



How creative branded content grows more revenue

A little about David Arkin

- 20 years of content and audience experience
- Was head of content at GateHouse Media (Gannett)
- Co-owned a unique real estate solution in Dallas, Texas
- Works with newspapers, TV stations, magazines, digital only



David Arkin

Founder

David Arkin Consulting

Services

- Fractional audience
- SEO
- Branded content
- Social media
- Newsletters
- Organic content

What we'll be covering today

- What is branded content?
- Why branded matters for businesses
- Why being creative matters so much
- Examples, examples and more examples

**How would you
define branded content?**

Branded content is content that's created (in collaboration with a publisher) that entertains, educates, or informs audiences while subtly promoting the brand's values and messaging.

What *isn't* branded content?

Branded content is not an advertorial or an ad, it's an experience

- It isn't distracting. Instead, it adds to the reader's experience.
- It doesn't trick someone into reading something it's not
- It's not written by an ad rep or someone trying to sell a product

Branded content can propel a brand

- Customer success stories
- Industry / subject matter expertise & key insights
- Community causes & corporate social responsibility initiatives

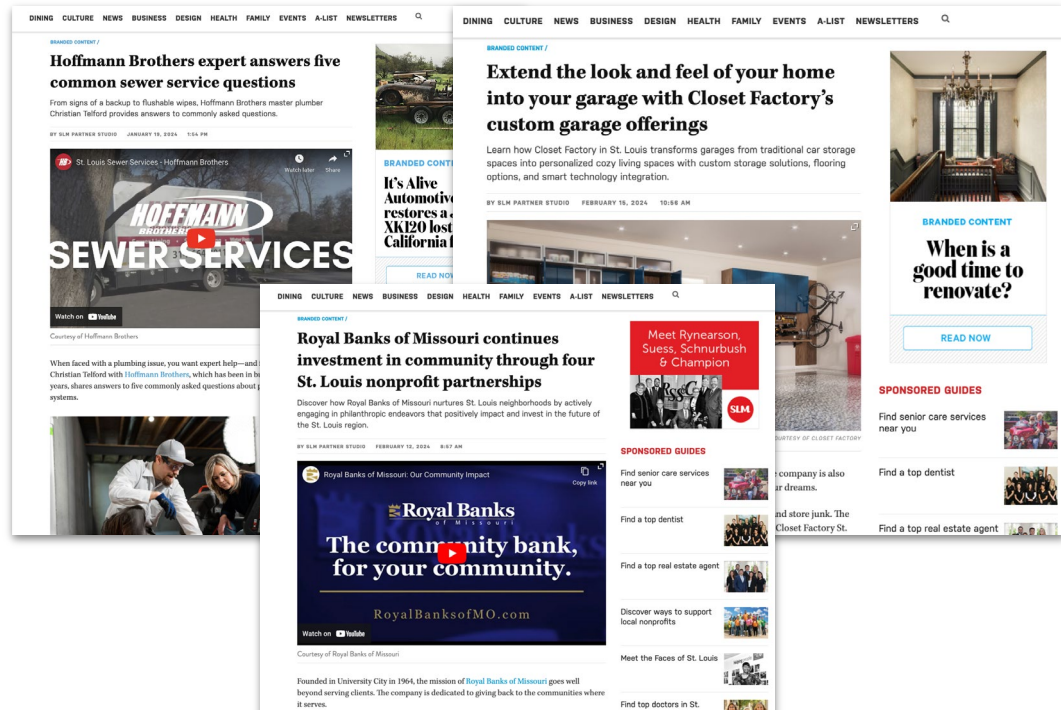


Meet two St. Louis families who turned their kitchens upside down and couldn't be happier with the end result

Callier & Thompson Kitchens, Baths and Appliances can take your remodel to the next level.

Industries that are a great fit

- Travel
- Real estate
- Interior Design
- Law
- Medical
- Retail
- Home Services
- Beauty
- Education
- Financial Services



The numbers show this really works

74%

of consumers prefer to get information about a company via branded content vs traditional advertising.

68%

of consumers prefer custom content because it is tailored to their interests.

