

Blogging For Instant Profit

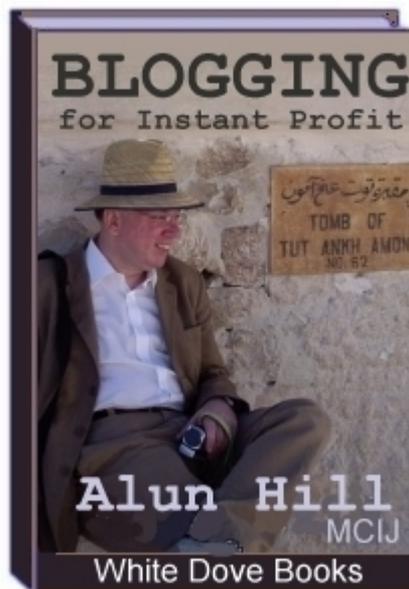
by Alun Hill MCIJ

MY BLOG

FREE BOOKS

OUR AUDIOS

OUR MOVIE



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Understanding the Blogging Phenomenon

When blogging hit the web, it did so with a bang. Blogging is now one of the most popular forms of communication via the web. Before, web surfers would simply browse through sites with preformatted text on them. There was very little chance for a surfer to comment on a site or to offer their opinion on anything. If a surfer wanted to voice their opinion via the web, they had to start their own webpage. Starting a webpage is perfect for some surfers, but it is way too complicated for most. In addition, starting a webpage usually takes a small investment, which is something not many surfers want to offer up just so they can post their views.

People today can find blog sites that offer blog space for much less than a typical webpage. Many sites will offer blog space for free. When you begin a blog, you will notice that they are all laid out basically the same way. Some experts will call their layout the last-in-first style. This is a very tricky name that simply notes that the last thing the person, or blogger, wrote will show up at the top of the blog. Most blogging software allows for this automatically. When you sign up at a blogging site and are given your own blog space, you will likely see that after you finish typing your post and submit it, the blogging software will automatically put your last entry at the top of your blog. This helps your readers stay current without having to scroll through many posts.

When you first get your own blog space, the blogging software will usually provide you with free templates to utilize. The templates will offer you different color and pattern styles for your blog. Some may look more feminine with flowers or pink stripes, while others will look more masculine in style. You simply choose one of the suggest templates and the software will set everything else up for you. If you have programming skills, you can typically alter this to make your own style as well.

After choosing your template, you will be ready to begin posting. The great thing about the blogging phenomenon is that you can post anything you like. If you are feeling a little upset about your significant other or if you want to share some political views, you can write about them and share them with anyone who reads your blog. A blog is typically a lot like a diary. It may not be quite as personal, or it may be even more personal. It all depends on how much you are willing to share. You can choose to make your blog anonymous by not including your name or any contact information. This will probably make you even more comfortable posting. If you wish however, you can make your information known so that anyone who reads the blog will know it is you who is posting.

Blogs are the perfect sounding board because they allow you to post and allows others to comment on your posts. By allowing others to comment, you can truly see how others feel about what you have to say. Sometimes they will offer applause and sometimes they will criticize. No matter what however, by blogging you have successfully used your freedom of speech. You should use this right whenever you can, as it is one that those before us fought strongly for and we still continue to fight for on occasion.

Many blogs today are becoming much more complex however. Some are offering graphic options. Web users are now using this space to display pictures they have. Some people with family far away will use the blog to share day to day things or special moments with their loved ones far away. By posting information and pictures, their family and friends can log in whenever they want to check in on the blogger. Blogs mean different things to different people. They are used as diaries, sounding boards, or family update pages. They are very simple to use and are being seen all over the web. Although there are few rules to blogging at this time, there is one thing that is certain. With its growing popularity, blogging is here to stay!

History of the Blog – What is It and Why is It so Popular?

When trying to research when the blog began, you may come up a little short. While it is widely known the blog is one of the most popular forms of posting on the web, there is really not a lot of history to it. Some will argue that the first blogger came to us across the television screen. The hit show *Doogie Howser, M.D.* always included a few shots of the teenage doctor typing in his computer diary, which many see as the world's first blog. While it is not exactly clear whether Dr. Howser was posting his thoughts on his hard drive or the web, it is unlikely the character even knew what the word “blogger” meant. According to the history books, the word “weblog” was first written by Jorn Barger in 1997. A list of others followed him in creating their own versions of the original weblog.

Although there is not much information on the beginning of the blog, there is a lot of information leading to the fact that the blog phenomenon is growing rapidly and is not likely to downsize anytime soon. Everyone is blogging these days. With sites offering free blog space, why wouldn't they? Everyone wants a chance and a forum to express their thoughts, and a blog allows them to do just that. Expression is one of the most precious traits and it should be practiced often. With that being said, you are probably wondering what a blog is, if you don't already know.

A blog, which is actually short for a weblog, is a lot like an online journal. It is a personal website (or posting space) that is updated frequently. With each posting, the blog is essentially updated. Blogs can include anything the blogger wants it to include. You can write about personal experiences, political views, gossip, books, television, or music. There are really no limits on what you can write about on your own blog. Today's blogs are allowing bloggers to post photos or little profiles telling their readers more about themselves. Many blogs are so popular that readers will visit them each day in order to see what is new in the blogger's life. These readers may or may not personally know the blogger, which makes the phenomenon that much more interesting and unexplainable.

The most notable thing about a blog is that it is the first online journal type that offers a place for reader comments. These comments can be helpful to the blog and draw interest to it, or they can be useless. Some advertisers are using blogs today to get their website link or product information out to more people. This can be annoying to bloggers, but the fact is that the advertisers are using other people's blogs to advertise for free. Although it is annoying, you have to admit, it is a pretty smart idea on the advertising side of things.

It is assumed that blogs are so popular for two main reasons. The first reason is simply because everyone wants to be heard. By posting your opinions, views, or experiences on the web, you are essentially being heard by anyone who reads your post. With more and more people reading blogs, you can count on more and more people reading yours as well. Expressing your opinions allows you to be free from any stress they may cause when you keep them inside. A blog is a socially safe way to express your views without having to worry too much about a reaction from someone else.

The other main reason the blog is so popular is because due to amazing blogging software, it is so simple to do. When personal websites came onto the scene, everyone wanted one. The problem was that the good ones were very difficult to construct unless you had programming experience. Many people hired professionals to create their personal spaces. Blogs on the other hand, are very easy to create. Software allows you to post your thoughts in a typing box and the system automatically updates itself when you are done. It could not be any easier. Because of these two reasons, people absolutely love blogs. They love to post on their own blog and they love to read other blogs. The phenomenon is one that is so well loved it will likely continue to grow and grow.

Six Ways to Better Blogging

Blogging can be an extremely interesting hobby to have. A blog, which has been defined as an online journal, is a place where someone can post exactly what's on their mind. While some bloggers could care less if their posts are read, others actively try to gain more readers. Some advertisers are offering money for blogs that get high traffic amounts, so learning to blog better can be an important task. If you are interesting in learning more about better blogging, check out these six helpful tips.

Use a Casual Tone

The most interesting blogs are not written using formal grammar rules. Frankly, the formal tone can be a little boring and web surfers don't want to read through a bunch of "hoity-toity" text. If you want your blog to be popular and a success overall, consider writing in a more casual tone. Think of the writing as being a conversation you are having with a friend. Write exactly the way you would talk, not the way you are supposed to talk. Using slang and other words that may not be considered "proper" is a great way for your blog to reach a wide variety of viewers. Using humor and other personality characteristics in your writing will make people want to keep coming back to read your newest entries.

Don't Overdo It

Keeping your blog short will help you retain any interested viewers. People don't want to spend massive amounts of time reading text on the web. If they wanted to read a novel, they would do just that. Try to stick to your point and keep it nice and short. A blog that is more than 500 or 700 words is just too much. If you need to carry on with the topic, consider creating another post that finishes your point. Although this is basically creating one long blog, the break in the text will be welcoming and readers will be less likely to get bored.

Never Advertise Improperly

Too often people use blogs as a space to advertise their services or their products. This can be a cheap way to get your work out there. It is noted however that blog readers can get annoyed quickly at advertisements on blogs. If you must advertise on your blog, consider doing so in a more subtle manner. Write a short post about your product and put a link to your website. Don't take up your entire blog space with the advertisement. Although it may seem like a great idea, you will essentially be scaring people away from your blog altogether.

Check Your Spelling

Although the tone of your blog should be kept casual, you should still edit your work. There is a way to be casual, without being sloppy. You should always check your spelling before you submit your post. If your posts are sloppy and full of misspelled words, people will think that you are not educated and probably won't take anything you say seriously. Some blogging software comes with a spell check feature, while some doesn't. If your blogging software does not come with any spell check feature, simply create your post in a word processing software and use the spell check there. Then cut and paste your edited work into the blogging software text area. This will allow you to post without spelling errors, which is highly recommended.

Be Versatile

If you want to reach the largest amount of people, you do not need to advertise endlessly. You simply must be versatile with your post topics. Those blogs that cover only one type of thing may be popular with one specific targeted group of people. That is fine, if it is what you want. If you want to reach everyone however, you need to post on everything. Consider posting on current affairs, music, books, and other hot issues. This will draw people in. When you post about popular things in the news, it will draw people to your site when they do a search on the web.

Post Often

People who become fans of your blog will likely be looking for a new post every few days. Some will only look once a week. If you want to keep your blog fresh and interesting, you should post often. Posting often is something that takes very little time, because your entries should stay short and sweet. It is a way however to keep things new and exciting for your biggest fans. They will be waiting for your new posts and will continue logging on as long as you provide them with new information.

Before Blogging – Five Things You Should Know

So you want to join in on the blogging phenomenon? Before you get started, there are a few things you should know about blogging. Blogging is a lot like an online journal. There are thousands of bloggers online posting each day. It is a trend that started in 1997 and has continued to grow steadily. If you are interesting in blogging, but have not yet begun, read over these five things you should know before you begin.

You Can Be Personal

Many times new bloggers are really not sure what to post. They know that their blog is a personal space, but they are afraid to make their posts personal in any way. The best bloggers do put themselves out there via their posts. They will post what's on their mind and their views or opinions on pressing issues. They may do so in a humorous manner or be quite serious. Sometimes new bloggers are afraid to post their true thoughts because their blog can be commented upon. The fact is however that not everyone will agree with your thoughts and posts, but you should not let that hold you back. These are people who don't personally know you, so their comments really don't matter much anyway. Don't be afraid to let your true feelings show on your blog, after all, that is what an online journal is all about.

Don't Be Too Personal

Although it is fine to be personal in your posts, you might not want to be too personal in how much you disclose about yourself. For example, including your phone number or address in a post or on your profile is probably not a good idea. You should think smart and only allow people to know things that you want them to know. For your own safety, you might not want to post your last name either. When someone has a lot of information about you, it is easier for them to victimize you through identity theft, harassment, or other crimes. So, stay safe and never post really private information.

Never Use Real Names

When you are posting, and keeping it personal and real, there can be times in which other people in your life come up in topic. Be very careful including other people in your posts. First, never use their real names. This is a huge mistake. Unless the person gives you permission to write about them, you should never do so. It will only lead to trouble. If the person you mention reads your blog, they could get offended that you are writing about them. Even if the post is positive, it can be seen much like talking behind their back. Try to keep the posts about you or celebrities or other public figures. Let everyone else's business remain their own.

Keep It Fresh

One of the best things you can do as a blogger is to keep your blog fresh. This means that you should be posting often and changing things around when doing so. Post on different topics so your audience can stay interested. Also, post at least twice a week. People who will become fans of your site will want to read as much as possible on your blog. Updating your blog regularly will allow them to be entertained. If you only post once a month, chances are no one will remember to keep checking your blog and your traffic will not be impressive.

You Can Blog For Free

Before you pay an arm and a leg for a blogging space, you should know that there are sites where you can blog for free. Yes, for no charge at all you can set up your own blog. These sites are great for the new blogger. If you want something a little more sophisticated, you might have to pay for it. The free sites are very well maintained however. They are easy to use and offer several different templates for you to use when designing your blog. They automatically update your posts for you, which make them a breeze! Remember, you should not pay a large fee for your blog, especially if you are new to blogging. Do your research and find the free sites!

Seven Tips to Make Your Blog More Scannable

Most bloggers love when their traffic is high and they have a great deal of fans. Getting to that popular point can be a little difficult however. If you want to have a successful blog, you will need to make sure all of the components are there. One of the most important components to have within your blog is scan-ability. This really means that your blog is scannable, or easy to go through quickly while still capturing the main points of your posts. Use these seven tips to make sure your blog is scannable and you will see an increase in traffic to your site.

Keep It Short

The number one mistake bloggers make when posting is creating extremely long posts. You should always be honest about your views and post accurate information. However, you should also be concise with your posts. Web surfers don't have the time or the desire to sit around for hours reading your blog. They are looking for a quick satisfying post to quickly fill them up. They want something that is full on content, but not lengthy. If you tend to be wordy with your posts, try cutting them down a bit to see if your traffic increases.

Create Interesting Headlines

The way you set up your posts has a lot to do with them being scannable. Your posts should always have an interesting headline. It should be catchy and attention grabbing with its wording. It should also be done using different style elements such as bold print, colored print, and italics. The more attention you can get to the headline, the easier it will be for a reader to go through your posts and read the ones that interest them most. When you make it easy for the readers, they will read more.

Break Up Your Posts

Breaking up your posts is not only about headlines, it is also about endings. Create a signature way of signing off on a post. You can “sign” your name or you can always end with an interesting quote. You can also choose to end with a question to try to get readers involved. No matter what your signature ending is, it will be easier for people to shift their focus from one post to the next when they see it. It will become familiar to regular readers and will be a comforting sign that you have nothing else to say on that topic at that time.

Cut Out the Big Words

You should never feel the need to use enormous words that very few people understand or can even pronounce. The best thing you can do is keep the grammar very simple on your blog. By doing so, you are making your blog easier to scan and to read. Most people will only look through the blog for phrases and headings, so these big words can really be distracting. With less than 20% of blog readers going over word for word, you should not waste your time trying to impress. Instead, write in the manner that you would talk to a friend. Making it casual is a great way to gain a lot of interest.

Don't Use It as Story Site

When someone uses their blog as a place to post lengthy stories about life, they are making a mistake. Blogs are indeed personal journals and if you want to do that, you are entitled. However, if you want your blog to be popular, you should not post stories. Instead, to make your blog more scannable, you should post lists. Lists are very effective ways to make your blog scannable and readers will love you for it.

Graphics Work

Graphics were once things that bloggers thought got in the way of their content. Today however the opposite is true. When done appropriately, graphics can really add to your content and make your readers more interested. You can make your site

scannable by adding a few graphics to your blog. Try adding graphics that go along with your posts for an efficient approach.

Be Clear

When you have something to say on your blog, just go ahead and say it. Some bloggers tend to let their opinions or main points drift in and out of their posts subtly. The most effective way to get your point across in a blog is to come out with blazing guns. You should keep your main point close to the beginning. This is a great way to know readers understand what you want to say.

How to Make a Living as a Blogger

People are often amazed to find out that people are out there making their living as bloggers. Most people will create their own personal blog to post personal opinions and views. Professional bloggers can make money using their own personal blog or they can work for other websites. If you are interested in how to make a living as a blogger, consider this information before you get started.

If you decide that you would like to use your own personal blog in order to create an income there are a few things you should know. First, most bloggers make their income using partnerships with advertisers. You can easily form a partnership with an advertiser, using programs such as AdSense. When you create an account with using something like AdSense, you will be giving the advertiser permission to advertise on your blog. You will choose the placement and size of the advertisement boxes; however they will choose what advertisements will go up in the space. The ads will change periodically depending on the content of your text.

Whenever a reader clicks on the advertisement, you will get paid. This can be very effective, especially if you have high volumes of traffic on your blog. These programs will even tell you how much traffic you have, in case you had no idea. Many of the advertising blog programs are free to begin. Some of the fancier versions may cost a little, but overall, a beginner can stick with the free versions.

Since making a living as a blogger all boils down to trying to get more traffic to your site so they might click on the ads, content is very important. The best thing to do is cover a wide variety of topics. Posting a large amount of short articles on your blog is a great way to get people to your blog. The more keyword rich your content is (saturated with specific keywords), the more traffic you will have. The idea is that when someone goes to a search engine and types in a keyword, your site will come up since you have an article rich with that keyword.

Obviously you cannot have an article on everything. You can however do research to see what the most popular keywords are at the time and try to use them to help you along. Using the time of year is a great thing to. Christmas keywords are extremely popular right after Thanksgiving occurs, so keep important holidays in mind when thinking of keyword phrases to use in your articles. If you are not a great writer, you can even hire freelance writers to help you with the content. The more content you have, the better off you will likely be.

Although this may seem simple, it can be quite difficult really to get people to your blog. There are studies that show different success rates based on the most minor things, like where the advertising box is located on your blog. Some experts will say the left side of your screen is the best place for it, while others will argue that the top is the best place. You really have to do your research and stay on top of the game in order to make a living as a blogger. Simply signing in and creating a post each day is not going to be enough to draw enough people in to make a difference. Since programs don't pay a large amount per click, you need to get more and more people to click on the ads in order to make any cash at this venture.

But, you can feel great knowing that there is a possibility you can make a little cash blogging. Basically, the more time you put into the blog and researching the advertising programs, the better off you are going to be. While AdSense is probably one of the best places to begin, there are many other programs out there that you can utilize. Just do a search on the topic and you will have a handful from which to choose. After everything gets rolling, you will be happy to know it doesn't take as much work down the road as the initial setup requires. Soon you could sit back and watch the money roll in without doing much at all!

Blog Optimization for Great Search Engine Results

If you are interested in trying to make money from your blog, you probably want to know how you can best optimize your blog for great search engine results. After all, most people stumble upon blogs when doing a search for something. If you use these optimization tips effectively, it may be your blog more people are drawn to. So, check these tips out and experiment with your own blog. Note what has the best results and stay with it. Change the other things around a bit until you get the results out of them that you want.

