetical customer you can cater to. Try to answer key questions like: who is my audience currently? What demographics do I want to cater to? What sources of tension are they facing that are relevant to my product and how can my business help ease those tensions? Once you understand what your audience wants and what kind of content they are likely to respond well to, you can work on developing content that speaks to them.
- 2. Define your Goals:** The content you make risks becoming less relevant if it isn't designed to accomplish something specific, so as you begin developing your strategy, develop it with a goal in mind. That might be introducing a new product, increasing customer loyalty, generating new leads, or something else entirely, but whatever it is will ground your content, give it purpose, and give you guidance on what kinds of content to make. For example, a whitepaper about a topic relevant to your customers might be better at drawing in new customers, while an instructional video that provides a demonstration of your new product will give that item a stronger introduction.
- 3. Define your Voice:** Once you know what you're saying and who you're saying it to, you need to decide how to say it. Developing the right voice is vital to a successful campaign. What that voice is will be unique to your company and your current marketing strategy. What matters is that it feels on-brand, resonates with your audience, can be maintained consistently across platforms, and is appropriate for the kind of content you're making.
- 4. Define your Space:** Next, you need to decide where you are housing the content you produce. If it's a video, you'll need to decide whether to host it on your site or on a video platform. If you choose the latter, you'll need to decide whether your content would work best on a longform service like YouTube or something shorter like TikTok. If it's a blog, do you post it on a company website or social media platforms? Do you publish your own white papers or sponsor papers published elsewhere? These don't have to be mutually exclusive, and you should try to broadcast your content through as many avenues as possible and develop content that caters to multiple outlets and formats to increase your exposure, but figuring out which platforms you will use ahead of time will define the shapes your content takes and will inform the audience you can speak to.
- 5. Define your Schedule:** To achieve its maximum effectiveness, content marketing should be consistently paced over a long period of time. Modern search algorithms value consistency, so keeping your content flowing at a regular pace improves your search engine placement. At the same time, it helps keep your brand in the minds of its customers, since they know when to look forward to new content. At the same time, it's important not to move too quickly. Posting too much content too fast will make it more likely that customers will begin to find it annoying, and the whole point is to make your marketing material something they want to see. Posting material also means creating that material, and there is a limit on how much high-quality material your company will be able to produce within any given amount of time. Putting out low quality content will reduce the effectiveness of your marketing, so it's better to create one really good article a month, for example, than daily articles no one wants to read.



Once you have a clear definition of your audience, goals, voice, space, and schedule, you should be ready to start developing and releasing content. Don't assume your content marketing strategy will be an immediate viral hit, though. It will likely take time to build up momentum and develop a backlog of evergreen content that new customers can look through. Your strategy will also probably need some fine tuning, so track your content's performance over time and adjust as needed until you feel that your content speaks to your customers and benefits your company in the ways you want it to.

## Did You Know...

### Personal Narrative Assistance and Support Materials

Project Solutions, Inc., the DBE Supportive Services Consultant, offers one-on-one assistance to firms needing help drafting their Personal Narrative.

To support your preparation, the following resources are available on the [NDDOT DBE website under Interim Final Rule \(IFR\) – Information](#):

- Personal Narrative Workshop recording
- PowerPoint slides
- Workbook and writing guidance

These materials provide step-by-step help for completing the Personal Narrative and are recommended for all firms beginning their reevaluation.

To schedule time with a consultant, email [db@projectsolutionsinc.com](mailto:db@projectsolutionsinc.com).

## Upcoming Events/Training

Apr.  
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### Introduction to [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov)

Webinar

Tuesday, April 21, 2026 | 11:00 A.M. CT | Cost: Free

[Learn More >](#)

Apr.  
21

### Tax Basics 101

Webinar

Tuesday, April 21, 2026 | 1:30 P.M. CT | Cost: Free

[Learn More >](#)

Apr.  
22

### Put Microsoft CoPilot To Work In Your Business

Webinar

Wednesday, April 22, 2026 | 6:30 P.M. CT | Cost: \$10

[Learn More >](#)

Apr.  
29

### Mastering Workplace Safety Audits: A Step-by-Step Guide

Webinar

Wednesday, April 29, 2026 | 1:00 P.M. CT | Cost: Free

[Learn More >](#)

May  
5 - 7

### National Tribal Road Maintenance Symposium

Box Elder Events Center | 631 WaTiki Way, Box Elder, SD 57719

Tuesday - Thursday, May 5 - 7, 2026 | 8:00 A.M. CT | Cost: \$125

[Learn More >](#)



# Time Management Hacks for Busy Entrepreneurs

Between managing business operations, meeting clients, developing growth opportunities, and innovating on the fly, entrepreneurs often find themselves stretched thin and overwhelmed by impossible demands on their time. In this article, we will look at practical time management strategies to help you make the most of your time while improving your business operations and your life. Whether you're a startup founder wearing multiple hats or a seasoned business owner looking to streamline your day, these strategies will help you work smarter and use your time more efficiently so that you can focus on what truly matters to you.