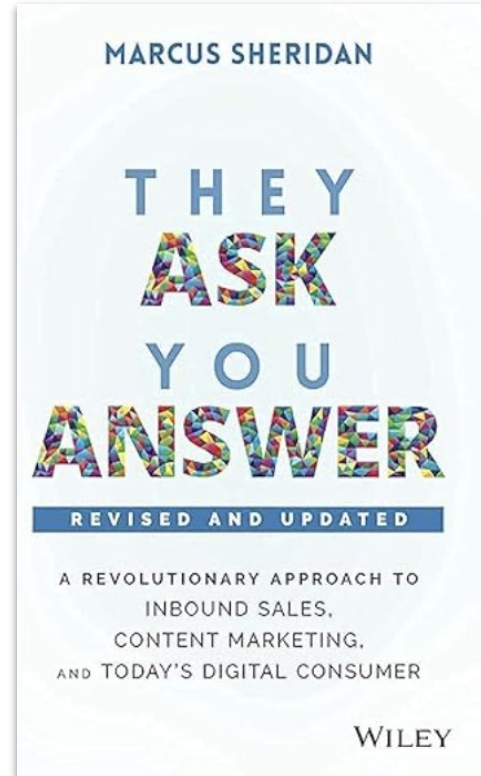
78%

of marketing professionals believe that branded content is more effective than traditional advertising.

They ask, you answer

We use a unique branded marketing model that centers on what's best for the customer:

- Cost and pricing
- Problems (yours)
- Comparisons and versus
- Best of lists (best in class, best practices)
- Reviews



Multi-month campaigns are most effective

- 3-month minimum campaigns help the advertiser create momentum
- They help media companies understand what's working
- They create a library of content with the advertiser
- They develop a view of what might work in the future

All of the places you should distribute

- On your website
- Newsletters
- Social media
- Great SEO
- Add on opportunities



What's in a branded content package?

Placements

- One week on homepage
- One week on website section (depends on package)
- Forever in Partner content section

Distribution Elements

- Display campaign linking to article
- 2-4X placement in newsletters
- 1-2X placement on Facebook and Instagram Stories



Features	Basic	Deluxe	Premium package
Story on website, unlimited photos, placement on homepage	✓ Homepage story, 1 section front (1 week)	✓ Homepage story, 1 section front (2 weeks)	✓ Homepage story, 1 section front (2 weeks)
Social post (Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook)	IG Stories 2X Twitter 2X Facebook 2X	IG Stories 2X Twitter 2X Facebook 2X	IG Stories 3X Twitter 3X Facebook 3X
Paid social media campaign			✓
Digital display ads	✓	✓	✓
Story featured in newsletter	✓ In 1 newsletter	✓ In 2 newsletters	✓ In 3 newsletters
Print branding ad		Quarter ✓	Half ✓
Pricing	\$1,000/1 story	\$1,500/1 story	\$2,000/1 story

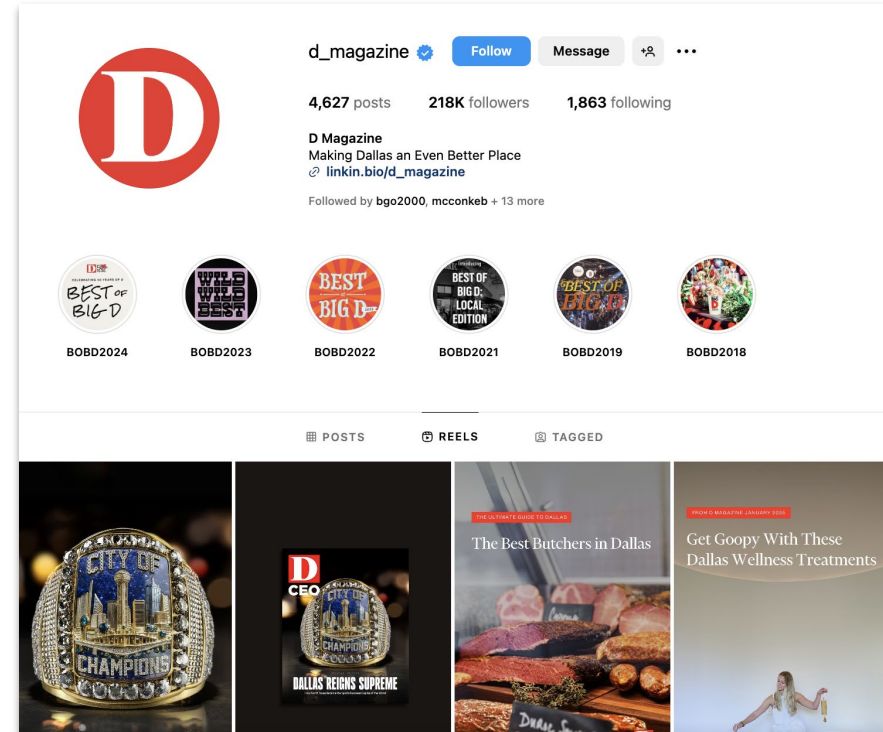
More ways to promote

Reels

- Have your story showcased in a Reel
- Handle the creation, distribution

Email blasts

- Reach a targeted audience through your email database
- A great way to promote the content and your brand in front of an engaged audience



