Roger Match
SEO & AI SEARCH CONTENT STRATEGIST

The *SME* Interview Process for *Great SEO and AI Search Content*

Generic content is everywhere. Real expertise is harder to find.

SME-led content brings something AI alone can't: **first-hand experience, original perspectives and advice worth trusting.**

But turning that expertise into SEO and AI search content takes more than asking a few questions. **It takes a process.**

Why Expertise Matters for Search Content

Expertise is strongest when it comes from real experience. Google says helpful content can demonstrate first-hand expertise and depth of knowledge.

SOURCE **Google Search Central**

Google encourages **original information and insights** beyond what's already available.

SOURCE **Google Search Central**

75%

say **expert-led content sparked interest** in a previously unconsidered product or service.

SOURCE **Edelman-LinkedIn, 2024**

Stage 1: Qualify Search Opportunities for SME-Led Content

Establish a clear rationale for SME involvement by assessing **where expert knowledge can add value.**

Content differentiation

Can expert insights introduce meaningful depth or perspective beyond what currently ranks?

Evidence and experience

Would first-hand knowledge strengthen the accuracy, specificity, or credibility of the content?

Depth of analysis

Does the topic benefit from interpretation and professional judgment rather than factual explanation alone?

Reader value

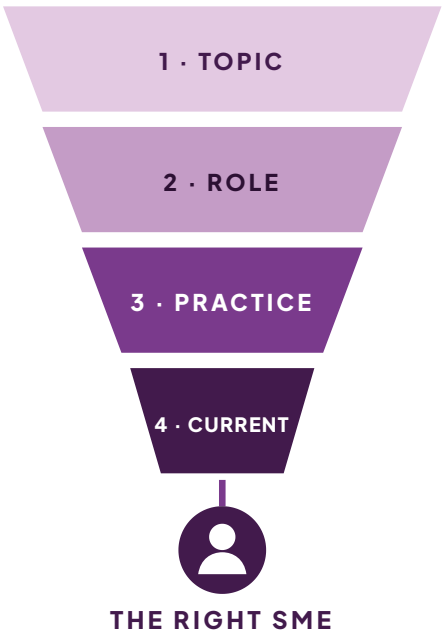
Would expert input help readers make better-informed decisions or apply the information more effectively?

Brand and expert authority

Could SME involvement strengthen the brand's reputation while positioning the expert as a credible voice in the industry?

Stage 2: Locating the Right SME

The quality of SME-led content depends on selecting an expert whose **knowledge directly supports the article's purpose.**



1. **Topic alignment:** Define the specific knowledge or experience needed to address the article's central subject.
2. **Functional relevance:** Identify the roles closest to the work being discussed, taking industry-specific responsibilities into account.
3. **Practical knowledge:** Prioritize experts who have executed the process or addressed the challenge firsthand.
4. **Current expertise:** Verify that the SME's experience reflects current industry practices, tools, and challenges.

Stage 3: Designing the Questions

✦ **Every question should earn its place in the article.** Use these 5 types to decide what to ask.

QUESTION TYPE	WHAT TO LOOK FOR	EXAMPLE
First-hand account	A specific situation and what happened	*"Tell me about the last time you dealt with this. What surprised you?"*
Operational detail	Steps, decisions and workarounds	*"What do you actually do that the documentation leaves out?"*
Contrarian check	Disagreement with common practice	*"What advice in your field do you think people get wrong?"*
Verifiable evidence	Proof, records or observable results	*"How could we check whether that claim holds up?"*
Expert judgment	Exceptions and practical trade-offs	*"When does this approach stop making sense?"*

Stage 4: Run the Interview

Choose the format based on **the SME's preference.** We're working with real people, each with their own schedules, communication styles and ways of sharing expertise. **There are 2 ways I do it:**

Async

Send a **Google Doc** with the questions, article context and deadline. **Give the expert time to think.**

Questions · Context · Deadline

or

Live

Meet on **Zoom or Google Meet.** Follow up on vague answers and **capture the conversation in a transcript.**

Follow-ups · Transcript

✦ In either format, value **natural professional insights and honest opinions** over rigid, generic quotes 🙂

Stage 5: Build in a Feedback Loop

Great SEO content should be credible and useful, but it also needs to deliver results 🙂



Track how it performs across **organic and AI search**, measure its impact and use what you learn to keep improving it.

DONE	STEP	CHECKLIST	PHASE
☑	01	**Draft the article** around the questions it needs to answer.	DRAFT
☑	02	**Integrate relevant quotes** and expert insights into the appropriate sections.	DRAFT
☑	03	**Share the draft** with the relevant reviewers.	REVIEW
☑	04	**Verify factual claims,** context and the accuracy of quoted material.	REVIEW
☑	05	**Incorporate feedback** and resolve outstanding corrections before publishing.	PUBLISH
☑	06	**Identify clear, self-contained expert insights** that AI search can quote without distorting their meaning.	AI SEARCH

Stage 6: Measure, Track and Repurpose

Monitor organic visibility
Track impressions, clicks, rankings and organic traffic over time.

Test AI search retrieval
Run relevant queries and record whether the article or its expert insights appear in generated answers.

Review citations and attribution
Check which claims or passages are referenced and whether the expert's meaning remains intact.

Measure results against the article's goal
Review relevant engagement, leads, sign-ups or other intended outcomes.

Repurpose proven insights
Adapt useful expert contributions into supporting content across social, email, video and sales channels.

Identify content gaps
Use search queries, reader questions and performance patterns to find topics that need stronger evidence or additional expert input.

Revalidate important claims
Check whether data, recommendations, tools and processes remain current.

Refresh content when needed
Update, consolidate or retire pages based on their accuracy, relevance and performance.

Better Search Content Starts With *Better Questions*

Give experts room to share what they know, challenge their answers, verify the details, and turn their knowledge into something readers can use.

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