## Start with a Time Audit

Before you can manage your time effectively, you need to understand where your time is being spent. A great way to get an understanding of your starting point is to perform a time audit. To do this, spend a week tracking your activities in 15-minute increments. There are software platforms that assist with this tracking, but a notepad and pencil are all you need if you prefer to keep things simple. As you go through your day every day for a week, write down everything you do every day, both in and out of work, and then examine the end results as you wrap up your week. This will give you invaluable insight into your actual schedule, which can vary wildly from the assumptions you make about the way your days play out. It might be easier to understand why you aren't accomplishing your primary tasks when you realize that you spend 20 minutes out of every hour checking emails, for example, or to see how your work-life balance has become skewed when your audit shows you leaving work at 6:45 instead of 5:00 most nights.

Time audits are very useful tools for developing an objective picture of your days, but there are a couple simple tricks you can employ to make them even stronger. First, make sure that whenever possible you are documenting your activities as they happen rather than in big batches during lunch or at the end of the day. Delaying data entry will make you more likely to forget details or give inaccurate information which will skew the results of the audit, so remind yourself to write what you're doing while it's happening, or as you wrap up each activity, to maximize clarity. Second, developing goals for each day and adding them to the notecards the night before will allow you to compare what you wanted to accomplish against what you actually did, which gives you a useful benchmark for progress and better insight into which activities are necessary, and which are distracting you from reaching your goals.



### **Prioritize Tasks**

Something you will likely discover as you review your audit is that not all of your tasks are of equal importance. Some of the things you do each day are vital to your business's success, while others are less valuable, and some aren't valuable at all and simply waste your time. Once you have an inventory of the things you do on a regular basis, examine each one and determine their value to you. There are a variety of methods for rating the value of tasks, with common methodologies including the use of the Pareto Principle, which says that 80% of your results will come from 20% of your tasks and advises you prioritize that 20% aggressively, or the Eisenhower Matrix, which divides tasks into four categories of importance (urgent and important, urgent and not important, not important and urgent, and not urgent and not important) and suggests prioritizing the tasks that are both urgent and important. Find a methodology that works for your needs and rank your activities according to their importance. If you find tasks that aren't helping you reach your goals, or that are so miniscule in their effect that they don't justify the time spent accomplishing them, you can begin saving time right away by cutting them out of your schedule entirely.

### **Don't Forget to Delegate**

As you review your tasks, remember that being the owner of a business doesn't mean you have to do all the work. There will probably be work that doesn't suit your skill set or seem worth your time but is valuable for your business nonetheless. These are tasks that should be delegated, either by assigning them to other employees or outsourcing

them. For some tasks, like basic customer service or data indexing, you can use automated services or AI to remove the need for human involvement entirely. As you develop your business, hire people you can trust to handle the jobs you can't so that you can focus your time on the tasks you do best while delegating the rest.



## Create a Time Blocked Calendar

A common problem entrepreneurs run into when attempting to optimize their time is reactivity. If you don't have a schedule for the day, it's far too easy to get swept up in the flow of work and become trapped in a cycle of reacting to whatever emergency presents itself, working hours you didn't mean to on tasks you didn't intend to prioritize, only to end the day without feeling like you really accomplished anything. To escape this trap, avoid being overly reactive by designing your day ahead of time through a time blocked calendar. Devote the end of each day to planning your next one, making sure to include scheduled times to do tasks that distract you from your core work like answering emails or making phone calls, time for deep and uninterrupted work, time to do things other than work, and time that's unscheduled to prepare for emergencies or to give yourself a chance to think ahead. This way, you can start each day knowing what you need to get done and measure your progress throughout the day to keep yourself on track. Doing this scheduling in 30-minute chunks allows you to implement the highly effective Pomodoro Technique, which advocates for working on one task for 25 minutes before taking a 5-minute break, repeating that cycle 4 times, and then taking a longer break before resetting. These small breaks improve focus and increase energy, which will let you get more done overall. Having a schedule doesn't mean you can't adapt, though. Don't be afraid to make changes if an emergency arises, just do your best to create a routine that lets you take control of your time and meet your goals consistently.