**Let's look at some unique
ways to sell and promote**

How ad reps can pitch branded content

- **Follow Facebook Groups:** Spot trending industry topics and community discussions.
- **Use Google Alerts:** Track key accounts and industry news.
- **Monitor Social Media & Newsletters:** Stay updated on advertiser and industry trends.
- **Leverage Search Trends & AI Tools:** Discover audience questions via Google Trends, SEMRush, and AI-generated insights.
- **Ask Advertisers Directly:** Identify content opportunities by discussing customer FAQs and popular products.

Use the power of email marketing

- Create a targeted email series to engage prospective advertisers.
- Similar to a newsletter welcome series, but designed for branded sales
- Use a three-email structure:

Email 1: Introduction to the branded content program.

Email 2: How the program benefits advertisers.

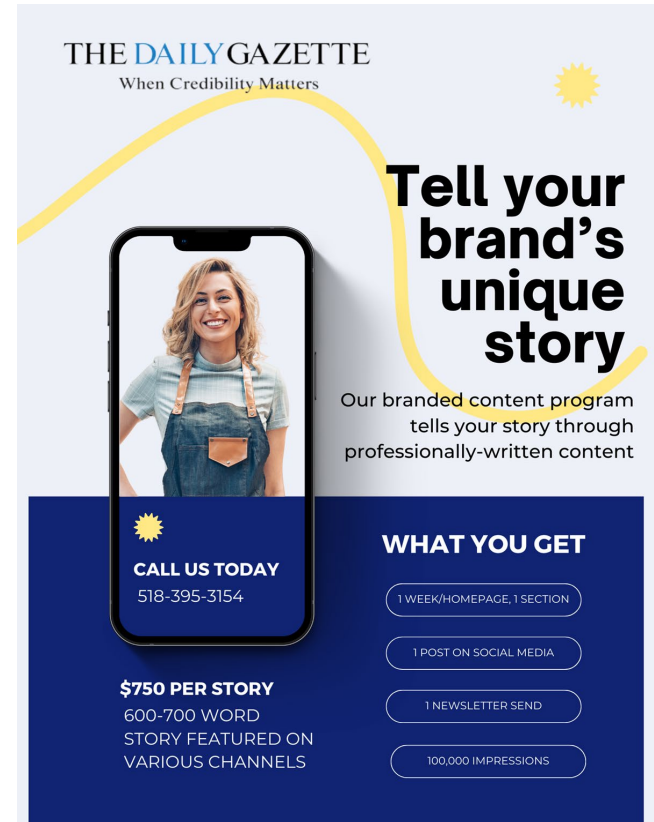
Email 3: Case study (if available) or why you believe in the program.

Use the power of email marketing

- Segment your list so the right advertisers get the right messages
 - Exclude existing branded content advertisers.
 - Target potential new buyers.
- Time of year matters, so does what you're working on
 - Launch during unique times of the year (e.g., year-end promotions).
 - Pair with high-performing sections and offer bundled packages

Material to show a potential advertiser

- Have ready-to-send materials to introduce branded content to prospects.
- Outline program details, benefits, and examples to share with potential advertisers.
- Position it as an easy add-on to existing ad packages.



