



The Content Man

The information you need to optimize your web content.

How to write a case study

By The Content Man

Case studies are among the best content you can put on your website. They instill confidence, prove your experience, and give your visitors something to click on and read--making your site stickier.

Writing case studies is actually rather easy, because you can follow a pretty standard format. Here's my advice for structuring a case study:

Start with a challenge. Make this section brief, a paragraph at the most. "A telecom company needed to find new customers in a hurry..." "A retail chain wanted to announce a new line of goods..." "A service company needed a better way to keep track of customer requests..."

Then they found a solution. Again, this section should be brief, one or two paragraphs. "After talking to several vendors, the telecom company decided to..." "After a thorough internal review, the company chose..." "They looked at several competitors, but wanted a solution that could really..."

Reaping the benefits. This is the bulk of your story. Devote a paragraph to each benefit. Include any factual support you can, such as a statistic or a customer quote. "Since the solution was installed, the company has enjoyed increased sales..." "The company has increased productivity by 50% thanks to..." "Service levels are up dramatically since the new system was installed..."

Support was great. It's always good to tell people how great your support is. This section only needs to be a paragraph. "Thanks to outstanding support, the company has never missed a beat..." "Implementation and all the support since has been exceptional, says the company..." "Support not only helped the company get started, but with the knowledge transfer..."

What's next? This makes a good forward-looking wrap-up for the story. "The company is now looking to expand the use of the product..." "People across the company have expressed an interest in the solution, since they've seen what it has done for..." "Now that the main challenge has been met, the company is looking to leverage its investment..."

The above organization works with just about any product or service and any customer. Be sure to use lots of quotes from the customer in your story. And, keep the writing relaxed and friendly. Remember, most people don't want all the gory details. What readers really want to know is, did your product work, is the customer happy, and how did your product help them?

One final note: if you still find it hard to write a good case study, you can take the story as far as you can by yourself, then hire an editor to polish it for you. That extra step won't cost much, but will make a big difference in the quality of your story!