Simple Content

Many experts say that the best way to optimize your blog is to keep everything very simple. You can choose one quality content topic and make it your base. Then from there you can use variations of the topic in order to keep everything going. This may seem like a broad and useless tip, but once you get into blogging more and more, you understand how important it is.

Put More Out There

If you are trying to get more of a presence on search engines, be sure that you have something to show. The more content you have, the more likely you are to show up on a search engine. Bigger sites always do better than smaller sites. It is simply a numbers game. Search engines will see your site in a different manner, depending on how much content you have. The more content you have, the more there is a chance there will be that someone will stumble onto your site.

Ask Search Engines for Help

Few people know that you can actually submit your site to search engines. Submit your site's URL and ask to be put into the index. This can take a while, but if they do list you in the index, you will see a larger increase in traffic. Beware however of a service that asks for money in exchange for getting your sites into search engines. These can be a little misleading at times. There are ways to do this without needing to pay anyone at all.

Keyword Pay

A great idea for optimization is to identify the most popular keywords. By doing this, you are essentially targeting the keywords that people most often search for. When you do this, you have an edge over the competition. When you know exactly what the people are looking for, you can give them just that. Once you have a list of keywords, simply create articles that use these keywords. By creating these articles, you are putting yourself out there to be found. When someone does a search for those keywords, your blog just might pop up on their screen. Be careful not to use the keyword so much that your article does not make sense however.

Daily Updates

If you really want the best optimization, you should update it daily at the least. The more you update it, the more often search engines will index your blog. Therefore, you will want to be sure your blog is always fresh. Adding new information is the best way to update your blog. The more new information you have, the better off you will be! Just be sure that when you do update, it is for a good reason. You should always remember that content can have a purpose, but it should always be quality content. If you compromise content, you are only allowing yourself to strip the creativity from your project. If you are happy with doing that, by all means go ahead. However, as a writer, you will have a certain responsibility to web surfers. Unless you want everything on the web to be useless, do your part!

Use these tips to help optimize your blog and get the most from search engines. The more you post and use these tips, the more results you will see. If you earn your living from the number of clicks your blog or your ads get, this will essentially mean more money for you. You can use all of them or some of them. Experiment with them to see what works best for you and your blog. Put these tips to use and watch your results rise today!

Is Google AdSense a Good Fit for your Blog?

Trying to make a living from your blog is a great idea if you are up for a challenge. Some articles will make it seem like a piece of cake to sit back and watch the dough roll in. The truth is that making money from your blog takes time and effort on your part. There are a few things that can make your task a little easier however. Google AdSense is one of those things for many. If you are curious about whether or not Google AdSense is right for your blog, take a look at these characteristics of their advertising program.

The first thing to consider when looking for a program like Google AdSense is their track record. You can rest assured that AdSense is the oldest program of its type. It has the largest base of publishers than any other program like it. Knowing this information, you can feel secure in becoming a member of their program. By using AdSense, you will know that you are in good hands of a company that certainly knows what they are doing.

Another thing to consider when signing up with an advertising program is the appearance of the program on your blog. You don't want to sign up with a program that has annoying flashy ads that will scare people off from your site. AdSense provides ads that are mostly text. They have around 10 different sizes with various dimensions so you can place them in the most appropriate places on your blog, without sacrificing your content and overall site appearance. If there is an image advertisement run in your advertising space, it typically fills up the whole ad block and is less annoying than most.

One thing to remember when considering Google AdSense is that they have strict terms of service. While some may see them as being too restrictive, they are not abnormal by any means. Basically to be an approved AdSense member you must agree not to publish pornographic material or coversation on your blog. You need to

keep it pretty family friendly. This is not a huge problem for most people. Also you are not allowed to change the AdSense code.

Another portion of the terms of service explains that those who agree also cannot specify keywords that ads will be pointed to. You pretty much surrender the choosing of the ads to Google when you agree with their terms. You may have control over the content of your blog, but they have control over the ad content. Lastly, if you work with the AdSense program, you must agree to have no more than three blocks of ads on one particular page. If you are looking for a program that also allows you to see which pages earn more for you than others, AdSense is a great fit. Some programs will not allow you to do this, so if you are interested in this option, AdSense is a great choice.

Again, AdSense is based on the context of your page. Whatever you allow on your page will have an effect over what type of ads are presented to your readers. Keep this in mind when you are posting on your blog. With AdSense you cannot afford to hide your main points within a bundle of text. You have to be clear and use defining vocabulary to ensure your ads will fit just right.

If you are a blogger who would love to get paid for referring others to a program like Google AdSense, then you will be glad to know that for each referral you have that signs up and earns \$100, you will get \$100 as well. This can be great for someone with many contacts or a blog building business. Overall, there are quite a few rules that you must agree to follow in order to become an AdSense publisher. The rules are not so restrictive so that you cannot make money. In fact, they are made so that the Google reputation is preserved and yours as well. By using an honest system such as AdSense, you will know that you are in the best possible position out there. You can make a bundle if you put in the time, so go ahead and check it out today.

Use Pictures on your Blog to Boost Traffic

Studies show that readers are often much more interested in blogs that offer pictures. Blogs that use pictures are shown to be accessed more often than plain text blogs. If you are looking for an interesting way to boost traffic to your site, you might want to think about including pictures. Adding pictures to your blog is typically not a hard task. Most blogging programs will have areas in which you can quickly and easily add pictures. Keep in mind that if you are involved in a program such as Google AdSense, pictures won't always correspond as well for your ads as text will however. Overall pictures provide readers with a better understanding of what you are trying to convey over your blog. If you are wondering why pictures boost traffic, consider these explanations.

Scanability

One surefire way to boost traffic on your blog is to create a blog with a high level of scanability. When your blog can be easily scanned for content, viewers are more likely to want to visit your blog again. Experts say that it takes almost 25% more energy for the eyes and brain to read words on a computer in contrast with reading them on paper. Therefore, although readers may not know it, they are likely to read much less on their computer screen. This is because it takes longer to read the words and uses up more energy.

Sixty percent of the people who read your blog will not read it word for word. They will simply scan through it looking for your main points. They almost always read the headlines and also look at the pictures. Pictures always help make your blog more easily scanned because they offer a break for the eyes and the brain. The eyes and brain will look at the picture in a different manner than they look at words on a blog. Offering the eyes and brain a "break" will allow your blog to be scanned easily. In turn, when it can be scanned easily, the readers will keep coming!

Keeping the Interest

One thing that bloggers tend to do is go on and on about one thing endlessly. It is important to limit each post to a small amount of words because if you don't, your reader will get bored. To avoid losing a reader's interest you can shorten posts and bring your main point to the forefront. You can also add pictures to your blog. Adding pictures is the perfect way to keep the interest of your readers. If you are talking about a lovely plant you have grown in your yard or an unusual looking dog you just adopted, consider adding a picture of it to your blog.

You would be surprised at how much more traffic you can bring to your site. People will be able to connect more with you about the subject you are posting about. They will be able to laugh with you at pictures you find funny and admire those that you treasure. You will be maintaining a "friendship" through your pictures with your readers.

If you want to add pictures to your blog, you might want to consider investing in a digital camera, if you don't already have one. This will make putting the pictures onto your computer a much easier task to begin with. After you master this task, read the "help" information on your blogging software to understand how you need to add the pictures to your blog. Pay special attention to any size requirements or suggestions. Some blogs will only allow a specific amount of space for graphics, so you will need to be aware of that amount.

Adding pictures to your blog is a great way to allow your blog to be easily scanned and to keep the interest of your readers. When you do use pictures you will see your improvements easily. Your readers will return to see what you have to say and new visitors will be interested and entertained. By connecting with those who read your blog via pictures, you will be building lasting relationships with your readers. Just be careful about what types of pictures you add. You should not post someone on your blog without their permission so if you are posting a photo of someone you know, be sure to ask them first.

Looks Do Count in Successful Blogging

If you are attempting to create a successful blog for personal or business reasons, you should know that looks do count. Many bloggers make the mistake of thinking that looks are not as important as content, since readers are essentially reading your blog for the words, not the way it looks. This is true to some degree. The fact is however that people will not take your words seriously if your blog looks less than attractive. To have a successful blog you have to have it all. You must have interesting content as well as a great look. If you want to update the look of your blog, consider these areas of importance.

Easy To Scan

The way your blog reads on a page is an extremely important part of your blog's look. You should always remember to keep your blog posts short and to the point. If you are treating your blog as a personal diary, your posts may be a little longer than normal. But, if you are trying to get more traffic to your blog, then you really want to focus the attention with short posts that offer the main point easily. Most blog readers will only scan your posts, not read them word for word. So keep this in mind when you are writing. The shorter the post, the more likely they are to read the entire thing. If your blog is easy to scan because the posts are short and the breaks are clear, you will have a great looking blog.

Professional Edge

When designing or redesigning your blog, try to make it as professional looking as possible. Even if the blog is not for a business, the more professional it looks, the more seriously people will take it. Not everyone knows a lot about programming, so you may need to research a bit. If you have the extra funds, you might even want to get a professional to program it for you. No matter what you have to do, just keep a level of professionalism in your mind throughout the designing process.

Friendly Colors

Most people don't think twice about what colors they choose for their blog. The facts are that some colors come across better on the web than others. Blue and black are easy to see, so they are always great choices to use. Sea-green, beige, or purple are also great soothing colors to use for a blog. You should stay away from using colors like pink, yellow, or any neon varieties. They are extremely hard on the eyes when reading them online and can deter people from reading your blog. Keep these color tips in mind when you design your blog to get the best results available.

Appropriate Graphics

It has been noted that the use of pictures on your blog is a great way to boost traffic. Blogs that offer pictures that correlate with their content are fantastic. Readers love to connect with the content further through pictures. With most blogging software offering ways to easily add pictures, it should not be a problem for most publishers to add them right into the blog. If you do have trouble, consider checking the "help" area in your blogging software for more information. The information there should provide you with step by step instructions to help you get on your way.

Successful Layout

Most people who design blogs and websites will tell you that the layout does matter as well. The way a blog looks to the reader is important in terms of layout. The layout should be clear and defined. If the reader is confused by the layout, they will likely not stick around to explore. They will most likely go right on to the next blog available. If you are letting a professional design your blog, you will likely not need to worry much about the layout. However, if you are doing it yourself, take a look at other successful sites to get ideas about what works and what doesn't. Look at your site like a reader would to get the best advice you can. Lastly, simply test different layouts on your friends and family to see which ones they find the most suitable for your blog.

Five Common Mistakes that Can Bury a Blog

Too often bloggers complain that after a great start, a year later their blog is as dead as can be. This is a common problem that almost always revolves around a small list of common mistakes made by the blogger. A blogger can sit back and expect the blog to do all of the work for him or her, which is a terrible way to approach blogging. A successful blogger would tell you that great blogging takes a certain amount of dedication and hard effort to make it work. You have to put effort into a blog to sustain it, especially after the first month or so of completing the design. Many people work so hard during the initial design phase that they get lazy after it is complete. To avoid this happening to your blog, check out these five common mistakes that can bury a blog.

Infrequent Updates

One of the biggest mistakes a blogger can make is to “forget” about posting. The most successful blogs are updated with new posts at least once a day. Some larger blogs are constantly being updated. You should try to create new posts as often as possible. If you miss a day here and there, it will be no big deal. However, if you miss a week or more without posting, you might as well consider the blog dead already. You have to take a few moments, even as few as five, a day to create interesting posts or content. If you are writing short and concise posts like you should be, this should not be that challenging. It is easy to keep your blog updated, if you make it a priority.

Too Much Advertising

Most bloggers today do want to make a profit from their blog. This is a trend that can get out of control quickly however. If you are interested in adding ads to your blog, do so with caution. There is nothing wrong with a few appropriately placed ads that offer viewers links to places that correlate with your blog’s content. However, adding a massive amount of advertisements on your blog is a mistake. If you have a

bunch of flashy ads on your blog, your content will get lost within the hoopla. Therefore, you should always limit your ads to three or less per page. Make sure you place them in appropriate places that let your content shine through. Don't allow enormous ads to fill up your pages either. They will simply annoy readers. Be smart about including advertising on your blog!

Unprofessional Look

Looks do matter when it comes to your blog. The more professional and crisp your blog looks, the more your readers will take you seriously. If you are interesting in boosting traffic, you should try a more serious layout or presentation for your blog. If you can afford to hire a professional, you should. If you choose to do it yourself however, you must make sure the end product is good. If you have a sloppy blog that looks "homemade" you will not likely have a great response. Try different layouts and approaches to see what gets you the most traffic.

Graphics Overload

Pictures can add a ton to your blog and draw in more readers. However, when done excessively, much like ads, pictures can drive people away. The main reason too many pictures can ruin a blog is because there are many web surfers who still use slow internet connections. When they try to load your page, it will take an excessively long time to do so. This in turn will likely drive them and anyone else with this problem away. Try limiting to a few pictures per page.

Inappropriate Content

Everyone knows that the web is a place where you can freely express yourself. However, if you want your blog to survive, you might want to think about that freedom of expression. Although you should always say what you feel, you can do so in appropriate manners on your blog. There are ways to say anything on your mind, without using profanity or any offensive lingo. If you want your blog to be successful, you cannot be inappropriate with your content.

How to Spice Up a Boring Blog

There is nothing worse than coming across a boring blog. The difficult thing is that what is boring to one person might be interesting to another. Therefore, you really need to focus on your readers when creating new text and posts for your blog. If you want the blog to be successful, you cannot simply expect your day to day activities to be enough information to keep the readers interested. If you post that you went to the grocery, came home, and then ate dinner, you can expect the readers to be bored out of their minds. If you find humor in your activities or if you tell them in an interesting manner, you might keep their attention even when using the same day to day activities. If you want to spice up a boring blog, you can also use these tips to get things moving in the right direction.

Allow Comments

One big mistake boring bloggers make is to not allow comments. You should always allow people to comment on your blog. You may not always like what they have to say, but their comments alone will help your blog seem more interesting to anyone who reads it. If you want to be sneaky, you can even comment on your blog yourself, using a different name. This can quickly create a controversy that some readers will appeal to. Try being honest and letting the readers comment themselves, but if all else fails, use the sneaky approach to break the ice. Once one person makes a comment, others will be more likely to comment as well. This will help get things going and make your blog a place to bounce ideas off of others.

Ask Questions

Another great way to provoke your readers to participate is to ask open-ended questions. You can do this throughout your blog or at the end. This will be seen by readers as an open invitation to respond. Your questions will get them thinking about what you have to say, whether or not they respond. They will be more likely to come

back to your blog to read more about your comments later on. Everyone has an opinion on everything, so go ahead and ask your readers straight out what theirs is.

Use Pictures

If you want to connect more with your readers and keep them interested, try adding pictures to your blog. Adding pictures is simple through your blogging software. Get a digital camera if you don't already own one so you can update your pictures frequently. By adding pictures that go along best with the content of your posts, you will be connecting with your readers on a more intense level. They will be more entertained and you will have a more interesting blog. Just be sure that you don't overdo it on the pictures. Place them in appropriate places and don't use massive pictures or else you might take the risk of having a blog that take ten minutes to load. Do be sure that you use close-ups however. You wouldn't want to use pictures that were impossible to see on the screen.

Be Personal

When writing your posts, you should always act as if you were talking to a great friend. Some people create boring blogs by writing as if they were writing a textbook. This is a huge mistake. People most often read blogs because they want to be entertained or gather interesting information or opinions. They do not want to read a blog that sounds like a textbook. Try to be a little personal in your blog. Let your own personality shine through. Allow your individual humor to be seen in each post. Your readers will appreciate your honesty and love you for your casual style.

Use these great tips to spice up your blog if it is hitting the boring stretch. A boring blog is one that pains people to read. Keep in mind that successful blogs will make people laugh, think, contemplate, and gain useful information. You can do all of this using these tips. So, get to work and completely transform your boring blog today! You will see an improvement in your traffic and likely enjoy blogging a lot more than before.

Five Ways to Find Winning Ideas for your Blog Topics

Blog topics are an important part of a successful blog. Some bloggers simply write about whatever is on their mind, creating an online journal of sorts. Successful bloggers know however that to have a great blog, you cannot always write about what you want to write about. You must also keep the interests of your readers in mind when writing. After all, if you want a successful blog, you have to depend on the readers to show up often. To keep your blog as fresh as possible, consider using these five ways to find winning ideas for your blog topics.

Do Your Research

Smart bloggers know that each day there are popular search terms listed on large search sites. Bloggers can use these search terms to help them get more traffic to their blogs. Each day a blogger can look at these popular search terms and creating posts using them. If the blogger is lucky, they will increase their traffic due to more people looking for that term. By researching the topics that are hot with readers each day, bloggers can create things specifically for the readers. Doing research may take a little time and you might never be writing about what you want to write about, but you will likely have more traffic than ever.

Ask Around

If you have been blogging a while you might have began to hit low points where you really have no more topic ideas left. Some writers call this “writer’s block” while others just see it as a small hurdle to be surpassed. When you have come to this difficult point, the best thing to do is ask around. Talk to interesting people you know. You can ask them what topics they find most interesting at the time. If you would rather be a little more subtle, simply bounce a few topics off of them to see which ones they respond strongly to. Use the topics that they respond strongly to in order to gather ideas for posts.

Use the News

The news is a great place to gather topic information for your blog. News teams research and investigate for hours to gather their topics. By using similar topics, you can skip all of the hard research work and still be a success. Never use their ideas exactly, just take them and use them to develop your own. For instance, if there is a major political issue going on in the news, consider creating a post about what you think about it. You don't have to use the news story, just the topic idea along with your own words.

Follow the Lead of Others

When you are looking for great blog topics, consider visiting popular blogs to see what they are talking about. Don't steal their ideas, but use the visit to stir up great ideas of your own. Sometimes when you see others working at their highest potential it can spark new potential in yourself. You can see which topics get the best response for their blog and decide if you could get the same response with a similar topic.