THE DAILY GAZETTE
When Credibility Matters

Tell your brand's unique story

Our branded content program tells your story through professionally-written content

CALL US TODAY
518-395-3154

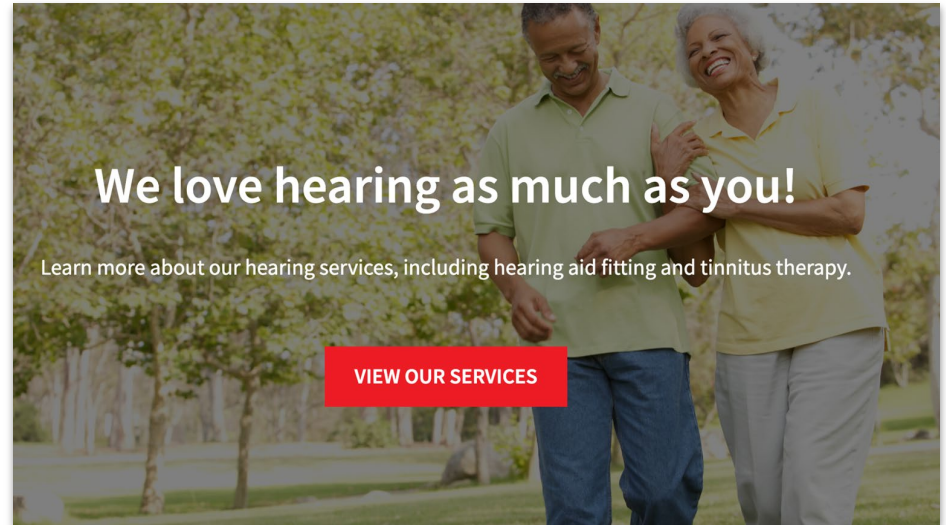
\$750 PER STORY
600-700 WORD
STORY FEATURED ON
VARIOUS CHANNELS

WHAT YOU GET

- 1 WEEK/HOMEPAGE, 1 SECTION
- 1 POST ON SOCIAL MEDIA
- 1 NEWSLETTER SEND
- 100,000 IMPRESSIONS

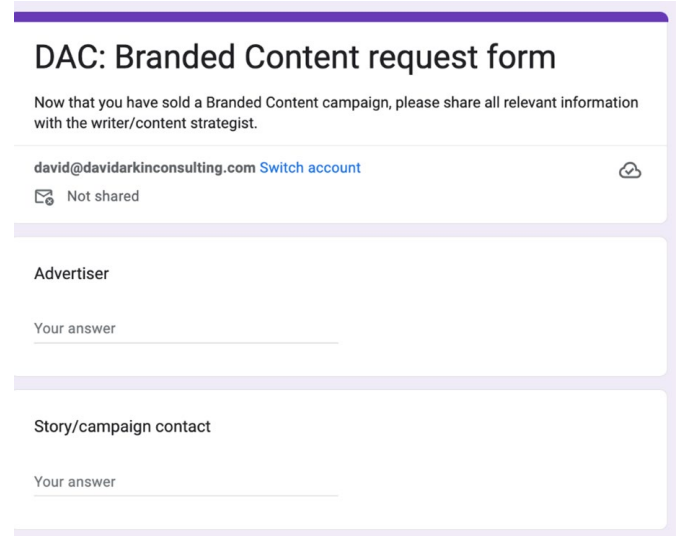
Make branded content specs (content)

- Create branded content spec ads by taking basics on the business and creating a prompt asking for a series of articles
- Create print and digital branded content ads, showing some of the content but not all
- Goal is to not use the content but get them excited




Involving a strategist


- Bring the writer/content strategist in as soon as possible after the sale – or even during the pitch
- Having a strategist present can strengthen the advertiser's confidence.
- If the strategist wasn't part of the sales process, meet with them after to outline key advertiser details.
- Streamline info gathering with a [structured form](#)



DAC: Branded Content request form

Now that you have sold a Branded Content campaign, please share all relevant information with the writer/content strategist.

david@davidarkinconsulting.com [Switch account](#) 

 Not shared

Advertiser

Your answer _____

Story/campaign contact

Your answer _____

Keywords drive the brainstorming process

- What are the top keywords around the business
- What questions are users asking about the industry
- Keywords can help drive the story selection process
- How we can align those keywords in the areas that grow the SEO

Keyword	Modifiers	Search Vol
kitchen remodels before and after	comparisons/and	4.4K
kitchen remodels before and after	related	4.4K
kitchen remodels 2024	related	30
kitchen remodels near me	related	49.5K
kitchen remodels on a budget	related	3.6K
kitchen remodels ideas	related	33.1K
kitchen remodels before and after pictures	related	320
kitchen remodels for small kitchens	related	9.9K

Have a tool that helps you manage it all

- Keep tabs on deadlines, approvals, and content production
- Anyone involved in the fulfillment process should be involved
- Creates a library of sorts for the content and tracking
- Use same sheet for analytics performance ([Link](#))

