

PROFITABLE BLOGGING



How to Make Your Blog Work For You

What is a Blog?

Before we get into the main core of the subject, it's important to establish what a blog is, exactly.

The thing is, what you believe a blog to be and what it actually is might not be one and the same, so it's important that we establish right from the start exactly what we mean when we say "blog".

Firstly the name. The word "blog" is a truncated form of the word "weblog". In other words a log/diary/journal on the web.

What that doesn't mean is an advertising platform, an article directory, or a place to spin automated content. There isn't anything wrong with any of those things, but for the purpose of this report, when we refer to "blog", "blogging" and "blogger" we are referring to a blog in the traditional sense – a place on the web where someone shares their thoughts in the form of 'blog posts', interacts with their visitors and interacts with other bloggers.

Why a Blog?

A blog can be an extremely powerful and, indeed, profitable tool when used correctly. It's also one of the easiest ways to get yourself established online, even if you have no experience at all.

One particular way in which a blog can be useful is the way in which it can serve as a kind of 'central hub' to all you do online.

In other words, everything else that you do online links to and links from your blog. Things such as:

- Content.
- Mailing list.
- Social media.
- Testimonials.
- Products.
- Services.

What this means is, instead of having just one piece of content at a given moment and trying to do something with it, with a blog you are able to get that content in front of a vast number of people in a number of ways.

Not only that, but each piece of content you put out there can direct people back to your blog which, in turn, can end up with them checking out more of your stuff.

Additionally, all this interconnectivity and interaction looks good to the search engines.

“Content is King”. Or is it..?

You may have heard the phrase, “Content is king.” What this means is, that content is where the money is.

Basically.

But here’s the thing:

Content might well be king, but a king is a very lonely person if absolutely no-one knows that he exists...

So, if you’re thinking that you’re going to start a blog, stick up a few articles and then sit back and wait for the money to roll in, think again.

Ain’t gonna happen, my friend.

If you want your content to do its job, you’re going to have to do some groundwork.

Just like if you want to reap a bump crop of veggies, you're going to need to make sure that you have tended to the ground first.

Not only that, but you're going to have to remain active and make sure that your prize veggies are growing healthily.

It's just the same with your blogging. You're going to have to put the work in to ensure that your content is on healthy ground and then you're going to have to maintain things to ensure that everything stays healthy and has steady growth.

This is where many a wannabe blogger gets it all topsy-turvy.

Sure, their blog looks nice and dandy. It functions well, they have their e-mail list integrated, their social media channels on their page, lots of great posts.

But nothing is happening.

What little traffic they might be seeing is doing absolutely nothing.

Nada.

Zilch.

I'll say it again – you can't expect to simply put up content and have the money start to roll in. Well, you can expect it, but you might be waiting for quite some time...

Your Options

Before we get onto exactly what you should be doing to make your blog the buzzing hive of activity that it ought to be, you need to be clear on exactly what you need.

First of all, you are going to need somewhere where your blog will live. Now, there are many options out there vying for your attention, however I would strongly recommend that rather than use a third-party service such as Blogger, Wix or Wordpress.com.

I would recommend investing in a domain name, some hosting and setting up your blog on your own server. This is because that way you have control over your blog.

Third-party services may have the advantage that mostly all the technical stuff is done for you, but you will likely find that in most, if not all, cases, integration with third-party services is very limited, the degree of control you have over exactly how things look and perform is limited, customisation is limited, if not impossible and you have pretty much zero say if, for some reason, that third-party decides to shut you down.

Whereas, with your own domain name and your own hosting, you can choose your own dot com name and you have full control over your server (so long as you don't do anything illegal that would be against your hosting company's terms and conditions, but it should go without saying that this shouldn't even be an issue).

When choosing a domain name, it's best to be professional and choose wisely because this is something you should be prepared to be stuck with.

A good option for a blogger is to go with your own name, followed by .com wherever possible. This is because, as a blogger, you would usually want to brand yourself rather than a brand name. You can go down the brand name route and some people do so very effectively, but having your own name means that you can still use the domain regardless of your marketing angle – you will always be branded as you, no matter what you do.

If “yourname.com” isn't available then you might have to get creative. For example, “your-name.com” might be available. Or perhaps you might have to consider tagging another word on there, such as “yournameonline.com” or “yournamemarketing.com”.

Again, whatever you choose should be professional and shouldn't be too long. Remember, you want people to be able to remember your domain easily, as well as find it easy to type in their browser. No-one wants to type in “john-smith-street-smart-online-wizard-marketing-guru-type-person-2018.com”. Aside from it being a cumbersome name, it also looks extremely silly. Of course, this is an extreme, tongue-in-cheek example, however some of the domains that some people choose aren't that far off!

If you really can't find a suitable domain name with the .com extension, then you might have to opt for something else, such as .net, for example. But .com is universally considered 'the' extension to go for and websites with a .com extension are usually considered to be more professional, trustworthy, etc.

There are some domain extensions that aren't even understood outside the country to which they apply (e.g. .co.uk is an extension that is used within the United Kingdom), so choosing a 'wrong' domain extension can actually be counter-productive, as it can give the wrong impression to someone who simply doesn't know any better.

WordPress

Another advantage of having your blog on your own hosting is that you are able to install WordPress (I advise making sure you choose a hosting company that provides this – it makes life easier!).