Sleep On It

If all else fails and you are still trying to come up with a list of interesting blog topics, consider this interesting strategy. Go to sleep each night with a clear head. In the morning, before you even open your eyes, target the first thing on your mind. Write it down immediately so you don't quickly forget. Then use these things to develop interesting blog topics. You would be shocked at how inspiring our first thoughts can be. They are so interesting because they are not clouded with any outside stressors from reality. They are simple thoughts typically that can be used successfully on a blog.

These five ways to find winning blog topics are proven to be among the best. A blog topic is one of the basic important aspects of your blog. Be sure that you pay attention to which topics get the best response on your blog so you will know which

ones are most effective. Use all or some of these tips to help you get on your way to better blog topics right away!

Six Easy Steps to Writing a Blog Entry

Writing a blog can be as easy as baking cookies to one person, but much more difficult to the next. Professional writers will tell you that they find blog writing enjoyable. Those who are not great writers may be intimidated by the task however and may never want to learn how to write a blog entry. Writing a blog entry does not have to be painful however. It can be a lot of fun! If you are interested in blogging, but are unsure how to begin, use these six easy steps to writing a blog entry to get started.

Gather Ideas

The most difficult part about writing anything is deciding what you want to write about. Blogs are interesting because you can use them in several ways. You can use them as a personal online journal of sorts if you wish. You can also use them as a place to post your opinions and views. Lastly, you can use them as a place to put short articles of interest for others to read.

If you are choosing to use your blog as a journal, you might not need much planning. You will probably simply want to begin writing and see where it takes you. If you want to use the blog for your opinions or for articles however, you will need to gather ideas. Create a list of topic ideas that interest you. Use them to determine what your topic will be. After choosing a topic, make a quick outline of main points you want to include. This step may seem tedious, but it will make the other steps go much more quickly, so be sure not to skip it.

Choose a Tone

After you have chosen your topic and created your short outline, you will need to choose your tone. The most successful blogs are written in a casual tone, which is a welcoming idea to most non-professional writers. Don't worry about grammatical

rules. Simply choose a tone that is like the one you would use when speaking with your spouse or a great friend. The tone should be friendly and stress-free.

Write Your Post

When you sit down to write your post, remember the tone you chose for your piece. Keeping the tone in mind put your topic idea and outline in front of you and begin writing. You should keep your blog posts pretty short. They should contain your main point within the first sentence or two. Don't ramble on and on or you will risk losing your reader somewhere in the middle. You can strive to keep your posts between 300 and 700 words altogether. This may sound like a lot, but once you start writing, you will see that it will not take a lot of time to get to this point. Don't forget to write in a casual tone. Write exactly like you would speak. Avoid large words that some people may stumble over. Create interesting, yet simple posts for everyone to enjoy.

Use a Signature Ending

A signature ending is important for any blogger. You can choose to end each post with a specific quote or phrase. You can add your name to the bottom with a special symbol nearby. It really does not matter how you choose to end your post. Be sure to choose a signature ending however. A signature ending is a great way for regular readers to see that your post is ending. It can be a comforting sight for many readers as well and make your blog seem more personal.

Edit Your Work

After all of the writing is said and done, you should always edit your work. Editing is not always a fun thing to do, but if you want your blog to be taken seriously, you should go back over your work. Look for misspelled words and other common mistakes. Although you are not worrying about grammar, you should not misspell words. When you are certain your text is mistake-free, you can move on to the last step.

Submit Your Update

The final step to creating a blog post is to submit it to your blog. This is typically done via the blogging software. There is a spot where you can paste your text and click on the “submit” button. The software should do the rest. After submitting, visit your blog as a reader and check out your new update.

Defining your Niche Creates Better Blogging

Some bloggers will post topics that vary greatly. Other bloggers feel most comfortable when they are posting on a specific topic. The question has always been: which way is best? Studies show that defining your niche creates better blogging. So, using this discovery, it is assumed that it is best to choose one route to take, and stick with it. This can mean that you choose one broad topic and use it to create your entire blog topic list. You will likely get repeated visitors if you are posting on the same subject matter in any case. If you are still not sold however, check out these other explanations for why defining your niche can lead to more successful blogging.

Knowing the Topic

While it can be boring to post on the same topic each day, there is one thing to be said about it. You will certainly know your topic. The more you post on a topic, the more thinking and research you have to do on the topic. When you devote a lot of time to one topic, you will become more and more familiar with it. Therefore, by sticking to one topic, instead of being a “jack of all trades” writer, you will most likely become an “expert” writer on your topic. Knowing a topic well will eventually make the writing process a lot easier. When you know a lot of information on a topic, blog posts will come easy to you. You will soon get to the point where you don’t have to research any longer and can simply use what you know to write. All writers will tell you that at that point, it will take much less time to do your work.

Variations of Your Idea

Although you will be writing on one specific topic idea, you will be creating variations of your idea for your posts. For instance, when your niche is weddings, you can create a post on wedding gowns on one day and a post on wedding bouquets on the next day. The list of wedding topics could go on and on for months or years. There is so many variations you can think of that you can stay within your niche

without changing topics altogether. This will allow each blog topic to be fresh and new each day. Brides, grooms, gowns, honeymoon site, all can be part of your blog. Even, how to choose your bridal rings will make interesting blogging. You can visit the various corners of your topic and still stick with your niche.

Creating Specific Posts

When you do go within your niche to create posts, you will be able to write specific posts that will attract a more targeted reader group. This will be great if you are relying on search engines to point people to your site. When you have specific posts that will bring in readers that are looking for topics like yours, your blog will be a success. You can bet that these readers will likely keep coming back to your blog in order to read other posts, which will be great for you as a blogger. If you are planning to ad advertising to your site, having a specific niche will help bring in more money since the ads placed on your site, will also be specific to your blogs. Choose your keywords carefully and add specific words to your blog. This will generate more traffic and can encourage more clicks on the ads placed on your site. With a program such as Google's AdSense, you can earn money with each click.

So, as you can see, defining your niche is something that you should strongly consider as a blogger. When you jump from topic to topic in your blog, you can confuse readers and never have the opportunity to establish a steady reader group that can sustain your blog. When you do have a niche that you are knowledgeable in, you will see that readers will value your information and opinion and your blog will be a hit! Go ahead and think about a topic that interests you the most. Think about different variations that you can use for more specific topic posts and try them out. You will quickly see that trying this approach can work wonderfully.

Ping for your Blog – Foreign Language or Marketing Tool?

When experts start talking about ping for your blog, there are two things that usually happen. First, if you are unfamiliar with the term, you likely tune out right away. If you don't tune out then you probably know all about ping for your blog and understand it is a smart way to market your blog. Ping for your blog is indeed a great way to market without really having to do a whole lot. What could be better than sitting around letting a program do your marketing for you?

To understand the concept of ping for your blog, you need to know what the term “ping” means. By definition, ping is a computer network tool that is typically used on TCP/IP networks. The Internet is a TCP/IP network, so ping is used on it frequently. Ping works by testing whether a host is operating correctly. It sees if the host can be found on the network of the host that is doing the test. For example, one host will test to see if another host can be found on their network and if the host is working properly. To be more technical, it sends ICMP packets to the host and “listens” for replies.

While the whole concept of “ping” can be quite confusing to someone who knows little about networking, you should know how it can affect your blog. Many types of blogging software are automatically set up to ping one or more servers at a time. This typically happens when you create a new posting or when you simply update your blog. Even if you update more than once a day, each time you do, the system will likely ping a few servers. This really means that when you update or post, a signal is sent to a server which then creates a list of the newly updated blogs and you will be included in that signal.

The thing to know when you are a blogger is that when you allow your blog to be a part of this process, you will be getting your blog to a larger audience. What happens is that when your blog is added to that list of newly updated blogs, people will be

able to access it more frequently. When someone visits their recently pings page, your site will likely show up with a link to it as well. When there is an index of pinged data, you will likely get even more traffic than normal. In layman's terms, this means that without any effort on your part, you are gaining more recognition.

When your blogging software does not have the capabilities to ping, you may think that you cannot capitalize on this process. In truth, you can still gain all of the advantages even when your software does not ping. To do this, you will need to visit a site with a pinging service such as Ping-o-matic. It can be used to ping the most popular services available, allowing you the same advantage as every other blogger. The process for using these services is very easy. All you need to do is tell them your blog name and its URL address. It really is that simple. Usually you will provide no other information. You won't have to supply your name, address, or any other personal information.

Now that you know what ping means and how it affects your blog, you should agree that it is certainly not a bad thing. It can really help your blog get the most exposure out there. The great thing is that you can have all of these advantages without even doing any work. See if your blogging software offers this type of service. If it doesn't, try visiting a site such as Ping-o-matic to get the most from the ping. Most of the services are free. You might want to be wary of those that charge a fee and are not popular choices. Ignoring this easy marketing tool is a grave mistake. Although you may not personally see a large leap in traffic, it can certainly work for great blogs that have a substantial amount of quality content. Try it for yours to see what it can do for you.

Smart Blogging for Business – What to Do to Boost Visitors

Today's largest businesses are really taking blogging seriously. They are not about to sit back and let the rest of the world reap the advantages while they don't. Successful business people are intelligent. They know how much blogging can connect people together. They know that by using blogs within their organizations, they can easily and cheaply build better businesses. If you are curious about how to make blogging work for your business and how to get visitors to your blog, check out these ideas that many companies are already using.

The best thing to do when you are creating a blog for a business is to create one with a professional look and a casual feel. When you do this, you offer an inviting place for someone to offer their input while looking as if you know what you are doing. You want the blog to look professional because you want your business to be seen as a professional and established company. You need to maintain the casual relationship throughout your blog so you can draw visitors in however. People will only visit your blog if they feel welcomed. If you make them feel welcomed by creating an inviting environment where they can contribute, your blog will be a success.

Make sure the colors you use are inviting and that the layout is efficient. Offer tidbits of information about your business and news that pertains to your company. Also offer any type of problem you hope to solve soon if needed. You can choose to include posts from the president of the company or from supervisors to get things started and to let everyone know that everyone at your business will be taking the blog seriously.

Creating New Plans

One thing large businesses are doing is involving their employees as well as consumers in their blogs. By allowing employees and consumers to log into blogs to give the company ideas for new products or plans, the company is wisely using their resources. A smart company knows that some of the best ideas will come from people other than members of their innovation team. They will know that consumers are great place to look for ideas. Since consumers are the ones that use the products the most, they will know exactly what they desire. Instead of the company needing to guess what the consumers want, they will hear it straight from their mouths.

Solving Problems

Another way successful companies are using blogs is by allowing them to be used within the company's walls to solve problems. Instead of using one specific problem solving team, they are allowing everyone who has a part in the product to voice their opinion or solution. This is a great thing for a business and can be the fastest way to solve problems. Drawing visitors to this type of arena can be a problem however. Many employees will not be willing to post their thoughts freely. Giving them the option of posting anonymously is a great idea so that they don't feel pressured either way. If you don't make the employees tag their name to the post, you might be surprised at getting the most useful posts from the mail room or janitorial staff.

Building Team Morale

Using a blog for your employees in order to build team morale is a fantastic idea. To get your employees to visit this type of blog, all you have to do is tell them about it. Make sure you only announce important bits of information via this type of blog. That way, if they think they will miss out on important information, they will visit it frequently. Allowing them to post information is a great way to stay up to date on new marriages, births, and other important aspect of your employees' lives. The blog is perfect for this because it is a more informal way of communication.

If you want to take your business into the next level with blogging, consider these tips before you start. Decide what type of blog will work best for your business. Also decide the look and feel of your blog. Remember to make it look very professional and include the qualities you want people to think of when they think of your business. Also remember to keep the tone casual however by using simple terms and only posting things in a conversational tone of writing. If you do these things, you will shortly see how positive of an impact a business blog can have on your company.

Why RSS is a Smart Move for Bloggers

Bloggers are often trying to find ways to get more traffic or get their material more exposed. If you want your blog to have more exposure than before, you should think about using RSS. RSS is something that is easy to use, once you know what it is all about. It can improve your website traffic, give you more exposure, help build your reputation, allow you access to the latest news, and update your blog automatically. If you are interested in using RSS, read on to find out more about it.

What Is RSS?

You have to know what RSS is before you can utilize it. RSS is commonly called Really Simple Syndication although its more technical name is Rich Site Summary. It basically stands for publishing updates to web-based content on a regular basis. The whole idea behind RSS is that data can be shared and distributed. Web page content or news articles are often part of RSS.

In many ways RSS is similar to email. It collects and delivers the shared data. If you have chosen to receive RSS, you will receive this data. News publishers will often collect syndicated content and then they will publish it. When thinking of a blog, you can use RSS in the same fashion.

A web publisher, or a blogger, can utilize RSS to provide updates to those interested. They can utilize news headlines or other postings in this process. RSS can also be used to send out new content to the blog's readers. It is a great way to let people know when you have something new out there.

What Should I Use RSS For?

Most bloggers want to know why they should use RSS. The best reason to use RSS is to boost your blog's traffic. When you use RSS you can get listed in search engines and RSS directories. This can boost your traffic immensely. You will be

shocked at how much more traffic you will get when you utilize RSS for your blog. In addition to adding it to the search engine, you will likely get a higher position on the search engine as well.

Another reason to use RSS is to keep your blog information fresh and interesting. You can use RSS to update your site with new content without writing it yourself. You can use RSS feeds that automatically update your content for you. With RSS, every time this happens, search engine spiders will automatically be updated that you have new blog content.

When using RSS, your blog content will be out there for others to publish it as well on their sites. Of course they will have to give you credit, but they will be able to put it on their site. Some people are alarmed at this in the beginning, however overall it provides you with loads of exposure you otherwise would not get. Having people access your blog from other sites will only improve your traffic on your site as well. So, this part of RSS can be a wonderful advantage.

Using RSS can take a little research. To get started you will need to figure out exactly where you want to begin. There are companies that specialize in helping you get started. Once you know what you are doing however, you will see that using RSS can greatly improve the success of your blog. To test the theory, try using a search engine to find your site. Type in the title of one of your posts and see what happens. If RSS is working well for your blog you should have no problem finding your blog in the search engine results.

If you want to offer the latest news headlines on your site you should certainly consider using RSS. If you want to offer your blog for other sites to use, you should also consider using RSS. If you simply want to build traffic within your site or want to have a more organized way of containing your information and content, RSS is also a great choice. RSS can be scary because it seems complicated, but once you get

the hang of it, you will likely enjoy using it and watching your blog become more and more successful.

Building Blocks for a Successful Blog

If you want to build a successful blog, there are three main things that can certainly help you get started. Although many people think that building a successful blog is one of the easiest tasks out there, they are wrong. A successful blog takes more than just setting up a blog page to chat about your life. You need to focus on these three building blocks in order to even have the framework for a successful blog. Even these three building blocks are not enough however to make your blog successful. Read on to learn exactly what you need to make your blog as successful as possible.

The Look

The first building block for a successful blog is The Look. What this means is that your blog should start with an appropriate style. You can begin when you first start your blog. Many blogging software programs will help you out with the style of your blog. If you are using a blogging program that caters most to beginners, you will see that it will offer different templates for you to choose. There will be something for everyone. You can go through the templates to choose which colors you like best for the layout. Experiment with the layouts to see which templates look best on the computer screen. You can always go back and change the template later if you want to change the look of your blog. Make sure that if you are creating your own blog, without using a pre-created template that you make it look as professional as possible. You can even hire a professional to do the job for you if you wish. The more professional your blog looks, the more seriously your readers will take your posts.

The Content

The content of your blog is the second key building block you will need for a successful blog. While you can choose to create posts that have no direction or purpose, you will find that when you post interesting commentary or short information filled articles that your traffic will increase. Although you may think it is

interesting, most readers will not enjoy reading about your day to day activities, unless you make them into humorous stories.

It should also be noted that the more content you have on your site, the more successful your site will be. It is basically a numbers game at this point. The more you post, the more chances you will have the one of your posts will attract the eye of someone searching for a related topic.

The Ads

The third building block is advertising. Bloggers can make a steady income using advertising on their blogs. The trick is to have a good mixture of ads and content however. If you fill your blog with ads and have no content for readers, they will be distracted and not visit your site again. A good rule to remember is that you should never have more than two or three ads per blog page. This is an important rule to remember. You should not overwhelm you readers with ads. You should only present them so that the readers can further explore them if they wish. Don't use flashing ads or other bold ads that will annoy your readers. Choosing the right type of advertising program is part of it as well. Look into an easy to use program such as Google AdSense if you want a quick way to get started in the advertising arena.

The Dedication

The most important building block of a great blog is dedication. You must be willing to be dedicated to the blog. You have to put in the time and energy to get positive results. Even if you have the other three components, unless you take the time to update your posts each day, you will not be getting optimum results. Dedication can help a lot. It can hide the fact that you are a beginner and allow you to create a beautiful and functional blog. No matter how little experienced you are dedication can cover that up. You can have a great blog as long as you take the time to give some of your energy to the project.

Three Reasons Why Blogging Boosts Business

Building your business can be a difficult task. You can put hundreds of hours of effort into the business, but if you still don't have important components, you will not be successful. Today business owners are realizing that blogging boosts business. Blogs are typically only seen as personal places to express yourself and your views. The truth is however the blogs are also great places to reach people about your business or your products. There are several ways to do this type of blogging.

The best way a business can use blogging to boost their business is by taking part in the blogs of others. You can easily create quality posts with your business in mind without needing to set up a blog of your own. Try finding blogs that pertain to the area of business you are in. This will help you get started. With millions of blogs out there, you should be able to find some with no problem. Choose to post on all of them, or choose the few that get the most activity. Then begin posting. When you do, you will see positive results come in. If you are still curious about how this can boost your business, check out these three reasons blogging boosts business.

Quick Name Recognition

The fastest way to get your business's name out in the public is to make it known to your targeted marketing group. If you want to get your company's name out to men who like fishing, then you can find a blog that is about just that. When you find the blogs pertaining to this marketing group, post useful and intelligent information about topics that pertain to your company. You might not want to sound like an advertisement. Think about responding to another comment and simply tagging your signature with your company's website. This is a subtle way to get their attention. The more you post on blogs, the more widely known your company's name will become with the select marketing group. When they tell their friends and family about the site then your consumer group will have grown even more. This is a fast way to get started. You will have to invest some time however. At least an hour a day can be used for this type of task.