Branded content Calendar							
Date	Client Name	Story topic	Made Live		Link	Number of stories	Schedule Social Posts
	Name of client		Date	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Add link		5/19; 6/7 — 2 dates (FB, IG)
Aug 8	Name of client		Date	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Add link		5/12; 5/23 — 2 dates (FB, IG)
Aug 15	Name of client		Date	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Add link		7/19; 8/02 — 2 dates (FB, IG)

Important metrics to consider

Branded content metrics convert a passive user to an interested reader

- Time spent on the story
- Cross channel impressions
- Social media reach and plays
- Page views of the article



**Let's look at some
creative campaigns**

Examples: Build organized campaigns

10 of the best places to see Christmas lights across North Texas

Dec 12, 2022 Updated Dec 21, 2022



 **SPONSORED CONTENT**

When this couple learned a beautiful Celina home was being sold off market, they jumped at the chance to grab it

David Arkin | Jun 7, 2022 Updated Oct 20, 2022



From mortgage rates to buying now or waiting, here are 5 answers to your most burning DFW real estate questions

Oct 21, 2022 Updated Oct 26, 2022



3-month real estate campaign: Local expert advice, people and community content



Examples: Get creative

BRANDED CONTENT /

15 things to know about Pappy's Smokehouse as it celebrates 15 years

This year, Pappy's marks a milestone while serving up Memphis-style barbecue.

BY SLM PARTNER STUDIO OCTOBER 16, 2023 10:02 AM



SPONSORED POST

5 reasons why your family will love living in Rockville Centre, according to this Long Island real estate agent

Posted September 12, 2023

5 REASONS YOUR FAMILY WILL LOVE LIVING IN ROCKVILLE CENTRE



LI real estate agent Tiffany Balanoff shares her tips and top picks



@DouglasEllman **HERALD**
Community Newspapers

Examples: Get creative

[FEATURED](#) [SPOTLIGHT](#)

5 suburbs perfect for families in North Texas

Sep 27, 2023 Updated Sep 27, 2023



Is it OK to Give Your Kids Ice Cream?

Parents know that dairy foods are packed with nutrition but are there any benefits to dairy treats? An expert shares

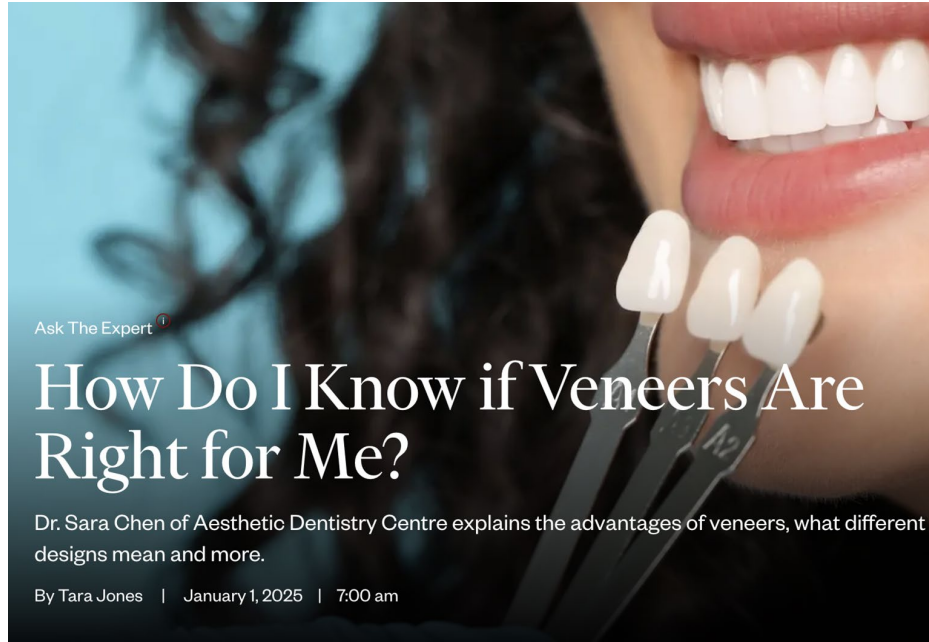
By Jenny Kales | June 16, 2023

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Ask The Expert ¹

How Do I Know if Veneers Are Right for Me?

