A-Z of essential editorial content types

(26 content types produced over 26 years in digital publishing)

- Use for **brainstorming** and **inspiration**.
- List *not* intended to be definitive.
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Content type	Description	Format	Reason to use
A-Z	A popular type of list content. What will 'X' be?	This can be an article, a video, an app. Take your pick.	A slightly more imaginative way of presenting bite-sized content.
Behind-the-scenes (BTS)	Provide exclusive BTS coverage of an event, product, or project.	From glossy magazines to TikTok videos, BTS content features regularly.	Gives you authority. Gives your audience access.
Case study	Case studies give you an (often exclusive) overview of a notable project.	Usually includes a challenge, a solution, and some results.	Ideal for B2B story-telling.
Do/Don't	Punchy lists of things you should and shouldn't be doing.	These lists work best as short-form content.	Confident that you know your audience? These lists will prove it.
Expert advice	Get the best contributors to advise your audience.	Expert advice is well presented via tutorials and walkthroughs.	Collaborating with experts helps build trust and authority.
Fact sheet	No one likes admitting they don't know about something. So help them.	Tables can be used when conveying lots of factual data.	They're useful when passing on a lot of details.
Giveaway	Come up with a compelling giveaway for your audience.	Giveaways work well in print, digital, and broadcast.	People like free stuff. Also, first-party data.
Head-to-head	Put two popular things or people head-to-head.	A verdict isn't essential. But you'll need contrast. And maybe a benchmark.	An engaging way to represent two sides of a story.
Infographic	Tell your story using data and visuals.	As good in social posts as they are in long-form editorial.	Infographics povide a good at-a-glance overview of a subject.
Jargon buster	Help people get to grips with a specific subject. Explain common terms.	Usually presented as quickfire lists.	Makes good standing copy, requiring only small updates to maintain.
Kick-ass Q&A	Have I just renamed a normal Q&A to get this in the list? Yes. Yes I have.	A short-format series of questions and answers.	Can be completed remotely. A compelling regular.
Long-form interview	An in-depth discussion with a notable/interesting figure.	Best undertaken in-person. Photography/audio/video pushes up cost.	People still want depth and quality. Interviews deliver on both fronts.
Magazine feature	In-depth content that often include interviews, analysis, and storytelling.	Originated it print. But the term has become more generalised.	The format of choice for some of the greatest stories ever told.
Numbered list	People love bite-sized content. Especially online.	Great for web content. Some say odd numbers are more memorable.	We're drawn to numbered lists like bees to sweet, dewy nectar.
Opinion	Approach notable figures and get their views on a timely topic.	Find the best people and get them to contribute individually or as a group.	Helps you build trust through small (usually free) contributions.
Profile	An overview of a person, thing, company etc.	Tend to work best as visual content (video or photography-led).	A wonderful opportunity to showcase talent (new and established).
Quiz	Interact with your audience by setting and sharing regular quizzes.	A basic quiz can be run for free on Google Forms. Easy to experiment.	They're fun. They get shared. They can be easily reused/updated.
Review	Is it a product aimed at your audience? Then it can be reviewed.	The process should be fair. The verdict should be clear.	We turn to people and brands we trust when buying stuff.
Springboard	Use one thing to get insight into another (e.g. Desert Island Discs).	Excellent regulars. Good for conversations/interviews/podcasts.	A content type which lends itself to authenticity.
Trend updates	Find what's popular in a chosen area. List them.	Trend updates can be delivered in both long and short-format content.	Most people want to keep up with the latest trends. Or at least know them.
Under extremes	How far can you push your idea? Can you send it in to space?	Can be created in a gonzo style. It's all about fun at the end of the day.	One of the best ways to promote shared values.
Vox pop	Get multiple people to respond to a single question or discuss a topic.	Makes great video content. Be up front about how content will be used.	Vox pops can be used in a number of ways and make great social content.
Week/month in …	Summarise a specific period. Do the legwork for your audience.	Top content for regular newsletters (especially considering effort vs value).	A good way to repurpose existing content and drive engagement.
X meets Y	Convince one prominent figure to interview another.	Should ideally be done in-person. The setting is also important.	An interview with a 'WOW!' factor. Builds brand personality by the bucket.
Yearly timeline	Present progression through a visual timeline.	The best examples tend to be more visual.	Easy to plan and create. Can be used as assets in other projects.
Zero in	Go seriously in-depth on a subject that no one else would.	Look at Popular Mechanics magazine. No one does it better.	There's no better way to show your audience that you get them.