Consumer Testimonies

Your company might even think about hiring professionals to blog for your company. You can offer these employees products to try and give them the task of finding blogs where they can appropriately “praise” the product. By paying these people to do the task, you will be getting the work done that you need without having to devote much time. Consumer testimonials go a long way with other consumers. If these bloggers are productive enough, you will see an increase due to it.

Building Relationships

Smart business owners know that they can go further with the help of others. A great way to connect and build relationships with other businesses is via their blog. If you are a regular poster who values their business, they will be more likely to work with you. Working together with advertising is a great idea. You can swap ad space for no fee if you like. These are great things for business owners and are easy to get into when you blog regularly.

As you can see, blogging can be a great way to do business. It may seem like tricky advertising, and it is in some ways. However, it is free advertising that does the same thing as a commercial on television does. It reaches a targeted marketing group and lets them know your company’s name, products, and sometimes offers an endorsement. Overall, it is an effective way to get your business out there. When people have no idea who you are, they are not going to feel comfortable working with you. The better your reputation is, the more likely they will trust you. When you have no reputation at all, they will not trust you either. So, even if you just want to use blogging to build your company’s reputation, it will be worth your while. Give it a try and see what type of results you can get using these tips.

Link Swapping your Way to Blogging Success

Most everyone who has Internet access has heard about blogging. Blogging is the new way to keep a journal, record thoughts, or just ramble about life or events on the Internet. A blog is updated frequently and on an ongoing basis. Weblog and blog is the same thing. Link swapping, or linking similar web sites or blogs together can be a great way for your blog to succeed.

When you blog or record your thoughts online, you have the option of making your blog site private or sharing your site with others. Some choose to use a blog more like a personal diary, while other people want to get as many readers on their site as possible. One easy way to increase traffic on your blog site is to link swap. Link swapping is fairly simple and only requires that you have an agreement with other bloggers or websites to put your link on their site in exchange for the same from them. Link swapping is a perfect way to help increase the readership on your blog.

Most of the time, link swapping on blogs will have links to other web sites with similar content. For example, a blog about pets may have several links to web sites that relate to pet care or topics in addition to other bloggers web sites that write about pets. There are two types of blogs, a personal blog or a business blog.

Small businesses can benefit a great deal from regular blogging and swapping links. As a matter of fact, many companies pay writers to blog for them. Companies, media outlets such as television stations, radio stations and newspapers are all getting into the blogging craze. The media can use a blog to give their readers up to the minute updates about stories and events from around the world.

Business blogging gives a company an inexpensive means for sharing their knowledge with other businesses and consumers. Blogging can also help businesses

better communicate with their employees with time spent emailing and sending out frequent memos. Also, when a business swaps links with other businesses, those links can help increase traffic to their site. This a great form of inexpensive advertising for a company. There are many online companies that offer free or low cost blog sites to anyone who wishes to use them. Some companies may opt for a more professional blog site and hire web designers for this type of job.

Other benefits of link swapping and blogging to the business are that these types of sites offer ways to show up on search engines. When a web site has more links from link swapping, one keyword search may produce several results leading straight to the company's blog page. Blogging for businesses is becoming increasingly popular and is proving to be a very good way for business to get the word out about their company.

For anyone who wishes to start blogging and to join in link swapping, there are many free blog sites available for personal use. Most blogging web sites offer easy set up and most can be easily customized to fit the personal tastes of the blogger. In addition, most of these blog sites make it very easy to include links for the specific purpose of link swapping.

Blogging for personal can vary a great deal from person to person. Some choose to use their blog as a way to record their inner most thoughts and feelings. Sharing a blog is optional and many people choose to keep their thoughts private. For those who are not afraid to let the world read their writing, public blogging is also popular. Blogging and link swapping is also an ideal way for large families to stay in touch with each other. Most blog sites even offer picture-hosting options to share not only your writing, but your photos as well. Link swapping provides an easy way for those wishing to share their stories to get the message out.

Whether you want to blog for pleasure or for business, you can use your blog along with link swapping to get the word out about what you have to say. Blogging and link swapping offer a beneficial way for personal users and businesses to share their world with others.

Four Ways to Keep Visitors Coming to your Blog Site

Blogging is a perfect way for people to share their thoughts with others. When people blog, it means they keep an updated online journal or diary. Weblog and blog are the same things. Companies might also blog to help increase the amount of business on their web sites. For many bloggers, increasing traffic to their blogs is not the only goal. Most people that blog want to keep their visitors coming back for more. The following are four ways to keep visitors coming to your blog site.

Blogging is a relatively new phenomenon. Some blog writes choose to keep their blogs personal and do not share their thoughts with others. These are more like online diaries. Other wants to share with everyone what he or she has to say. Blogging is a big business and many websites offer free blog hosting. In addition, many companies choose blogging as an inexpensive way to advertise their products or services. Blogging on the Internet is often much cheaper than maintaining a web site and is usually more interesting for readers and clients.

Update your blog: The easiest way to keep visitors coming back to your blog site is to update your blog on a regular basis. Readers will stay loyal to blogs that are updated daily. Some blog writers even updated several times a day. Readers will tend to loose interest in your writing if they have to wait several days for new material. Be loyal to your readers and your readers will be loyal to your blog. Also, there are literally thousands of blogs available on the Internet. If your blog is not updated on a regular basis, you will loose your readers to another blog site. Another fun way to update your blog and keep your readers interested in your site is to include something fun for your readers to enjoy. That could be as simple as a joke or maybe a link to a humorous story you have found on the Internet. You might also try including a trivia game or polls for your readers to enjoy on a regular basis.

Participate in web communities: Participating in web communities or discussion forums and mentioning your blog whenever possible will help keep readers coming back to your site. In addition, you can gain new readers when doing this. You can also be loyal to the blogs of other writers and ask them to visit your site. Leave nice comments about their site and invite them to your site. If you have mutual interests and the same type of readers, you can even share your blog links on your site. This helps everyone. Your reader will appreciate interesting reading while you benefit from readers from the other site.

Understand who reads your blogs: Another great way to keep blog readers coming back for more is to understand who reads your blog and write content that is directed towards them. This does not mean that you have to write on only one particular subject, though. If you are a stay at home mom and write about your life at home with the kids, your loyal readers may not appreciate it if you write about cutting edge topics or use a lot of foul language in your writing. If you generally write humor, do not bog your readers down with sorrowful woes and tales. Your readers will be interested in the things that attracted them to your site in the first place. That is usually what you are more interested in writing about. You can gain a better understanding of your readers interested by including places for comments and encouraging your readers to contact you by email.

Include keywords: You can gain readership and help keep your current readers by including certain keywords in your blog. If you have entered your blog on a search engine, these keywords that point to your blog will come up after a search. This is a great way to get readers interested in your blog. This is also a good way for companies to increase the traffic to their blog.

Blogging is the new way to keep a diary or journal online. Blogging is increasingly popular for companies as well. If you want to make your blog stand out against the thousands of other blogs, keep your readers interested and coming back for more

everyday by updating your writing, participate in online communities, understand your readers and include keywords.

Indexing your Way to More Blog Exposure

A blog is defined as a website that contains information, comments, thoughts and links by a writer. A blog can be a very personal site for writers looking to express their innermost personal thoughts or can be very general. Blog indexing means that blogs are listing on cross Internet searches and search engine sites. There are special sites that lists blogs that makes them easy to find for readers

When you first start writing a blog, it is usually because you have something you want to express. If you choose to share your blogging thoughts, you will want a steady stream of readers for your blog to be successful. More exposure to your web blog means more readers. Blog exposure is important and one way to get this type of exposure is through blog indexing.

Readers can find a blog about almost any topic in the world and in any language. A blog index helps readers find what kind of blog they are most interested in reading. Some blog indexing sites list several different topics to choose from and then list blogs that relate to a particular topic. For blog writers this can mean increased exposure to a blog site.

Blog indexing can also include indexing your blog pages within your site. When you add an entry to your blog, it will be included with a link on your site. Keeping these links can help readers go back and read your past entries. Many times, when you include certain keywords within your blog writing, a search engine can also pull up your past blog entries. This makes it easy for your readers to catch up with current entries as well.

Web searching through blog indexing is very beneficial. You can have the option whether or not to include searches to your site. When a blog is indexed, it helps

readers easily locate your site. If you do not index your site, it still may be found using a search engine; however, the link will be blank if the entry is old or if you have removed it for whatever reason. Indexing your pages and including searches to your blog site means that a reader can enter your blog they are looking for and produce results.

When you get ready to index your blog pages and implement searches, there are few tips that can help readers easily locate your entries. One easy tip is to keep your page noticeable. This means that you want to keep your search options easily accessible for your reader. Also, enter your blog on as many search engines sites that you're possible can. Many search engines sites such as Google and Yahoo have steps you can use to enter your web site on their search engine. This process may take a couple of weeks, but it is well worth it if you are interested in more exposure through your blog.

Another way to increase the traffic on your blog with indexing and searching, make sure all of your links works. Check your links often and make sure that they are leading your readers to your site or to where you want them directed. Also, if you change your web blog location, you will need to update your search engines or include a link from your old site to your new site. If a reader clicks on your link to get to your blog and finds that it is no good, chances are that they will not attempt to find your location.

You can also increase traffic to your blog site by using a blog-hosting site that is easy to use and that offers features such as searches and indexing. There are many blog sites that are available to those that want to blog, but some may not offer the type of features you want to use. If you choose to keep your blog personal and private, then you will not need to worry about indexing or entering your blog on a search engine.

Blogging can be a great way to share your writing with others. In order to make sure that you have the maximum amount of exposure to your blog consider indexing and search engines. This can help readers easily locate your blog and will help them locate interesting entries in the future.

Traffic Counts – How to Know if Someone Visits your Blog

For those who blog, or write in online journals, keeping track of visitors can be a great way to see who visits a particular blog. There are many ways to keep track of blog readers when you blog. Blog hit counters; visitor tracking, referrers and keywords all can help you know if someone has visited your blog.

When you set up your blog, you will probably have already decided on the type of blog you will keep. Some web blog hosting sites will offer their service for free, but have a minimum of features. Other blog sites might cost, but will offer bloggers services to keep track of visitors. There are many reasons to track the visitors that read your blog. Understanding who visits your blog will help you know what your readers are looking for. Successful blogging starts with interested writing and will appeal to your readers. Another reason you might want to keep track of the visitors that come to your site is to increase traffic. This is especially important for blogs that are for companies. Companies can use their blog for inexpensive advertising. Knowing who visits the blog site will help a company understand if they are reaching their target audience for their services or products.

A blog hit counter is one way to keep track of the amount of visitors that read your blog. Blog hit counters are usually small boxes at the very end of a web page that updates a number every time your site is hit. Some blog hit counters can give site owners site statistics, reports and graphs to illustrate blog activity. These counters can also show you where your readers are finding your site. If your blog hosting site does not offer a blog hit counter feature, one can easily be downloaded or added to your page from another site. There are many free sites that offer counters for blog pages. Blog writers can register on the hit counter site, download and install directly into the blog template. This will give an accurate count of how many visitors you have to your blog. If you are not worried about keywords or details information about your readers, then a blog hit counter is the easiest way to track your readership.

If you want more advanced blog features, then you can add tracking options to your blog. There are several ways you can track your readers. One is by keywords and the other is a visitor tracker. Keyword trackers are ideal for those who need to know what keywords people are using to locate a blog. This could be important for businesses that need to reach potential consumers. A good keyword tracker can also help you organize your blog site to determine which keywords are most popular with readers. It can also help get your site listed on search engines. Keyword trackers can be downloaded for free in many cases. If your site relies heavily on readers, then a keyword tracker could be a good choice.

A visitor tracker works much the same way as a keyword tracker. The difference, however, is that a visitor tracker will provide you with information statistics about your blog visitors. Usually, this information is given in easy to understand graphs and tables. If you need to see where your visitors are coming from, then a visitor tracker can be quite beneficial. It is a little more sophisticated than a hit counter, but works about the same way. When a visitor enters your blog site, their information is saved onto the visitor tracker. When you are ready, you can log in and see exactly who your visitors are. Many times not only are you able to see the statistics on your readers, but you can also see reports for current visitors and those that have visited the site in the past.

One other way that a blog writer can keep track of their readers is to include a comment section at the end of your blog page. Not all visitors will want to leave a comment, but this is a good way to gain feedback about your site. You will better understand the type of readers that frequent your site, but also understand the kind of content that they want to read.

Bada Bing, Bada Blog – How Blogging Markets your Business

Now that blogging has become so popular among everyone from the novice writer to the most experienced journalist, businesses are starting to take notice. A well-written and frequently updated blog can help market almost any type of business. Blogging can help target readers who are interested in a company's product or service and businesses can keep track of what their readers are looking for through blogging. In addition, blogging can help link together companies that compliment each other very easily.

There is a lot of talk about blogging. Some feel that blogging is just a passing fad, but others feel it is just the beginning. Some business analysts feel that blogging does not significantly help a business market the company. Many businesses feel that this is not so. Blogging can be a beneficial way to mark a business, build an audience and help link in other companies together.

Bloggging can help almost any business expose their readers to their services and products. Sometimes with new products, a blog can create interest in something new. Blogging is helpful because it can talk in depth about the product, and it can also give step-by-step instructions on how a certain product can be used. A reader, who is interested in the product after reading about it on a blog, will be more inclined to research similar products on the Internet. This can lead to a more informed consumer and can save a consumer time when shopping or researching a new product. In turn, a company may save time because customers who have read the blog are already informed about the product. These customers can also read reviews on these products and services, which can be helpful in the buying process.

Another great thing about companies using a blog for their products and services is that a blog enables the company and the customer to communicate effectively. A customer can read the blog and comment on it right away. This provides good

feedback to the company and they can know what the customers want. Usually blogs will provide places for readers to leave their comments or send emails to the writer. This is a good marketing tool for businesses. People enjoy communicating about products and services that they have had good or bad experiences with and blogging provided the opportunity to do so.

Blogs can also help market a business because it will be included in search engines. When people enter certain keywords, blogs that contain those words will show up. When blogs are updated frequently, search engines can provide your company with a lot of hits. This can lead to many people looking at the company's blog who might not otherwise have done so.

When companies use blogs, it also has the ability to create a sensation around a product and influence public opinion. This is an excellent tool for companies to use. Because of the huge popularity of blogging, this can be a more effective tool than some forms of advertising. Readers are more likely to share interesting blogs with their friends and this can help companies get the word out about their product.

Another way blogging can help market a business is that blogs often help a company position itself as a leader in a certain field. This means that those who blog can show their expertise about certain subjects and then updates this information on a regular basis. Blogging can help generate leads and send a positive message about your company without spending a lot of money for advertising. Readers can look at these blogs and know that they are dealing with a quality company.

Companies also use blogs to help network with other companies that compliment their business. This is beneficial because they can easily share their links and readers will see all of the blogs that relate to what they are searching for on the Internet. Link swapping is often used in blogging, especially with businesses.

Blogging is proving to be a beneficial marketing tool for businesses all over the world. While it's a fairly new way for companies and customers to communicate with each other, blogging provides an immediate and unique form of advertising for the company. Customers are able to read and research products and services through blogging and companies can better understand what their customers want.

Keep Them Coming for More – What Blog Readers REALLY Want

Blogging has become a very popular as more people turn to writing online journals to express their thoughts and interest. Most blog writers have some sort of following by readers, unless they choose to keep their blogs private. Even if the blog is designed just for your family or a group of friends, it is important to understand your readers and what they want.

A blog, or Weblog, is an online journal or diary where people of all ages and from all over the world can express their thoughts, opinions, interests and maybe just random thoughts. Businesses also use blogs to communicate with their customers and it is proving to be an effective form of communication. Whether you write a blog for your company or just for other readers, you readers rely on you for updating your blog on a regular basis.

When you get ready to keep a blog, think about what your readers want from a blog. One important part of keeping readers interested in blogs is to update frequently. If blogs are not updated on a regular basis, they will find another blog to read. It is important to keep your blog current and to provide the updates to your reader. You might even think about including a subscription or email option to your blog. When a reader subscribes to your blog, they will automatically receive updates when you add a new entry to your blog. This helps them know when you have new material on your blog.

Another way to keep your readers coming back to your blog is to target your audience. If you are a pet lover and write about your life with your five dogs, then you need to find others with similar interest. Some groups will not be interested in your story. Find your audience by visiting web groups or communities that have to do with your main subject. Tell everyone you know about what you blog about and

provide a link to your writing. If a reader is interested in the subject you are writing about, it is more likely that they will come back and visit often. It is important to remember that there are literally thousands of blogs on the Internet on virtually any topic. You want to grab your reader and keep them coming back.

You are also enticing your readers by coming back for more if you use your blog wisely. If you want to write private thoughts, then do not share your writing with others. If you do want to share, be careful about what you write about. If you embarrass people you know through your writing, then you are not using your blog wisely. Protect the people around you and do not try to get even with people through your blog. Readers that do not know you are not interested in reading your nasty posts to your enemies. Keep your blogs fun and entertaining for anyone who wants to read them.

Also, when you blog, keep your readers interested by having an easy to use blog. Sometimes large pictures or downloads can take up a lot of time and your reader may not want to open large files. If you want to include pictures, links, or downloads make sure they work and will not slow a computer down. You can also make your blog easy to use by using a blog-hosting site that cuts down on advertising and pop-ups. Most of the time, those types of advertising will annoy your reader. When you choose a blog site, check into the types of features that the site can offer. Some of these sites that avoid ads and pop ups may cost, but are worth it if you want your readers to have a good blog experience on your site.

You can also ensure that your readers will come back to your blog if you treat your readers with respect. They may not like something you write about and if they leave a negative comment, do not flame your readers. Also, you readers will appreciate your writing more if you leave nice comments to them or even send them a quick email thanking them for visiting your blog. This is a great way to build communication with your readers and will keep them coming back for your blog.