Dr. Sara Chen of Aesthetic Dentistry Centre explains the advantages of veneers, what different designs mean and more.

By Tara Jones | January 1, 2025 | 7:00 am

Partner Content [Ⓞ]

3 Reasons Why Professionals Are Flocking to Allen, Texas

From its accessible location to unique entertainment scene, see why professionals are choosing Allen

By **Tara Jones** | December 17, 2024 | 7:00 am



© CREDIT UNION OF TEXAS

Enjoy a cozy fall getaway in Effingham, Illinois

Follow this detailed itinerary to catch a show at Effingham Performance Center, enjoy brunch on the patio at Firefly Grill, and more.

SATURDAY

9 a.m.: Grab coffee from [Joe Sipper's](#), and head to the [farmers' market](#). What's a beautiful fall crisp morning without a cup of joe? Head to [Joe Sipper's](#), a "well-loved cafe with delicious coffee and food" as Kawate describes it, for a seasonal coffee and a light breakfast. Before you leave, pick up a cultural guide to the city to help explore downtown. Then, head to Jefferson Avenue for the weekly [farmers' market](#), located on the lawn of the historic [Effingham Courthouse Museum](#). The market remains open through the end of October. It features fresh fruits and vegetables, handmade items, and other vendors, as well as live entertainment.

10 a.m.: Explore [boutique shopping and public art in downtown Effingham](#)

Afterward, continue your trek through downtown Effingham, where you'll find a number of unique places to shop including [Baseball Card Connection](#), [America's Groove Record Store](#), [Millennium Accessories](#), and [The Last Straw Home Accents & Gifts](#). Along the way, enjoy [Sculptures on the Avenue](#), a self-guided walking tour ending at City Hall's "Flame of Hope" piece, which started it all.



Branded Content

What to ask at your next dispensary visit

Kind Goods professionals provide tips to guide your first or next trip to the dispensary.

Thinking about trying cannabis but not sure where to start? [Kind Goods](#) has been voted the [Best Cannabis Dispensary](#) in *SLM's* A-List Readers' Choice Awards for three straight years.

The budtenders at Kind Goods have the insights you need to make informed choices, whether it's your first time or you're exploring new ways to enjoy cannabis. Here's what they suggest asking—and their answers for each.

1. What's the difference between edibles, flower, and vapes?

Naomi: Think of it like a restaurant menu. Flower is a 'full-course meal' with rich flavors, edibles are a 'slow-cooked dish' with delayed effects, and vapes are a 'quick bite' for fast satisfaction.

Cory: Each method is absorbed differently in the body, which affects how long the effects last. Edibles are great for sustained relief, while vaping and smoking offer quick, short-lived effects.

Robb: Edibles are more predictable for dose control, but smoking or vaping offers more flexibility. Beginners might prefer edibles if they want a controlled experience.

Educational Insight: *Each method's bioavailability—the percentage of cannabinoids that enter your bloodstream—varies. Smoking or vaping generally has a higher bioavailability than edibles, which means it's often more efficient with smaller doses. Edibles are also influenced by your metabolism, making them longer-lasting but less predictable in timing.*

Examples: Get creative

Branded Content

Can a decluttered garage improve quality of life? These St. Louis residents say yes

See how Garage Living helped St. Louis homeowners reimagine their garage and unlock its potential.

By SLM Partner Studio

January 29, 2025 at 9:51 AM



Why Focus on the Garage?

For many, the garage is a high-traffic area that serves as an entry point to the home, a workshop, or even a storage hub. Yet it's often neglected when it comes to thoughtful design. That's a missed opportunity, according to Garage Living.

"A cluttered garage isn't just an eyesore—it's a source of stress," says one of the company's design experts. "We help homeowners reimagine this space so it works for their unique needs, whether that's making room for hobbies, improving organization, or simply creating a polished look they can be proud of."



Examples: Get creative

5 key ways Strategic elevates the wealth management experience

Dec 20, 2024 0



1. Strategic is a fiduciary

What it is: Fiduciaries are legally required to act in your best interests when providing financial advice.

How it works: As a Registered Investment Advisor (RIA), they prioritize your financial goals and needs above all else, and are upfront about any potential conflicts. Unlike other firms that may follow a "suitability" standard, which only requires recommendations to be suitable (not necessarily in your best interest), RIA's go further to ensure that every piece of advice, every investment strategy and every portfolio recommendation is tailored to serve your unique financial situation.

