

Profitable Blogging: How to Blog Effectively & Efficiently and Generate Sales

What are characteristics shared by all successful business blogs?

- A blogger who is familiar with the blogosphere spend time reading blogs before diving in!
- Planning: "Driving to work naked is like starting a Biz Blog with zero planning. Both might start out ok . . ."
 - What are you blogging on?
 - Who is your audience?
 - What are your goals?
- Consistency: e.g., don t blog on nuclear power for two months and then switch to clean water for the next month
- Conversational: Not formal business writing
- Honesty: Builds trust plus, it's easy to be honest
- Personal: Photo and an "about me" link are great ideas
- Patience: Unless you're already famous, don't expect massive and instant traffic!

What kind of results can you expect from your blog?

Blogs have no magical or mystical properties but can be an effective part of your marketing mix.

- A Web site that works better more repeat visitors
- Search Engine Optimization (SEO) benefits
- Increased traffic more people will see what you have on the web
- Networking
- Because blogs project personality, they can shorten sales cycles. People like to buy from people they know. People trust people they know.

How many readers do you need to make it worthwhile?

- A lot of readers are great but NOT essential for success. A few key influencers is all it takes meeting planners, journalists, etc. will often look at your blog when considering engaging you.

How do you build traffic to your blog ?

(A poorly positioned and/or written blog will never generate significant traffic)

- Publicize:
 - Offline:
 - § Business Cards

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- § Speeches, seminars, and classes
- § Press Releases
- § Letterhead
- § (Basically everywhere, without being obnoxious)
- Your website include a link. Don't hide your blog!
- Email signature
- Some blog and RSS/Atom directories and search engines:
 - Technorati.com (essential)
 - portal.eatonweb.com
 - blogwise.com
 - getblogs.com
 - globeofblogs.com
 - blogdigger.com
 - blogpulse.com
 - icerocket.com
 - 2rss.com
 - feedster.com
 - weblogalot.com
- Highlight your most popular posts (for an example see www.bloggingforbusinessbook.com, under the book picture in the right hand corner)
- "Add to My Feedreader" Buttons. I have buttons for the following:
 - MyYahoo!
 - Bloglines
 - NewsGator
 - My MSN
 - Pluck
- Email Interface (FeedBlitz.com)
- Post "Series" one logical post broken into several parts and posting sequentially

The best (and most popular) bloggers are great conversationalists:

- Read a lot of related blogs. Use blog search engines and blogrolls to help find them.
- Leave (intelligent) comments on others blogs. The goal is to add value and be remarkable.
- Link and trackback to other blog posts.
- Blogroll! ("blogs I read")

What is Search Engine Optimization for blogs?

Most Internet traffic is driven by search engines, and search engine optimization (SEO) is developing Web pages and sites, in this case blogs, to maximize the number of visitors sent by the search engines.

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- Linking strategies -- getting links to your blog, primarily through social interaction.
- Keyword strategies -- Keywords and phrases are terms users type into search engines to find content

Both linking and keyword strategies are important. If there is lots of competition in your topic area, you might need to optimize for social interaction in order to get links. For example there are lots of computer technology blogs, so social interaction and the resulting links are extremely important. In less saturated areas you can concentrate on keywords and phrases.

(free) Keyword/phrase selection tools:

Google Keyword research tool, currently at

<http://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal>

Overture Keyword selector tool, currently at

<http://searchmarketing.yahoo.com/rc/srch/>

Post title is the MOST important place for keywords! See

bloggingforbusinessbook.com/blogging_for_business/2005/12/blog_title_impo.html

Keywords also go the body, as link text, as part of the blog name, and "alt text" on images.

How do you write blog posts quickly and efficiently?

- Recycle thoughts and materials. Many of my blog posts come from:
 - Emails
 - Seminars
 - Keynotes
 - Client reports
 - Ezines
 - Book material that never got used
 - Ebooks I'm working on
- Many of us do research in our field as part of staying current, performing customer work, etc. Use this research for blog posts!

What are some ins and outs of promoting yourself and your products effectively?

- #1 Build credibility by providing value and insight!
- Talk about what you're doing and let your passion show.
- Products and services, e.g. speech topics, ebooks, CDs, etc. can be advertised in the sidebar, and occasionally mentioned in blog posts.
- Links to Web site (from both posts and the sidebar)

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Any special considerations for promoting your book via a blog?

- Get your publisher to mention the blog in (and ON) the book, and in the book catalog.
- Start early! Before the book is published (starting slowly is OK).
- Be very focused.
- Remember both people who have bought your book and who might buy your book will be reading.
- Consider an Amazon "plog" personal log
- Remember that who like your book and/or your blog are a pre-qualified group if there ever was one to sell additional products to.

What are the pros and cons of running Google AdSense or other advertising in your blog?

- AdSense (and others) may or may not work well depending on the blog topic!
- You need a lot of traffic.
- Ads may not be appropriate.
- In order to be effective, ads must occupy prime screen real estate. That space may be more effectively used otherwise.