By Way of the Blog – Why Your Marketing Plan Should Include One

Blogging is a great way for a business to effectively market their product or service without spending a lot of money. There are many benefits of business blogging. Businesses that keep up with a blog can introduce their products or services to consumers and can better communicate their customers. In addition, businesses that blog can understand what their customers want and serve them better.

A blog, sometimes called Weblog, is defined as a web page that serves as a journal or diary for individuals. Most blog writers update their blog on a regular basis and writers often share what most interests them. Individuals are not the only ones that have found blogging beneficial. Businesses have learned that this new way to communicate is a good marketing tool for their products and services.

Every company should consider have a regular blog for their businesses. Larger businesses may opt to hire a several special writers with certain areas of expertise to update their blog. A smaller company may have one writer that can effectively write about their product. The idea of blogging for any size business is to get the word out to readers. A reader who frequents a certain blog is more likely to share the blog with others. Also, blogging is a great marketing tool because it allows consumers to be better informed.

When a business chooses to blog, it allows them to introduce their product or service to consumers. Keywords and search engines help consumers quickly find the blog they are looking for with ease. For example, if a company specializes in making handmade jewelry and keeps a blog that is on a search engine, then that search engine would list their blog on a search. Blogging allows customers to research the product they are looking for with ease.

Companies that keep a regular can also use their blog to communicate with their readers and customers. There are many features that a blog site can offer that will allow a reader to enter comments and contact the writer. Companies that encourage their readers to leave comments can take the comments and improve their services and products. In addition, companies can email their customers back and let them know that they are interested in what they have to say. In addition, a company that uses blogging to market their service or product should always rely on an experienced writer to update the blog. Business blogs should be polished and easy to read.

Another good reason why businesses and companies should include a blog in their marketing plan is because a blog provides a unique way to understand what customers want. Companies that are in tuned with their customer's needs and wishes can better serve them. Keeping an updated blog will initiate more customer communication that can help a company know right away how to improve. Blogs provide good public relations and are generally much cheaper to maintain than a regular web site. Also, a business that keeps a blog can reach out to other complimenting companies and link those blog sites together. This will help build readership and customers.

When setting up a blog for business purposes it is important to look for a blog-hosting site that can offer the right kind of features. Most businesses will use a site that can offer them more search engines and options to add links and URLs on their page. Free blog sites may not have the capabilities to offer as many features as the ones that charge a monthly fee. The search engine option is very important for a company that keeps a blog. This will ensure that readers can easily locate the company's blog page. Also, a company setting up a blog should always keep the links and contact information within the blog current. A customer will not want to continue using a blog page that is full of broken links or outdated contact information. If a company relies on their customers to read the blog, then those customers will always rely on the company to make their blog experience a positive one.

Blogging can be a great marketing tool for any size business. It is important for businesses to realize that blogs are not a passing fad, but a unique way to interact with customers and gain recognition in a particular field.

Blogs vs. Websites: What's the Difference?

Online journals, better known as blogs, are becoming more and more popular. When the Internet was first getting started, users rushed to build personal web sites. Web sites are still very popular among web users, but many are now turning to blogs. What's the difference? This article will examine the main similarities and differences between a Weblog and a website.

While blogs and website are intended to be different, there are a couple of similarities in blogs and sites. Mainly, they are both found on the Internet using a URL or a web address. Both also must have some sort of host to keep the information online. Another similarity of the two is that they both can be maintained by virtually anyone from individuals to companies. Both Weblog and websites can also contain information, pictures, link and keywords, as well. These two types of sites will target readers.

With a blog, information that is entered on the site is generally updated very frequently depending on the writer. Sometimes blog writers even update several times a day. Usually with a website, information is not updated regularly. Websites generally contain information about something that does not change often. When a website is updated, usually the entire page is altered. With a blog, just one entry at a time is updated. After a website has been changed, that information is gone and cannot be seen again by the reader. On a blog, new entries are added, but the old ones are not deleted from the site. Instead, they are stamped with the date and time that they were created, given a title and indexed on that blog page. It makes it easy for a blog reader to go to a certain blog page and read past entries without having to search.

Another main difference between and blog and a website is that a website is generally a little harder to maintain and oftentimes requires a solid understanding of the way

the Internet works. With a blog, almost anyone can easily and quickly update a blog. It does not require any special working knowledge of the Internet. In addition, there are many sites that offer blog features and most of the time these can be used for free.

Blogs also encourage people to communicate with each other much more so than with a website. A website's primary function is to provide some sort of information to a reader. While there may be a place to leave a comment or an email address for writing that is not why that site was created. Blogs are used for communication. Writers may choose to make their site private, but most choose to publish their blogs making them public to any one who wishes to read. Most blog hosting sites offer options to add to the site so readers and the writer can leave comments to each other on the site. In addition, there are entire web communities built just for blogs. Blogs encourage those who have similar thoughts, interests or even businesses to share their blog site so readers can find them easily. Blogs offer guest tracking, keyword tracking, hit counters, comment areas, and even tag boards for both the reader and the writer to use.

Blogging is extremely popular right now. As more people begin sharing their thoughts with others, there are more blogs created each day. Blogging gives writers, journalists, professionals, moms, dads and even teenagers an instant way to publish their thoughts on a regular basis. For those who enjoy writing, blogs give a unique opportunity to practice writing skills and experiment with what others want to read. Businesses use blogs to show off their expertise and knowledge in their fields, whereas websites do not always get this type of message out to the readers.

Blogging and websites do have some similarities. They are both found on the Internet and contain information. However, blogs give a writer the unique opportunity to communicate with their reader and update their entries on a frequent basis. Anyone who tries blogging will love the instant gratification of getting their opinions and thoughts out on the Internet right away and getting instant feedback from readers that visit their site.

Blogs' Way with Words Adds to Success

There are many ways to make your blog a successful one. Blog writers put a lot of work in their writing and for the most part, want readers to visit. But, there are thousands of blogs available for readers online. If you want to make your blog successful then you must consider what your reader wants.

A blog is an easy and instant way to share your thoughts and feelings with readers. It is easy to build readership to your blog when you are ready to share your writing with others. Because there are so many other blogs on the Internet, if you want your blog to be a successful one, it is important to help your blog stand out from the thousands of other blogs that are available to readers. A few simple tips can help make your blog add up to success.

Allowing your readers to leave comments is a great way to make your blog more successful. Even if you are posting random thoughts about your day, you will feel more accomplished if you know someone is reading your work. A successful blog will enable their readers to contact them either through email or through comment boxes on the site. In addition, a successful blog writer can gain more readers by doing the same for other writers. By visiting other blog sites and posting comments, a writer can encourage others to read their blog. In addition, your readers will feel important and included when you respond nicely to their comments. Even if someone responds negatively to your writing, a successful blogger will still thank the reader for his or her opinion. Communication is a great way to a successful blog.

Another way to make your blog writing successful is to look into track backs. A track back is the system used to notify a writer when another writer writes about their blog. It sounds confusing, but it is really simple. If you read a blog by someone else and decide for whatever reason to write about that blog in your own blog, a track back will tell the other writer about your blog. Usually, this will lead to that writer reading

your blog and can evolve into communication. Over time, you can even link the blogs together and share readership. Track backs can help start communities of like-minded individuals and get others who might not have otherwise found your blog, to read your blog. Track backs can also increase the amount of traffic to your blog site.

Successful blog writers also make good use of tag boards. Tags are the links that help a reader navigate quickly through a site. Using keywords, a blog can list all entries containing certain keywords together. When a reader wants to read about that one subject, they only need to look at the tag board and select what they are interested in reading. Tagging is highly recommended for blog writers that want to increase their traffic to their site. This is also an important feature for business. Not all blog-hosting sites will offer this feature, but it can be downloaded to most blog sites. When you use this feature, or any feature that involves links to other blogs or websites it is always a good idea to check the links to make sure they work. Readers will become frustrated when the links available on your site are no good.

Another way to a successful blog is to write about what your reader wants to read. This can be done easily when you are able to link with other people with similar interest. For example, if you are a stay at home mom and want to write about your life with a two year old, do not try to get readers that are only interested in pet care. Visit parenting boards and communities and get others with the same interests to visit the site. In addition, make sure that your site is edited for spelling and typing errors before publishing and that you have updated your site frequently. Not updating your blog on a regular basis will lead you to lose readers to other sites that are kept up to date. Also, look into blog hosting sites that eliminates annoying ads or screen pop-ups. Most of the time, you might have to pay a small monthly fee for these ad-free sites, but if you want to build readership, this can be a small price to pay.

Hints for Hunting the Best Blogging Tools and Software

Blogs are everywhere. One quick search will net hundreds of blogs about hundreds of topics. Virtually anyone in the world can sit at their computer and publish an online journal. Blogs are the hot new way to communicate with the masses. Even businesses, news media outlets and famous stars are blogging. With so many blogs out there, it is easy to see why there is a huge demand for good blogging tools and software.

Blogging tools and software can help both the writer and the reader of the blog. With easy to use tools such as hit counters and comment boxes, blog writers can see exactly how many people have visited their blog site and what they think of their entries. Blog readers can also benefit from these features because they can communicate with the writer and navigate through the site efficiently. Software offers great features for blog writers, too. A writer can customize their blog to fit their personality.

When you are ready to look into blogging tools and software there are a few tips to follow. The first thing you will need to decide before looking for tools to add to your blog page is to decide how your blog will be used. For example, you may want to use your blog as a personal online diary or you may not wish to share your writing with anyone else. You will need a blog that offers a password only feature that can block out anyone else from reading your blog. The same goes for if you only want to share your blog with those that you invite. Some blog tools and software will allow you to set up a password so that only those that you give it to will have access to your site. If you want to make your blog public, then you may not need these types of features. If you have a large business, you may want to use blog software that will allow several bloggers from your company to use. These types of decisions should be made before looking into tools and software.

In addition, if you want to obtain blog software, you will need to understand the two main types of software used for blogging. One type is Weblog publishing. This type of software allows users to make and publish web pages that are static, or do not change often. This is an easy way to make many pages at once and publish them on the Internet. They are not necessarily for blogging. The other type is a Weblog community. This type of software allows users to make customized dynamic or constantly changing web pages, such as blogs. This is the type of software that often works best when you want to write a blog. This kind of software usually offers features that are easily added to a blog such as comment areas, moderation, track back options, and hit counters.

When looking for the blog tools and software you want to use for your blog, you will then need to decide on how much you want to spend. Just like most things with computers, you can spend a lot or you can spend nothing. Most of the time, how much you will spend will depend on the type of features you need or want for your page. For most casual blog users, free blog sites offers most of the tools needed to maintain a functional blog. The most basic blog sites offer hit counters, comment boxes and subject indexing. If, however, you need more tools and better software, you might need to download the tools or purchase the software. This is usually the case for businesses that need to maintain a large amount of blogs for their company. Other tools that can be downloaded might include quizzes, games or trivia, databases of readers that join, comment and discussion forums, link areas, picture hosting and search engine or keyword options.

A blog that is easy to use for any reader and is interesting can generate more readers. Added tools and software can help blog writers achieve this. There are many new and exciting blog tools and software that can be used to make your blog stand out from the crowd of many.

Top Five Blog Boo-Boo's to Avoid

If you've just entered the world of blogging or if you've been blogging for a short time and find that things are not working out as you expected, it will be worth your while to spend some time understanding the common mistakes that bloggers make, mistakes that make it hard to enjoy what should be an enjoyable, satisfying experience: Blogging!

The five most common new blogger mistakes are:

Diving in (rather than wading in)

Having unrealistic expectations

Losing focus

Plagiarizing

Ignoring the reader

Diving in! Many bloggers are so anxious to get started that they dive in rather than wading in slowly -- its a mistake in an unfamiliar swimming pool or pond and its a mistake when entering a new arena such as the 'blogosphere.' Consider these things before you start your Blog:

Find a focus for your blog . . . a focus that reflects what you know, what interests you and what you enjoy talking and writing about. No topics are out of bounds: politics, religion, science, sexual orientations, comedy, exercise, diet, diseases, etc., etc..

Take the time to read dozens of different blogs: note the colors, graphics and layouts to get an idea of what appeals to you. Also note that some bloggers are long-winded and others are brief and to the point . . . others are just chatty and entertaining and have no particular point to make . . . this too is a personal style you get to choose.

You need a host for your blog, some are free, some charge a small amount per month for their service, some are simple to use and some require more technical knowledge, some have more features than others; choose carefully, once you've established your blog and have a few regular readers you may not want to change your address (your URL).

You may or may not want to use your real name on your blog, this depends on many factors, not the least of which is your stance on controversial issues and how publicly you want to be identified with your opinions.

Unrealistic expectations! If you come to blogging expecting instant results: a large readership and many complimentary comments, you may be disappointed. There are tens of thousands of blogs online vying for the same audience. Patience and tenacity are essential on your part. If you write well, find a unique niche to fill, have appealing titles for your posts and tirelessly promote your blog the readership and comments (some of which will be complimentary) will come.

Losing focus! When you started your blog you had a particular reason for doing so; it might have been to express your views on a topic or it might have been to just communicate with a close circle of friends about your daily activities. Readers will come to your blog for the first time and either be interested in your subject matter or not, will either like your style or not and, if they like your subject and style they may comment and then come back later. Once you've established a topic and tone for your blog you're free to change it but to do so you're basically starting all over.

Be aware that you can have more than one blog, each one devoted to a particular topic and each one, if you choose, under a different identity.

Plagiarizing! There are some great bloggers out there and as you surf through blogs you might find one who said something really well, something that resonated with you and something you want to put in your blog. DON'T just copy and paste

someone's words in your blog without giving them credit, making it look to the world like the words are yours. If you write it, write it in your own words and write it better, adding your own thoughts and feelings and then be gracious, mention where you got the idea and provide a link.

Ignoring the reader! Some of the people who read your blog will leave comments; some readers will agree with you and some readers may even praise your insights but most will pick a point you've made and criticize it. People leave comments on others blogs for the same reason they themselves blog, to exchange ideas and express their points of view. Always respond to your readers comments; thank them for reading and taking the time to comment (even the severe critics) and then respond, as appropriate, to their comment. If you ignore your comments your readers may end up ignoring your blog.

Blogging for Bucks – How to Start Making a REAL Living with your Blog

There are many bloggers who make incomes of several thousand dollars per month from their blogs. These are not casual bloggers who only want to see their words and their name online or who just want to put forth a point-of-view, these are serious bloggers who have made blogging into a full-time (or nearly full-time) job.

Here are some of the ways they make money from their blogs and ways you can also blog for bucks:

Advertising! There are many advertisers waiting for you to approach them, these are programs such as Google's AdSense (<https://www.google.com/adsense/>) where you allow companies to place their ads . . . ads related to your topic . . . on your blog. Each time one of your readers clicks on an ad on your blog, you earn a small amount of money (a predetermined amount). A slightly different approach is used by companies such as CrispADS (<http://www.crispads.com/>). With this type of service, you tell them how much you want to charge for advertising space on your blog and they will attempt to find an advertiser who will pay that price (plus a commission for the go-between company). These are just two of a large group that is expanding daily.

Blog Feeds! RSS (Really Simple Syndication) and ATOM Feeds are two of the dominant blog feeds. The object of a blog feed is to distribute every new post you add to your blog to a list of subscribers; you make your blog posts available to RSS or ATOM, people who want to read your stuff on a regular basis can subscribe to your posts and read them on a newsreader. The latest trend is to include advertising to these blog feeds and, as before, if your subscriber clicks on an ad that is included with your feed, you get some money. There are no BIG bucks here yet but its a rapidly growing field.

Affiliate Programs! Online companies have been offering affiliate programs to bloggers for years, some of the big ones are Amazon, Linkshare and Clickbank. They work by providing you a unique URL that you add to your blog. Any readers that click through to the company and buy something are providing you with a commission. Another version of the affiliate program is the “mini-mall” concept offered by companies such as Chitika eMiniMalls. The mini-mall works (like the affiliate program), through a link on your blog that takes your reader to a page with a variety of merchandise -- all sales earn you a commission.

Sponsors! Large corporations are very aware of the blogosphere and of the growing number of people who read blogs and, in response, they are using blogs to advance their business interests -- blogs may never replace the Michael Jordan-type superstars for corporations but blogs are already gaining many fairly lucrative corporate sponsorships. If you have a blog that is dedicated to a particular topic, e.g., digital cameras, that is published on a regular basis, that has a good readership and is recognized as an authoritative source for digital camera information, your blog may draw the interest of a corporate sponsor and you may be approached to run their advertisements for new products on a long-term basis. If and when you reach that point you know you've made it to the big time, professional blogger's league.

Your Product! The methods mentioned above are just a few of the very many ways you can start making money from your blog . . . but there is a catch!

As you probably noticed every scheme mentioned and every other money-making blogging scheme you'll find requires a great blog . . . a blog that draws hundreds of readers (as a minimum) on a regular basis. To reach this stage of readership you need a blog that offers the reader some type of unique, quality content.

If blogging is to be a money making business for you, you'll need to treat it like a business by dedicating your time, energy and creativity to its success. Also, like any

successful business, you need a product or service that is a 'customer magnet.' Your “product” is your content: it could be news or information or entertainment but whatever it is, it must be unique and interesting.

Blah, Blah Blog – Expressing Yourself through Blogs

Picture these three scenarios:

You are at a costume party in a room full of strangers. You are dressed as an 18th Century dandy; you've studied the mannerisms, have affected the perfect accent and you charm every partygoer you meet. Beneath the facade, outside the realm of this party you may be a banker, a steel worker or an unemployed poet but here and now you are Monsieur Baudelaire, the fop who speaks of temperament and style as the be-all and end-all of a meaningful existence.

You are at work where you are always the no-nonsense professional, respected by peers and underlings and depended upon by your manager to perform your tasks with skill, technical proficiency and a pleasant demeanor -- an expectation that is hardly ever unmet.

You are at an informal get together with family, close friends and neighbors; you talk about sports, literature and fashion with people who know you and who understand your opinions, your quirks and your few flaws -- there is no facade, no pretense, you are unabashedly you!