Examples: Get creative

st louis dogwood canyon best time to visit

All Short videos Forums Images Maps Videos News : More

◆ AI Overview


Dogwood Canyon Nature Park, located near Lampe, Missouri, is beautiful year-round, but **August and September** offer a more intimate experience with fewer crowds, while fall (October) is known for vibrant foliage, [according to St. Louis Magazine](#) and Dogwood Canyon's website. 🌐

Here's a more detailed breakdown:

Spring (April):
While April is often associated with flowering dogwoods, the park's website and Facebook pages are good resources for checking the current bloom status, as it can vary year to year. 🌐

Show more ▾

August and September are ideal months to visit Dogwood Canyon, as the summer crowds have thinned out, offering a more intimate experience with nature. Aug 19, 2024

 St. Louis Magazine
<https://www.stlmag.com/branded-content/dogwood-...>

[Beat The Crowds By Visiting Dogwood Canyon In August And](#)

Beat the crowds by visiting Dogwood Canyon in August and September

Late summer is the ideal time to enjoy a range of memorable outdoor experiences at the popular attraction.

By SLM Partner Studio

August 19, 2024 at 9:46 AM



As summer winds down and the heat begins to mellow, there's no better time to plan an escape to [Dogwood Canyon Nature Park](#).

Nestled in the Ozark Mountains near the Missouri-Arkansas border, this sprawling 10,000-acre paradise offers a serene retreat that's perfect for families looking to soak in the last rays of summer sunshine.

August and September are ideal months to visit Dogwood Canyon, as the summer crowds have thinned out, offering a more intimate experience with nature.

Example: Be mindful of what Google likes

Holiday Wonderland Tours

If you're looking for a holiday-themed tour, check out these options to see some of Big Cedar Lodge's scenic 4,600 acres. You can explore the grounds in a variety of ways: lace up your hiking boots, hop in the car, or enjoy a scenic tram ride.

[Home For The Holidays Self-Guided Light Tour](#)

Take a journey in the comfort of your own vehicle through the story of Christmas. Hot chocolate, s'mores, and souvenirs are available for purchase. Reservations are highly recommended.

DETAILS

- **Price:** \$40 for cars and SUVs; \$60 for mini bus
- **When:** Nightly from 5–10 p.m.
- **Where:** Check in at the Big Cedar entrance off the roundabout

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING: "This place is so incredible! The cabin is super cool and overlooking the water. The staff is amazing! Our trip started this week and ends at Christmas. The lights are awesome!" *–Kaleb Garcia*

McCormick Tribune Ice Rink

Where: Millennium Park

When: Beginning Nov. 17, 2023, through March 3, 2024 (Weather permitting)

Highlights: Admission is always free! Families will enjoy free beginner to intermediate skating and hockey skills lessons every Saturday and Sunday from 9–10 a.m. [Check out the ice rink website](#) to find the full lesson schedule and book your skating reservations.

Tip: "Skating times **must be reserved online** and **skating lessons require reservations**. Be sure to plan your trip in advance," says Villafranca. Go to the [Millennium Park website](#) to plan your visit.

Extra tip: Discounted parking is available for pre-purchase at [Millennium Garages](#).

What Google is looking for: Personal experiences, showing you are an expert

Another Google best practice

1. Establish the details of the remodel. To get your remodel started, you'll meet with one of Crescent Plumbing Supply's skilled and experienced design consultants, who will get all of the basic details of your project and go over your budget, timeline, and other parameters of the remodel. At this point in the process, it's not mandatory to have a contractor or team of professionals lined up, but if you do, share that with the design consultant so they can coordinate on the project. Don't have a contractor lined up? Crescent can connect you with a number of preferred vendors.

Designer Tip: *Consider how you will use this room/rooms in your home, and how you want your space to feel. For the kitchen, do you need more than a kitchen faucet? (i.e. pot filler, soap dispenser, disposal button, instant hot water?) For your sink, do you prefer one large basin or two separate spaces? And in the bathroom, how will you use this space? Would you like a hand shower for easier cleaning? All of these thoughts help to create the spaces you will love to live in. —Carter*

How we help publishers with branded content, audience growth



We provide branded content services for newspapers, city magazines, parent magazines, TV stations and more

- We have a branded content bootcamp that helps you perfect your strategy or have one built for you from scratch
- We can serve as your content strategist including writing the content for you



Let's chat

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