These scenarios that represent three versions of you in the real world are also three (of many) approaches you can take to presenting yourself to your readers in the virtual world, through your blog: as a character of your creation, as the professional at whatever you do, or as the real, unadulterated you, complete with flaws. Your blog and your blogger persona are your creations and are limited only by your choices. Consider also that whatever it is you write, in whatever form, even if it is spoof or satire, it will be considered by your readers as an expression of your true feelings.

People express themselves in many ways and for a growing number of people the need for some sort of public expression of thoughts, feelings, style or creative expression is filled by blogging. Expressing your thoughts in written words, however, is not as simple a task as it may seem to be; many people, in fact, find that it can take hours to accurately transfer the most seemingly simple thoughts to the written word. Thoughts and feelings do not require the organization or structure that is required by the expression of those thoughts and feelings.

Some things that make the task of expressing yourself through your writing much easier are improving your grammar, improving your vocabulary and practice, practice, practice.

Grammar! As a rule you should always write to your audience -- they are the ones who need to understand you. Perfection may be necessary when you are writing for an audience of scholars and grammarians who require it but, regardless of your audience, the better your grammar the better you will be understood and the easier it will be for you to transfer those thoughts to paper. There are literally hundreds of English grammar guides available online and very reasonable English grammar guides available in bookstores; good grammar is a tool you will never regret learning to use.

Vocabulary! Finding the right words to express your thoughts is much easier when you have more words in your armory to choose from. You may be tempted to learn some suitably obscure words to impress your readership but too much of that will only confuse them and turn them away from your writing. Research has shown that the average adult in the U.S. reads at an eighth-grade level so arming yourself with a recondite vocabulary will not be helpful (nor was our reference to a 'recondite vocabulary' unless you knew that recondite means "difficult to understand"). Arm yourself, instead, with a good dictionary/thesaurus.

Write Often! Practice makes perfect or, to be honest, it at least helps you approach perfection. Try to make a meaningful entry in your blog every day, that may not always be possible but do try! Two of the wonderful things about blogging are its flexibility and availability -- your blog will always be there (barring computer problems) when you need it and you'll find that the more you write, the easier it will be to write. Keep in mind, however, that even a professional writer who writes for hours every day is seldom completely satisfied that the words that came out adequately express the thought that went in so don't allow yourself to get too frustrated, take a short break and then try again.

Banishing Those Blogging Myths

There are certain myths that have grown up around blogs, bloggers and the blogosphere in general. Here are just some of them and some clarifications:

Anyone can start a blog! Not just anyone! There are some requirements, some more obvious than others. Obviously, you need a computer that you know how to use, an Internet connection and some experience using the Internet. You also need a host for your blog; there are blog hosts that are free and some that cost a small amount per month. One last requirement is not just an ability to communicate your thoughts but also a willingness to do so.

Anyone can set up a blog! Some blogs are much easier to set up and use than others, this depends on your blog host (e.g., blogger, iblogs, typepad, tblog, etc.). Some blog hosts take you through a couple simple set-up steps and you're off writing your first post but there are others that get far more technical than the average user may be ready for.

Blogging doesn't take up that much time! That depends! Some posts, when you have a clear idea of what you want to say, may take just a few minutes while you may struggle for days (literally) with others that involve complex issues or thoughts. In general, blogging is a daily activity for the serious blogger (some bloggers write up to ten posts a day) and a once-a-week activity for the casual blogger.

Most blogs are political! Many blogs focus on political topics but most blogs are just bloggers discussing their lives, loves and travels. A list of the 50 most visited blogs at BlogHub (<http://www.bloghub.com/top50blogs.htm>) shows very few political blogs.

Blogs are in competition with the main-stream media! This is true in a few cases (not as many cases as bloggers would have you think). Just recently, there have been some very popular and influential social and politically-oriented blogs that have caused main-stream media outlets to back-track and change their coverage of important events.

Bloggers just criticize and have no new information to add! This may be true in some cases but blogging today is much more than the personal activity it used to be. Corporations, media outlets, public personalities, politicians and experts in almost every field have now joined the ranks of blog producers. Considering all this expertise, one would have to say that bloggers have a lot of new information to add to any debate.

You can't believe anything you read in a blog! That's a bit of an overstatement. You'll run across bad information and even intentional untruths in blogs but, for the most part, bloggers who state facts are stating what they honestly believe to be fact. It is always up to the readers to verify that any information they receive is accurate information.

The blogosphere is a meritocracy! Does the cream rise to the top? Of course it does but outside of the world of the dairy, a lot depends on how you define cream. If you consider the those bloggers who have the highest readership to be the “best“ than yes, the blogosphere is a meritocracy with readership being the 'payoff' for being the best. The best, however, is not always the most popular. You will, while surfing, run across some extremely intelligent, extremely poignant and extremely erudite bloggers who have a very small readerships, as evidenced by very few, if any, comments to their posts. That can be explained by those blogger's lack of willingness to 'play the game' that must be played to attract a large readership, e.g., aggressively promoting their blogs, spending many times more hours reading and commenting on other's blogs than they spend writing for their own, listing their blog on every available directory, etc.. Every one of us has a different definition of success, to some, a large

readership is adequate success, to some using their blog as a money-making device and actually making some money is the ultimate success while to others, like those with an intentionally low profile, feel that simply creating posts that are perfect expressions of what they want to say is reward enough.

Need a laugh? Speaking of myths, if you need a good laugh, go and read the post titled: “Blog Myths and Facts” posted by 'Frank J' at the IMAO blog

(<http://www.imao.us/archives/002581.html>).

Five Things to Try to Defeat the Blogging Blues

There are times when a blogger, like any other writer, will 'lose the muse.' Every idea that comes to mind seems either trite or dull or, worse still, no ideas come to mind. What's a blogger to do? Here are five tactics that just might clear away the cobwebs and allow you to find an inspiring idea for another great post:

Start with the news! Open up your favorite news page or open a newspaper and see what catches your attention. What are the politicians up to today? Any pending legislation that worries you or flat out scares you? Or perhaps someone is running for office or proposing a law that you may want to publicly support. Some celebrity is sure to be in trouble again; have anything to say about that? Maybe you have an idea about who should be dating or marrying who. Who died? A nice memorial post for a nice person may be in order. What happened "On This Date" in past years? Some past events are worth researching and writing about. Are you into sports? Many bloggers or blog readers are sports fans and they might be interested in your take on the playoffs or the players. Don't forget to check the editorial page and the letters to the editor -- do you agree with the opinions? Tell the world why or why not.

Read some blogs! Start surfing your favorite blogs. What are they talking about? You might have a different perspective on the latest hot topic that might just be interesting to your fellow bloggers or a perspective that might make them mad (BTW, never worry about making bloggers mad -- most of them love having something to gripe about). If you can't find anything that inspires you in your favorite blog, surf through some of those blogs that always make you mad; the ones that seem to promote everything that goes against your lifestyle. Anger is always a good blog motivator but don't get so angry you get irrational. Comment on some blog posts and then expand your comments into a post on your blog. Also try logging onto Blog Explosion, Blog Clicker or one of the many other blog traffic generator programs -- there are lots of ideas out there that are worth writing about from either a pro or con perspective.

What have you been watching or reading? Have you read any good (or bad) books lately? Write about your latest read -- recommend it, blast it or even write an abstract for your blog (but don't give away ending). How about movies, the great ones or the pitiful losers might be worth some good or bad words -- you could make movie or book reviews regular features of your blog. The same goes for television shows. Start a series that follows your favorite TV show, there might be quite a few fans of the same show that will be interested in your take and appreciate your summary of episodes they missed. If there is a book, movie or TV show that you thought was great there is sure to be a reviewer who panned it. Find the bad review and write a post countering the reviewer's opinions.

What have you been doing? Your work place, your co-workers, your bosses, your home and your family members are all fair game for your blog -- keep it short and amusing and you'll have a great post. Once you introduce a particularly interesting person to your readers you may want to do some sequels. When was your last travel vacation -- write a travelog about where you've been or do some research on some places you'd love to go to and write about them.

Do you have a special skill? If you can make something that is unique or something that is common but made special because of what you know, there may be people interested in knowing how to do it. Give away tips on cooking, sewing, cleaning, fix-it projects, pet care, child care, beauty secrets, personal care or organizing tips. Make it a regular feature on your blog. If you have a digital camera find an interesting subject, take some pictures and then write something based on the subject. If you found it interesting or comical or sad it's likely to interest someone else.

How to Make the Time to Blog

What's the perfect job? How about a job where you are your own boss, you set your own hours, work right from home, never have to deal with unreasonable deadlines and get to do something you love doing? Sound good? Well that's the job description of a blogger. That, however, is the not the whole story! There are very, very few bloggers who have nothing else to do but work on their blog and even fewer who have a blog that provides a decent source of income so blogging is, for most, a second or even a third “job.”

There are two basic types of bloggers, the casual blogger and the serious blogger.

The casual blogger may have a basically well balanced life and a blog that is primarily a hobby. The casual blogger will start writing a post, work at it for awhile and then stop to get some other things done until he or she feels like writing again. If a finished post doesn't get many comments, that's OK; the post expressed just what the casual blogger wanted to say and its out there if anyone is interested.

The serious blogger's situation is quite different from the casual blogger's. The serious blogger has a blog that he or she considers to be a job -- a job that may be competing with other important elements of life such as a primary job, a family, a social life and adequate rest. The serious blogger is committed (almost to the point of an obsession) to maintaining his or her blog and feels it is an essential element of daily life. The serious blogger feels dejected if any post sits on the blog for twenty-four hours or so without generating a comment or if the blog's “hit counter” does not register a certain number of visitors every day. That kind of commitment to blogging may take a big hunk of time out of the day and can easily create some serious conflicts between blogging and the rest of life -- to avoid this, the serious blogger needs to be organized and efficient.

Time management for the serious blogger! Anyone who feels that the day is too short needs to understand and implement the basic principle of time management: setting priorities. Some things are obviously more important than other things but some important things may be left undone unless you are controlling your schedule and not having random events control you. You need to set priorities and live by them.

Make a priority list! To begin setting priorities, make a list of everything you need to get done -- everything including things you've committed to doing, things you want to do, things you know you should do and things that you really don't want to do but are on your mind. Be honest and put everything on the list -- take a couple hours or more to put it together if you need that much time, it will be time well spent because you are about to get organized.

Important: You will be using and modifying this list every day so create the list using some program that will allow you to move list items around, add items, remove items and save the list. Just notepad or your word processing program will do nicely but there are other more specialized programs available -- they may even be free, check out: Tucows at <http://www.tucows.com/>.

Categorize! Now carefully consider each item on the list and put each one into one of the following five categories.

Must get it done today

Must get it done this week

Nice to do and might be beneficial

Nice to do but not really necessary

Unnecessary

Now you have a decent priority list. Start every day with this list and every time you become aware of a new task add it in a proper place to the proper category. As the “must do” items are accomplished and moved off the list, some of the nice-to-do items may be moved up, but only if their priorities can honestly be changed.

Too many must-do things! If the list of items in the two “Must get it done . . . ” categories is overwhelming, reconsider each item's importance and re-prioritize if you can, if not select the items that you really don't have to do yourself, things like fix-it projects, business phone calls, business letters, editing and proofreading jobs, etc. -- some of these things may be able to be done just as well by someone else. Find a friend, family member, co-worker or a freelancer to do it for you.

Body of the Blog – Terminology to Know for Successful Blogging

The world of blogging has made and is making a contribution to the language. As you get into blogging, read blogs and read about blogging you'll run across some terms that are not easily understandable but valuable if you want to immerse yourself in the culture. Following are some common phrases you'll run across while blogging:

Blog: Blogs were originally called web logs or weblogs; “web” being a reference to the World Wide Web (now commonly called the Internet) and it was called a “log” because, like a ship's log, a weblog was most used as a running commentary on events in the writer's life. Weblog was eventually mispronounced often enough so that all that was left was “blog.”

Blogosphere: The name given to the virtual “world” of the blog and the blogger. (Also occasionally called the blogaverse.)

Blogroll: A blogroll is a list of links to blogs. You will usually have a blogroll somewhere on your blog that lists links to your favorite blogs. This is often (but not necessarily) a reciprocal arrangement where the blogs you have linked will also have a link to your blog (the cutsey blogging term for that is “linky love”).

Blogorrhea: This term refers to blogs that have a many posts added every day. Some posters add ten or more posts per day to their blogs.

Blogspot: Blogspot is the most popular blog hosting service in the blogosphere -- you'll often see a reference to Blogspot or Blogger (Blogspot's other name) and you'll also see some chat about Typepad and Moveable Type, other popular, but more technical, hosting services.

Comments: Almost every blog gives its readers a way to comment on what is written; this function can be disabled by the blogger and some of the high profile bloggers do, in fact, disable it.

Comment Spam: Spam, as you probably know, are unsolicited e-mails -- the ones that try to sell you something. Comment spam are unsolicited comments to your blog, i.e., comments that do not directly refer to what you wrote but are attempting to either sell you something or entice you to visit some commercial site.

Fact-check: Verifying that what is written . . . statements presented as fact . . . are, indeed factual.

Fisk: When someone, in a comment, repeats your entire post with their own comments, criticisms or observations inserted between your paragraphs and/or sentences you've been “fisked.”

Flame: A comment to your post that not only disagrees with you but resorts to personal insults and open hostility is a flame. If you respond in the same insulting and hostile manner the situation has elevated to a “flame war.”

Meme: A meme (actually a scientific term that relates to genetics) in the blogosphere is simply an idea that has spread rapidly and seems to have acquired a “life of its own.”

MSM: An acronym for “mainstream media . . . referring to newspapers, national magazines and network television news. Another term used in place of MSM is “old media.”

Permalink: A link that leads directly to a post, rather than to the latest entry in a blog, is a permalink. This give a reader the opportunity to go directly to an older post.

RSS: An acronym that is commonly defined as Really Simple Syndication. RSS allows you to syndicate your blog -- that is, make every new post automatically available to readers who have subscribed to it. The subscribing reader will receive every new post from your blog, as well as from any other blog he or she subscribed to, without having to actually visit the blogs.

Sidebar: Blogs are normally set up with two or three columns; one wide column for the main posts and one or two columns on the side(s) of the wide column. These side columns are called sidebars and are usually used for contact information, the blogroll, links to blogging services, and etc.

Thread: A term occasionally used to describe a series of comments that relate to a specific post.

Trackback: A system used to associate a post on one blog with a post on another blog. Just as an example: if you had just posted an article discussing Admiral Byrd's second Antarctic expedition and then happen to run across a similar or related post on another blog, you could use the trackback mechanism to notify the other poster and that poster's readers of the existence of your post.

Troll: A blogger who has a reputation for adding obnoxious comments to blogs is referred to as a Troll.

XML: XML is an acronym for eXtensible Markup Language. This is a programming language used for blog sub-programs such as syndication programs.

Watch Your Blogging Manners!

If your blog is a public blog (one that allows people to read it, as opposed to a private journal where you keep your personal reminders) you will be inviting people to read and comment on what you have written -- your readers will be very much like visitors in your home and you have certain expectations on how they should behave. Likewise, when you make a comment on someone else's blog you are visiting their virtual homes and should behave appropriately. This type of “blog etiquette” is not mandatory but it is polite, expected by most bloggers and generally appreciated.

There are no hard and fast rules for blog etiquette but some good guidelines follow. You'll find that, like most things in life, common sense is the only rule you need:

Surfing through the blogs! If you are just surfing through blogs (using a blogroll or a program like BlogSoldiers or BlogClicker) you are not expected to comment or let the blogger know you have been there unless you read something that inspires you to comment.

Commenting on a blog post! If you like what you read on a blog your compliment will no doubt be appreciated by the blogger you are visiting. If, on the other hand, you have a problem with something in the post your criticism may or may not be appreciated but there is no reason not to make a polite criticism. Try to make your criticism constructive not destructive, i.e., don't be obnoxious or mean or launch a personal attack (a “flame”); you are a visitor and you have something to say -- just say it as nicely as you can. Some bloggers totally reject any corrections or negative comments regardless of how they are presented but that's their problem, not yours.

Don't be “Anonymous”! You will find that people comment on your posts and on others and sign themselves “Anonymous.” That practice is generally considered to be

in bad taste and people who comment as “anonymous” should be (but usually are NOT) ignored.

Expectations! Don't assume that you will get comments on every article you post in your blog; some readers will comment either negatively or positively and others will not. Also, never assume that your comment on another blog will receive a reply. Some bloggers never reply to comments on their posts others always do. Don't take it personal!

Replying to comments! When someone comments on your post (even if it's a negative comment) it is considered polite to reply to their comment by adding another comment addressed to that person, thanking them for reading and commenting; beyond that you may want to make a more lengthy response.

Don't be a stalker! If you are constantly leaving comments on a blog or asking questions that are not responded to, take the hint -- this blogger does not want to communicate -- that's his or her right. Never send an e-mail to a blogger unless you are either invited to do so or if that blogger displays his or her e-mail address on the blog.

Don't get personal! Bloggers enjoy their anonymity -- some more than others. If you are a regular visitor to a blog and have had several animated exchanges with the blogger, you might strike up a friendship that will grow into an exchange of personal information and even an off-line friendship. More than likely, however, bloggers stay “in character,” that is to say all relationships remain online and impersonal. As a general rule, never ask for personal information -- if the other party wants you to have anything other than what is offered on the blog he or she will offer it.

If you are attacked! If you write anything at all controversial it is very likely to get “flamed.” A flame is a personal attack in the form of a comment on your post that is

normally emotional, rather than thoughtful, and is never constructive. If you choose to respond to a flame don't sink to the commentor's level. Use rational, well-thought-out arguments and be sure to thank the commentor for “taking the time to read and comment” on your post. That last bit of sarcasm is sure to be frustrating to the flamer who expects you to be insulted and angry.

Give credit where it is due! Never take a block of text, a unique phrase, a picture or a graphic from another blog or from any web page and use it in your post as is, without clearly indicating where it came from. In many cases even crediting the source is not sufficient because copyrighted material is not to be used without explicit permission. Copyrighted material is protected by law and the copyright is in effect even if there is no notice that the material is copyrighted. Everything you write is also automatically copyrighted to protect you. Required reading on this subject is the article titled: “4 Basic Questions About Copyright and Weblogs” published at About.com

<http://weblogs.about.com/od/issuesanddiscussions/a/copyrightblogs.htm>.

Trackback Tips for Successful Blogging

Trackback is a system used to associate posts on different blogs and, in a greater sense, it allows blogs to “share” readers.

An example! Just as a simple example of how Trackback works: If you have just posted an article discussing Admiral Byrd's second Antarctic expedition and then happen to run across a similar or related post on another blog, you could use the trackback mechanism to notify the other poster of the existence of your post. When your trackback notification (which is the permalink to your post and, possibly, some basic information about your blog) appears on the post in the other blog that blog's readers will also be notified that you have something to say on the subject and they may pay you a visit.

Everyone can have it but not everyone does! Some blogs have this Trackback capability built in and others do not but the good news is that Haloscan, a very popular comment tracking program, now offers a trackback feature for those who don't have it and the better news is its FREE! If you are interested you can go to <http://www.haloscan.com/members/join.php> to sign up. Note that signing up for Trackback (if you don't already have it) will give YOU a trackback capability but you will still not be able to Trackback to a post on a blog that does not have Trackback.

Trackbacks vs. comments! Normally you will see a post you have something to say about and comment on it. Using a Trackback when you don't have an honestly related post -- one that adds something relevant or clarifies the subject post -- is not an accepted practice. If you become known as a “trackback spammer” by sending unrelated trackbacks you may be banned from the offended blogs.

How it works! Trackback works by sending a “ping” (an electronic notification) from your blog to another blog to notify them of your post. This ping also notifies their Trackback program to list your post. Some bloggers moderate their trackbacks, i.e., they manually review each trackback notification and verify that it is indeed a related post -- this prevents spammers from relating their junk posts to real blogs. If the blogger reviews your post and finds it relevant he or she can permit the trackback and your post will then be listed as a trackback on the other blog.

The first step in creating a trackback is getting the “Trackback URL” from the post where you want to send your Trackback notification. If the post does not have a Trackback URL, they either don't have a Trackback capability or they have it turned off.

Next, copy that URL into the appropriate place on your blog's post. This will usually be identified by some reference to “Trackback URLs“ or ”Trackback pings.”

Next, republish your blog -- your trackback software will automatically send the Trackback ping to the target blog's post.

That's all here is to it, your trackback, featuring a permalink to your post, will be sent to the target post and, after being approved (if the blogger is moderating trackbacks) your Trackback will be listed.

Other functions! On some systems it is possible to send simultaneous Trackbacks to more than one target posts. Another capability of Trackback allows you to send a trackback ping to yourself, linking a post on another blog -- this lets your readers know that the other post is out there and can be considered a “recommended reading” type function.

Just a review of four important Trackback points!

Not every blogger has a Trackback capability and some that have it do not have it enabled.

Some bloggers moderate their trackbacks to avoid unrelated posts being linked. Some however do not moderate or even monitor their Trackbacks, so trackback spammers can sneak in. Don't be a Trackback spammer and don't tolerate them.

Haloscan is now offering Trackback capability packaged with their commenting program (both are free).

Installing Trackback on your blog will not allow you to send Trackbacks to blogs without that capability.

More information on Trackbacks! Wikipedia has a very comprehensive entry on Trackbacks you can find it at: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trackback>. Wikipedia articles are always comprehensive and will provide you with information you can rely on.

Don't Be a Bump on a Blog - Easy Steps to Blogging Success

What is a blogger? A blogger is a cross between an educator, an entertainer and an orator; each blogger 'owns these three hats' and 'wears' each of them while in different moods. One other commonality between bloggers is: each blogger is in search of an audience.

Pack your bags! If you recognize yourself in the preceding paragraph you are ready to begin your journey into the blogosphere. There are only a few things you need to do to make your journey a success:

Find a home for your blog

Find a focus for your posts

Learn “Bletiquette”

Persevere

Find a home for your blog! You need a host for your blog, some are free, some charge a small amount per month for their service, some are simple to use and some require more technical knowledge, some have more features than others; choose carefully, once you've established your blog and have a few regular readers you may not want to change your address (your URL).

Start by surfing the Internet and the blogs to see what bloggers have to say about their hosting programs. Don't get in over your head by picking a blog host that requires a technical expertise that is beyond your current capabilities. There are many free hosts that are more than adequate to start you off and are customizable -- as you gain new technical skills you can edit your blog template to make your blog look like you want it to look and do almost anything you want it to do, all without changing your URL.

If you are using free hosts start blogs at two or three host sites just to see which one you like best and which one gives you the most capabilities right 'out of the box.' When you find one you are happy with, be nice and go back and cancel your other blogs.

Find a focus for your posts! Most every blog has a theme, a theme that sets the tone for most (not necessarily all) of the posts on that blog. Your blog can be a topical blog that focuses on a special interest of yours (politics, religion, health care, science, engineering, cooking etc.); a personal blog that focuses on what you are doing that day, where you have been, where you are going or any aspect of your life's journey; or a showcase blog that displays your writing, art, photography, or etc.. Some posts will not fall into your blogs main theme and that's OK -- your blog is a reflection of you, and we all have different moods . . . we all 'wear different hats;' don't decide not to post just because you feel like writing 'something different.'

“Bletiquette!” The objective of most bloggers is to attract a regular readership; to do that you need to display some basic (really common sense) blog etiquette (bletiquette!):

When commenting on a post, stick to the point, don't get personal or abusive.

Never comment as “Anonymous;” if you are ashamed to use your actual blogger name, don't comment.

Try to respond to all comments on your post, even if it is just to say “thanks for commenting” (but don't expect all bloggers to do this).

Don't get personal by asking personal questions unless you have a long-standing relationship with the other blogger; bloggers enjoy the relative anonymity of a blog and a blogger name.

If you are “flamed” (verbally attacked for something you wrote) don't get into a “flame war;” respond politely or not at all.

Never take a block of text, a unique phrase, a picture, a graphic or anything else from another blog or from any web page and use it in your post as is, without clearly indicating where it came from.

Persevere! Bloggers blog! That's what they do! If you post every day you will improve not only your technique but also your readership; don't give up.

Bloggers are very much like novelists. Novelists write every day and finally reach the end of the novel. Then they submit the novel to publishers, file their rejection notices and resubmit to other publishers. Eventually, every novelist who perseveres gets published . . . eventually every blogger who perseveres gets a loyal readership and his or her own measure of success.

Familial News – Family Blog Fun

Blog is the hot word on the internet in recent years, and with good reason: they are taking over the internet and information exchange as we know it. As you may or may not know, blog is short for web log. It is an online journal that can be about anything or anyone with topics ranging from personal reflection to political news to sports. Of what value is a blog to you, though? Family blogs are becoming increasingly popular because of the way they allow you as a family to keep up with members all over. You can keep members of your family that are located anywhere in the world up to date on happenings in your immediate family including births, deaths, and even marriages. In addition, a family blog is just a good way to get down the things that happen in the day to day life of your family. If you are considering a family blog, then there are some things you should probably pay attention to. Here are a few tips on how to maintain a good family blog.

The first thing to keep in mind with your family blog is safety. A blog may seem safe enough since it is nothing more than words on a web page, but keep a few things in mind. First of all, once you put something up on a blog, it becomes essentially public. Always remember that before you post anything anywhere on the internet, blogs included. Along those same lines, make sure you limit anything that may give readers a hint as to where you live specifically, or any personal information about your children or family in general. Keep addresses, phone numbers, and even email addresses off of the blog because you never know who is looking. Keep safety in mind first, and you are well on your way to a fun and successful family blogging experience.

Once you understand the safety needed with your family blog, you can start adding content. Your content doesn't have to be anything in particular. Your blog is whatever you want it to be. Keep it updated regularly, though. The reason is that you want to keep those who you want reading the blog doing so with regularity. If you are not updating it regularly, they may stop checking in and that defeats the purpose of

your family blog. You want to keep fresh news, ideas, and information that will keep your distant family members reading regularly and with interest. Also, you may want to have some sort of schedule. For instance, you always update on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays. That way the readership knows when to check in for new news and information on your family. It will also keep you focused if you have some sort of schedule to go along with it.

Some blog applications include a board for readers to write messages to you or to discuss what is in your blog. If that is the case of the blog you are choosing, then you owe it to your readers to keep an eye on it. If they are posting questions or comments, make sure you are regularly acknowledging or addressing them. If you are working on a family blog, then many of these messages will be from family members that are located far away and so will be a good way to stay in contact with them. Even if they are not family members, your readers will have gained an interest in what you are reading so, with safety in mind, you should still acknowledge them and their questions and comments.

Blogs have become all the rage on the internet in recent years. If you want to get in on the craze, a family blog can be a fantastic way to do just that. A family blog is a great way to keep other family members and far away friends up to date on the happenings within your family as well as some of your personal thoughts and feelings on any number of things. However, there are a couple of tips you should keep in mind as you work on your family blog. Make sure that you are safe and smart with personal information, update regularly, and acknowledge responses to your family blog. Follow these simple tips and you should be able to fully enjoy your family blogging experience.

Blogging Success with Pictures

So you have become a blogger. You have joined the legions of those keeping web logs and journals online. How do you make it fresh, though? How do you stand out and show the world that your blog is worth a read? Well there are a number of things you can do from optimizing your content to making sure you are consistent in your updates. However, consider the idea of adding pictures to your blog. A great deal of blog success can be had by making pictures a big part of what you are doing on your journal. Post them, link to them, or do whatever you have to, but pictures can be the difference in your blog being simply a fun hobby or being a big success.

In order to understand why pictures are a part of blogging success, you should make sure that you understand what the world of blogging is all about. For the most part, blogs are often used to sell something. It can be a product or it can simply be your own ideas and readership. Either way, you want your blog to be read. So everything you do with your blog will likely be done as part of making it interesting to your designated audience, right? Keep that in mind as you put everything together.

Most any good blog is going to have a theme. Before you begin your blog you need to figure out what your theme is. Is it your life? Is it your philosophies? No matter what, there is no better way to make a point about your theme than with photos or pictures. Most any blog site has the tools for uploading pictures, so make sure you are using them. Potential readers will be able to see just what you are all about as soon as they see your blog page without having to read a lot to see whether or not they want to continue reading your page. When you have an instant impact with pictures it will be much easier for you to end up with a successful blog.

For many people, the blog is a tool they use to market a product and drive up sales or services they offer that go hand in hand with their blog. With good pictures and photos you can keep your products in front of your readers at all times. You can put

images of the products along the side of your page or you can place them strategically through the blog site. In addition, you can then advertise without bombing your readers with your propaganda in the text. Nobody wants to read a bunch of ads, but if you post pictures, you can advertise without advertising all over your actual blog content. Either way, the photos and images will be added way of making your blog a success for you.

Another reason that pictures can be a big key to blog success is simply a matter of aesthetics. Images will make your blog look nicer and if it looks nicer it will then attract more readers. It all makes sense. I mean, would you want to publish a book with a boring blank cover? Of course you wouldn't. The same goes for your blog. In essence, a well kept blog is like your online book and with good images you are making for a nice cover. They may say not to judge a book by its cover, but many do anyway so you might as well have a nice looking one just to be safe.

The truth is that whether you are talking about blogs, magazines, or television, we live in a society that is very visual. So when it comes to a good blog, readers expect to see pictures and images that will titillate them and keep them engaged in the information. So, the key is to keep your images fresh and consistent so that they help accentuate your points and support your themes and ideas. You can get your pictures and images from your own library of images and pictures you have taken on vacations, around your home, or even just in your town. You can also download free images that are available online, link to other blogs or even use other images if you are willing to pay the royalties. No matter what, though, the key to blogging success is very closely tied to the images and visual quality of your blog. Newspapers and magazines would not sell as well if they lacked images, and your blog will operate just the same way.

Four Tips to Increase your Blog Readership

Aside from being a fun hobby, what is the point of having a blog? The answer is to draw readers. Whether you are selling advertising, a product, or just your own set of ideas, you want as large a readership as possible with most blogs. So if that is the case, then it is important to know how to draw readers to your blog. There are a number of ways to increase the readership of your blog. Here are four tips that will help you to increase your blog readership that are easy to do and will definitely pay off for you.

First of all, to increase readership you would want to increase the number of pages each reader is seeing. You don't want to be judged only on your last post, but rather on the whole of your work. To that end, try highlighting related posts within your blog. At the end of an article, highlight posts that may be of interest to those who like the current post. Most blog platforms are fitted with plug-ins that will help you with this, but if they are not, then go ahead and at least list the links to other pages manually. Another similar idea is to highlight the related posts within the content of your post. If you are talking about a subject you have discussed before, link off of one of the keywords into the past post that is related. This will also help a past post to maintain its freshness.

A second tip for increasing your blog readership is to think about doing a series. A series is a great way to keep a reader coming back again and again. In addition, if you are linking back, you can get readers looking at multiple posts even after you are done with the series. Be careful when doing a series, because you do not want to frustrate readers. However, if you have a topic you genuinely think you should handle over a period of time, then a series can really help your overall readership. If you are curious as to whether or not a series is working for your blog, then check posts. See if readers are posting through the series to see if they are following you. If they are, then your series is a success and you are only helping your blog readership.

Another way to increase readership is a little more “controversial” if you will. You can try putting excerpts on the front page of your blog from certain posts. Many people claim it is just a way to get more hits on your site. The truth is that extra hits are a little side benefit of it, but the real value is that it can make your site more engaging. By adding excerpts to the front page you can manage the front and keep it fresh while also teasing those who get that far into reading more than just your most recent blog post. This will encourage a prospective reader to explore your blog site a little more than they may have normally. Again, you want to be judged by the whole of your work, or at least by a larger piece of your work than just one post and this will do that. If your writing is up to par, then, you will see a rise in your readership.

Finally, if you really want to build and increase readership, you have to have good quality content. It should be useful, original, and interesting to your target audience as well as keeping them wanting more of the same. The more you raise the quality of your blog’s content, the more you will see your membership, readership, and page hits go up without even having to use any other “tricks.” People know what they like and they like quality for the most part. Giving the readers what they are after is probably the best way possible to increase your blog readership.

Having a blog can not only be fun, but if you are doing it right it can also be profitable. Either way, though, you want to maintain and increase a following, or readership. There are as many tips out there to increase blog readership as there are blogs, but to really get things going, consider using these four tips. Follow them and you will see your readership grow.

What's the Best Blogging Software for You?

With blogs seemingly showing up all over the internet, many people want to jump on board as fast as they can. You may be one of those people. You may just want a way to polish your writing skills, or perhaps you even have thoughts of some day putting a little extra walking around money in your pocket. No matter what your reason, you likely want to know where it is you should start in your blogging. Well, first of all you are going to need some sort of blogging platform or software to create your blog in the first place. There are hundreds of options out there, so what you need to do is choose the blogging software that is best for you. Here are some tips on what to look for to get the best blogging software for you.

First of all you have to make a decision on what the reason for your blogging is. Are you doing it to try and earn some extra money, to record your own daily reflections, to polish your writing style, or for some other reason? The reason you are doing it will have a lot to do with what you want to accomplish with the site. For instance, if you are doing it only for personal reasons, then you may just want to seek out the first free blog hosting website you can find that you like. On the other hand, if you are doing it to earn money you may be much pickier about what you want in terms of blogging software. You might want the blog on your own site, or on a site where they help you promote it. No matter what the reason ends up being, it is that which will most affect your choice of blogging software and which one is best for you.

Secondly, once you know why you are blogging, you need to figure out exactly which features are going to be most important to you on your blog. Are you going to want to be able to post pictures? Or are you just going to be typing text as your content? You may also want to look at what tools are available like the ability to link, or to archive your posts. Once you know why you are blogging and what type of blogging you want to do you are that much closer to knowing what you need in blogging software. Keep in mind, though, that the more features that you are getting

with your blogging software the more you will likely pay for that software. So, you must decide early on what you need and don't need.

Third, once you know why you want to blog and with what features you want to blog, it is time to start seeking out software. It is available all over the internet and even in computer stores now. You may first want to do a search because often times you can find web hosting and domain name registration software that will include blogging software applications with it. If you want to blog just to blog, then you may want to look at some of the free applications that allow you to just create a free account and then immediately begin blogging. On the other hand, if you want something on a website you have already established, and then look at software that may exist directly on your computer or through your hosting company. Much of it goes back to the first tip: know why you want to blog.

Blogging is so popular now that many people feel like they are on the outside looking in if they don't have their own blog. The problem is that you may not know how to get started in the world of blogging. Obviously you cannot have a good blog until you have figured out the blogging software you want to use. There are a few types out there including blogging platforms at websites, purchased packages, and some that even come with website hosting and allow you to include a blog on your website. No matter what type you use, you need to make some decisions to help you figure out which blogging software is for you. If you decide why you want to blog, what blogging features you want, and how much you want to spend on it, this will help in the decision making. Once you have done all of that it is just a matter of sifting through the various blogging software packages out there and deciding which fits your needs the most. The search for blogging software that is best for you will become obvious.

Updating your Blog is Key to Success Blogging

Blogging is one of the fastest growing and exciting web hobbies. For some, blogging is also a career or at least a second form of income. However, in order for your paying blog to be successful you have to know the keys to reaching that goal. There are a number of tips you can get from websites, books, and even magazine articles on how to make your blog a success. None of those will really be effective for you, though, unless you perform one of the most basic tasks in blogging: update your blog. It sounds elementary and it sounds simple, but if you do not keep your blog updated regularly you will not have success in whatever you are trying to do with it.

The key to success is building and maintaining a serious readership. To do that, you have to think of yourself as a columnist in a magazine or the editor of a newspaper. Readers get serious when they know they can come back for more any time they want to. At the very least they like to know when to catch an update or when you might be putting up something they want to read. So by updating your blog regularly, you become a source and voice that your readers can count on. You can lose readers fast if they log in and keep coming back, but never see new content. What is the point of checking in with you if you aren't staying current?

Secondly, if you are updating the blog regularly you are updating the feel of it as well. Depending on what your topic is, you want your blog to contain references and keywords that are popular. By staying current you will be able to catch new readers that are out there looking for something from you. They will also be able to find you more easily as your content is on par with what is going on within the topic. Updating your blog is about keeping it up to date so to speak. You want your content fresh so that your readership will know that when they go to your blog they will be going to read something worthwhile and pertinent to their world right then.

Third, updating your blog will improve your blogging because you simply have more pages that way. The key to a successful money making blog is getting hits on your site, right? Of course it is. Every time you update your blog you are adding another page that can be clicked on. It is like exponentially increasing your hits. An old post on your blog may have something you can link back to in one of your newer posts so you end up referring people to your own site. Every time you update, you can add more links. Simply, you end up with plenty of content to be read and plenty of hits with people looking at each post individually.

So how often should you update? Ideally you would update your blog at least once a day. Twice a day is good as well, but if you go much beyond that it ends up diminishing your returns. So if you find yourself in a writing mood, then it is a good time to start storing up articles on your computer hard drive. Then, when you have a day where you don't feel like updating the blog, then all you have to do is copy, paste, and add it to the blog. If you just don't think you can do every day, then at least do as often as you think you can. The more often you update, the more up to date you are, and the more successful your blog will become.

Blogging, if done correctly can not only be a lot of fun, but it can also be profitable. If you can draw readers to your blog and hang on to them then you will be amazed at what can happen. Of all the tips you might get about drawing readers to your blog, the number one tip you can take is this: update your blog and do it often. Remember this if nothing else: updating your blog is the key to blogging success.

How to Turn Blogging into a Successful Career

Many people blog. In fact, there are more bloggers out there now than ever before. What seems to fascinate many about blogging is that it can actually become a career, believe it or not. However, just sitting down at your computer and typing is not going to make you rich. So how do you make a living blogging? There are a number of things you can do that will help. Here, though, are a few tips that will get you started and show you how to turn blogging into a successful career.

First of all, you have to have a blog in order to make money from a blog. There are a number of sites out there that will set you up with a blog for either a fee or a portion of your advertising proceeds. If you are truly serious about making blogging your career, then you need to consider not using these services. If you are going to try to make money in blogging, then it would make sense to share the money with as few people or services as possible. Instead, start your own website and keep the money. You will pay a monthly hosting fee, but if you are serious about blogging you know that this money will be considered a business expense as if you were to rent a storefront for a clothing store or something similar. So your first step in turning blogging into a successful career must include starting a blog and doing so on your own website.

Secondly, you have to figure out how you are going to derive revenue from your blog. There are a number of ways to do just that. The easiest and perhaps most popular way is to use some sort of advertising. Many of the search engines and other services on the web will place ads on your blog site and then pay you for every time someone clicks on one of the ads. Another way to do it is to sell something from your site and use the blog to bring in customers. Or, in a similar strategy, advertise someone else's product on your site and then get some sort of commission from that person. No matter which strategy you use, or even if it is another strategy you come up with on your own, you need to find a source of revenue if you are going to make blogging into a successful career.

Third, once you have a way to make money off the blog, you need to get people to the blog. The key to most anything that happens on the internet is to drive traffic to your site. No matter what, whether you are using an ad service or selling a product, internet money is a game of percentages. You want to draw as many people as possible to your website. The larger the overall number of hits your site gets is the lower percentage of those clicks that have to be profitable you need. So how do you draw traffic? The key is, to turn a phrase, keywords. You need content on your site that is going to bring traffic from search engines to you as much as possible. There are a number of ways to do this: through software programs designed to find the best keywords, websites that perform a similar service, or just coming up with them on your own and crossing your fingers. No matter how you choose to do it, though, just bare in mind that you cannot turn blogging into a successful career without getting people to your website.

Blogging can certainly be fun, but what if you want to turn that fun into a profit? There are hundreds of people out there who have turned blogging into a successful career. It is a great way to make money from home doing what you want, when you want. However, there are some things you need to consider before diving into a blogging career. First of all, you have to get yourself a blog, obviously. Next, decide how you are going to generate revenue from that blog. Then, finally, work hard to drive traffic to your website. Remember, the internet is a game of numbers and percentages so promote and update your blog as often as possible.

Affiliate Yourself and Start Earning Income with your Blog Site

Not only are there a lot of people out there blogging for fun, many of them are finding ways to make money by blogging. There are a number of ways an income from blogging can be achieved, but one of the most popular is by affiliating your blog. If you are blogging or considering starting a blog and you are not yet affiliated, you will quickly find that you should. Otherwise, you are just leaving money on the table that you may not have to.

The first thing you may be asking yourself is this: what is an affiliate program? Well, that is a great question and one easily answered. An affiliate program is one where the seller offers a part of the money generated by a sale to those who refer customers to them. There are, in fact, a lot of websites out there who are parts of affiliate programs.

With these companies, you need to sign up. You will, in most cases, be given a unique ID from that affiliate. That ID is for identifying you as the one who has referred the customer to the site and made the sale. If, then, you are successful in helping to sell the product, you receive payment that is generally stated in whatever your affiliate agreement includes. The amount you might get paid ranges greatly. You may make as little as one cent in US dollars or as much as one hundred US dollars depending on the product, the company, and sometimes the amount you help to sell.

Once you have made the decision to use an affiliate program and have figured out which one you want to use, then you are ready to get started. Sign up and register for the affiliate program and start adding your affiliate's codes to your blog. Ah, but there is the next issue: how do you include affiliate links? There are a few ways you can do that. First of all, you can do reviews about a product and then link to that product through your affiliate program (obviously you would need it to be a product offered by your affiliate program). A second way, if you don't want to do a review, is

to compile a recommended list that is either in a blog entry or along the side of your blog. A third way to get your affiliate program involved in your blog is to use codes or scripts in your coding that will generate random links to products in your affiliate program.

Once you have your links and your program in place, it will be all about product. It is important to note that most people are not going to keep reading a website if they think it is just all about selling. Make sure your content, which you update regularly, is useful to the reader. You want that reader to keep coming back and hopefully working through your affiliates, so you really should concentrate on good, solid, useful content that is going to keep your readers coming back and not make them feel like they are being sold all the time. If, however, you really want to sell, you should try to label your site as a commercial endeavor. Keep those things in mind and your affiliate program will hopefully help you turn a profit.

No matter what your blogging experience may be, it is possible that you can blog for fun and profit at the same time. There are a number of ways to make a profit off of your blog, but the most common right now is to affiliate yourself with certain other sites and products. Affiliate programs generally cost little or no money and can help you make money on your own. They are basically a way of getting commission from helping someone to sell a product or service. So find the ones that work with the theme of your blog and get those codes up on your site. Once they are up, make sure you are finding ways to drive traffic to them without going overboard on the selling and making sure your content is useful. Stick with these tips and stays focused and before you know it, your blog can become a success through the use of a good affiliate program.

Blog Waiter – How to Get Tips from your Blogging

Blogs and blogging are sweeping the internet. They are all the rage as a hobby, writing exercise, and even a career for some. In fact, it is even becoming more common that bloggers are seeking a way to make money. Be it via advertising or affiliations, they each have their own way of pursuing that writing career by way of the blog. There is another way, though. There is an alternate way to make a little extra money by blogging. That way is not unlike the way waiters, cab drivers, and even bellhops add to their income: the tip. Wait a minute! How do you get tips from your blogging? There are ways, and if you read on you will see that they aren't as difficult as you might think.

First of all, if you want people to tip you for your blog, you have to give them a reason for doing it. You need to be providing very good information or highly entertaining copy that makes them feel like you earned it. In essence, you are the web equivalent to a street performer by working for tips. So, like that street performer, you owe your audience something that makes them feel like you are worth their money. So polish your writing, update it often, keep it fresh, and stay true to the topics your readers are used to. If you are all over the place, you won't be able to build the loyal audience necessary when you go to start asking for tips. Basically, the start of it all is your content. Just like with any other money making web venture, your content is going to go a long way. So to get started earning tips from your blogging, make sure you give the audience a reason.

Once you have your content set up, you need to promote it. Asking for tips won't do you a bit of good if you don't have an audience to ask. Market your blog, market your topics, and target those search engines. Don't do any of it at the expense of the quality of your content, but make sure you are getting something going in the way of marketing. Register with blog directories, post to other people's blogs, and generally get your name and blog site out there so that you will drive an audience into what is

hopefully quality, informative, and or entertaining content. Again, if there is nobody at the site then asking for a tip is not going to do you a lot of good.

Next, since you have set up your content to be useful and entertaining to a particular audience and you have begun to get your blog marketed, you are almost ready for those tips. However, there needs to be some sort of vehicle available to your readers to get the tips to you. I mean if they have to do a lot of work to get money to you then you probably shouldn't count on the money rolling in. There are a number of online methods available for receiving payments via email or the web. It would be wise to have one located prominently on your blog so that if a reader is stuck with the desire to tip you, he or she can do so with ease and without a lot of time that may result in rethinking the tip. Remember, this is something you want to happen when your quality and entertainment is fresh in their minds.

Finally, if you really want to earn tips from blogging, then you should probably ask for them in some way. You can do so in the blog posts or even with some sort of message on the main page of your blog that states that tips are appreciated and are the way you fund the blog. Either way, you need to make it clear to the readers that you are reliant on their generosity without sounding like you are hard selling, or worse, begging.

Blogging can be a lot of fun, and can actually make you a little money if you are willing to work hard at it. One way of making that money is by earning tips from your readers. There are some things that you need to get in place though to make that work. Make sure you have quality content, market your site, set up a method for receiving the tips, and be sure to ask for them. If you do those things, then you can be earning tips from your blog before you know it.

Rev your Search Engines – The Best Ways to Get your Blog Blasted through the Internet

Part of blogging for profit is making sure you show up in search engine searches. There are a number of ways to make that happen. Some are simple and obvious, while others take a little know-how. So what should you do to get your blog blasted through the internet? Here are a few tips that may be able to help you show up higher on search engines and thus generate more traffic. You know what more traffic means, right? It means a better chance at making an extra buck with your blog.

First of all, as much as it may seem like a hassle, you need to do your own marketing. When you generate more traffic on your own, the search engines start to notice and your ranking will improve. The first thing you should do is get your blog registered everywhere you can register it. Go to all of the lesser search engines as well as the more popular ones and register the site everywhere you can. In addition, register with all of the blog directories you can find out there. You can barely log onto the internet without bumping into a blog directory. So, with that in mind, make sure that all of those have your blog in them so that those searching blogs will have a better chance of finding yours. Remember, this is about getting traffic and getting a search engine ranking. You can do neither if nobody knows you are out there in the first place.

It gets said over and over again regarding blogs, but make sure your content is high quality. That quality comes from writing in proper style. You should make sure your sentences are complete, when capitalization is needed make sure you do it, put your commas in the right place, and use periods. In addition, make sure you are putting interesting and useful information out there so that you will get as many return visitors as possible to your website. In addition to getting people to look at what you are saying, you want to get them coming back. If you want that search engine ranking, then you need to keep the hits to your site coming and coming often.

Another seemingly obvious thing you can do to drive up traffic and thus your search ranking is to update regularly. Make sure your blog is something you are caring for regularly, like you would anything else. People will come back if they know that new and fresh content could possibly be there. You should be posting at least once a day if not twice to ensure that new visitors are getting good content and that returning readers are seeing something fresh that makes them want to stay. Again, get those visits up and the search engine rankings will come right along with them.

You also want to make sure that when people log onto a search engine seeking out information that they find you as often as possible. To do that, you should make sure that many of your posts are search engine optimized. Have certain keywords and keyword phrases in mind as you start each post. When you go to revise, then, make sure they are appearing early in your post with frequency, and then sporadically throughout the rest of the post. This is an important move since most people on the internet find their information through the use of search engines. If you have specific phrases they are looking for then you are more likely to get more hits from those seeking information on the subjects about which you are writing.

If you are going to blog for profit, then it is crucial to get traffic to your site. To get traffic to your site you want to rank as highly as possible in search engines. There are a number of ways to get your ranking up, but it does require your dedication and work. First of all, make sure you do your own marketing. In one of those cruel twists of irony, the best way to get your traffic up is by getting your ranking higher and to get your ranking higher you need to get your traffic up. So register with blog directories and search engines, update your blog regularly, publish good clean content, and optimize your information with keywords and keyword phrases whenever possible without hurting the quality of your posts. Get that traffic up, market your site, and follow the simple tips above and you can blast the internet with your blog.

Energize your Blog – Optimize it!

In order to make money from your blog, you want to make sure it is getting traffic. More importantly you want to make sure it is getting the right kind of traffic. So how do you energize your blog in this way? Simply put, you have to optimize it. Optimizing your blog means that you find ways to drive profitable traffic to it via search engines and links from all over the internet. To that end, here are a few tips that just might serve you well in your quest to add a certain energy to your blog through optimization.

You may have already decided to submit your blog to many of the directories. That is a great idea for driving traffic to your blog, but you should also know what you are doing before you get that far. Once you get the traffic, you want to make sure it is the right traffic. You can do that by further optimizing what you are putting into it. The idea is to get the best keyword placement in the major search engines.

So first of all, choose lucrative keywords. Basically you can go a couple of ways with your blog keywords. You can choose general keywords that generate high traffic but give you basically no chance of showing up anywhere near the top of a search, or you can choose a keyword that results in lower traffic but in higher subscriber and sales rates. The second is going to be the most lucrative in most every situation, so think hard about the keywords you are going to use.

Secondly, don't get confused. Often bloggers believe that higher traffic automatically means higher profits and ad clicks. That is not necessarily true. Some of the sites in the world that are the most profitable are the ones that have only moderate traffic. However, as was mentioned above, they target high rate sales keywords. They have an audience in mind and go after it so that their percentage is high even if their traffic is not.

It is not just keywords and searches that will get your traffic to you. You want to target your blog at two or three word phrases that are going to get you the traffic you want, but that have little competition. That may sound impossible with the size of the modern internet, but it isn't. There are studies from a number of sources that indicate that there is a higher than expected number of search queries that had never shown up before 2004. As long as new product show up on the internet, new services are invented, and people are developing there will always be new terms, new phrases, and new markets to target with your blog.

It comes up time and time again with blogs, but the importance of updating regularly cannot be emphasized enough. The more you post to your blog, the more the spiders (the software that finds information for search engines) have to look at each time they visit your site. In fact, if you post often enough, you will notice that you are updated at the search engines more and more often. That is because if the spider knows you have new content every time it visits your site, it will come back more frequently. In some cases, it may come back more and more just to keep up with your updates so that you are updated several times a day even. The software is advanced and knows when you have new content so make sure you give the spider software something to see that your website will be at optimal level to show up on the search engines those spiders are seeking.

If you want to make money with your blog, you know that you have to be a result when people go looking on search engines for information. The best way to make sure that happens is to set up your blog so that it will be optimal to the search engines. You should target keywords that are profitable, and not necessarily ones that just generate high traffic. Also, update regularly and make sure you are being specific with your blog and with individual posts. Be diligent and focused and before you know it you can have your blog ranking high all over the internet.

About the Author



Alun Hill MCIJ is a full time, UK based, travel journalist who travels almost constantly around the whole of the UK, searching out restaurants, hotels and "must see" places.

He has been writing about, filming and reporting from UK tourism destinations for over 12 years. He covers both "business" and

"pleasure" trips for his readers. He also regularly writes about and uses the "Eurostar" rail service between London and Continental Europe .

Alun is a member of the "Chartered Institute of Journalists" (the world's oldest professional body for journalists, to whom he is the official photographer and videographer), the "British Association of Journalists" and "The International Travel Writers Alliance". From October, 2007, he is to become a full member of the London Press Club; and he holds a full UK Press Card, issued by the Metropolitan Police at Scotland Yard, London.

Publications

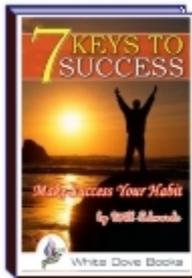
Alun writes for the National and Local press in the UK; and Local and National TV in the UK and Europe (Germany, Hungary), reporting on travel and tourism in the UK.

Alun is also a featured writer at The News Bureau ...

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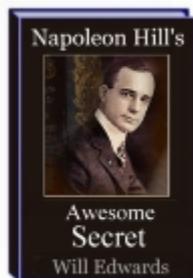
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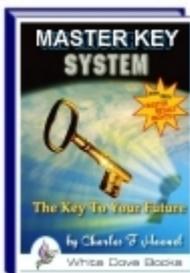
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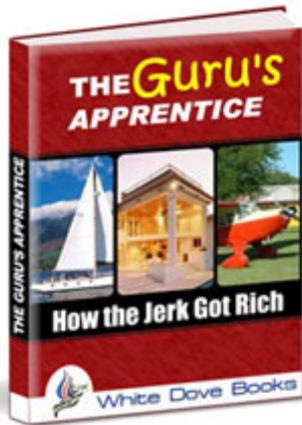
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About White Dove Books

White Dove Books was founded by Will Edwards, in 2003 primarily as an outlet for his writing. Within its first three years, it became recognised as one of the internet's leading Personal Development sites; breaking into the top 100,000 sites on the internet for the first time, according to Alexa's rankings at the end of 2005.

The INSPIRATION newsletter, published by White Dove Books, was started in 2005 as a way of providing useful information including tips and techniques for living life to the full, interesting articles and free inspirational ebooks to our visitors.

In 2006, we were granted permission by the talented artist Rameer Tawasil to use his design as our logo. Although we now have a new specially designed logo, we continue to fully support Rameer's world-wide campaign for peace.

Today White Dove Books works in partnership with many authors and on-line publishers of inspirational material to provide a quality on-line service that serves thousands of people in dozens of countries across the world.

Our mission is to help people to develop their own unique talents, abilities and passion in order that they may lead more meaningful, joyful and fulfilled lives