Now, you might be thinking about something I mentioned earlier – Wordpress.com. I listed that as a third-party platform and mentioned that I don't recommend using a third-party platform for your blog.

So, what gives?

Quite simply, WordPress is free, open-source software and is what is known as a Content Management System. This software is available for you to be able to install on your own server, either by using an automated installation script supplied by your hosting company, or by downloading the WordPress software from wordpress.org and then uploading and installing it manually yourself.

Wordpress.com, on the other hand, is a third-party, hosted service that uses a modified version of the WordPress software.

Although WordPress isn't exclusively for blogging, it is widely used for this purpose for a number of reasons, not least of which being its ease of use and the fact that it's extremely customizable and integrates with a vast number of external platforms and services.

Monetization

There are a number of ways in which you can make money from a blog. The most obvious one is to have a page on which you can showcase your own products and services. When you make your posts, you would want to direct attention to this by hyperlink directly to the relevant page on your blog.

If you don't yet have products or services of your own to sell then you will likely be looking to make money from affiliate offers.

The most obvious place to start would be to ensure that you have signed up for any affiliate programs that your domain registrar and hosting company have. You could then place banners for these on your blog, perhaps in your sidebar, as well as hyperlink to them at appropriate points in your posts.

You might have other products for which you're an affiliate which, again, you can promote in the same way. One such one might be your mailing service (often known as an autoresponder), such as Aweber or GetResponse. Of course, if you have such a service then you will be building your own mailing list, in which case it would make sense to have an opt-in form at an appropriate location on your blog. The obvious place would be at the top of your sidebar, if you have one (I'd recommend having one). Across the top of the page is also an effective location. Wherever it's located, it should always be above the fold, ie above the bottom of the browser window.

In your sidebar, below your opt-in form, I would recommend placing banners for affiliate offers. You will likely hear people refer to "ad blindness", but make no mistake – sidebar banners on a blog still work. So make good use of that real estate.

Traffic

Now, you have your blog installed. You have your opt-in form nicely-placed above the fold, leading to a killer offer or free gift to entice people onto your list. You have well-placed, monetized banners in your sidebar. You have killer content in your posts, with appropriate hyperlinks leading to offers.

But nothing is happening.

Why not?

Well, nothing is going to happen unless people know about your blog.

Think of it like this:

Imagine that you have planned a lovely meal. You have gone out and bought all the ingredients, you have cleaned the house, tidied up, prepared the meal, lit the candles, put on some nice background music, set the table and have the food all ready to serve. You anxiously wait for your guests to arrive.

You wait.

And wait.

And wait...

You then get frustrated and upset that no-one has arrived.

Of course, this is to be expected, considering that you haven't let anyone know about the meal.

Sure, you might get someone who, coincidentally, happens to call round just at the right time and so is fortunate to discover your wonderful meal and so enjoys a lovely evening with you.

Or, perhaps a stranger just happens to stumble across your house. Maybe they are looking for somewhere else but have somehow found your house. You invite them in, but they're not really enthusiastic about the idea and don't really want to stick around, as they don't know who you are or what your deal is.

This is exactly what it's like if you put everything in place on your blog but then do zero about letting anyone know that it exists.

Sure, there could be someone who already knows you and knows that your blog exists, so they just happen to drop by one day. Or there might be that lone visitor who just happens, purely by accident, to stumble across your blog, but they don't hang around because they didn't really want to be there in the first place.

No, you have to get yourself out there and get people to your blog!

How do you do this?

Well, firstly, once you have published your latest post, you should share it across all your social media channels – Facebook, Twitter, Google +, Linked In, etc. The more, the better. Also let your mailing list know that your latest post is there. Just tell them a little about the subject, just to whet their appetite, give them the link and invite them to check out your post for the full story/answer to the question/etc.

You could also make a short video and upload it to online video sites, the obvious one being YouTube. It doesn't have to be long or profound – just a 30 second video recorded on your mobile device would be sufficient. Just highlight something that your blog post contains that will attract people's attention and then supply the link along with an invitation to check out your post.

The next thing is the big one...

Blog-hopping.

Blog-hopping is the process of visiting someone else's blog, sharing their content, leaving a comment on their post and then hopping over to another blog to do the same thing.

There's an important point to bear in mind with this approach, though. You absolutely must do it from a place of generosity, selflessness and without dependence on the outcome.

In other words, if you do it purely to get traffic then you run the risk of finding it a cumbersome task. It will also be reflected subtly in how you come across to other people.

Rather, what you want to do is make that process a part of the whole package, knowing that if you perform the task well then all the other stuff – the visits, shares, clicks, subscriptions and, yes, sales – will happen in the background.

I know that this can be a difficult concept to grasp for some people. But it works, plain and simple.

Another advantage to this approach is that it is 100% search engine proof. In other words, if Google decides to make yet another algorithm change that affects everyone's search engine optimization strategy, you will be completely unaffected.

Why?

Because, blog-hopping and, more accurately, relationship-building, is completely impervious to anything the search engines do.

In fact, all search engines could shut down tonight and in the morning, you will carry on just as before, entirely unaffected, whereas those whose efforts relied solely on SEO (search engine optimization) will probably be running around in a blind panic.

In Summary

So, to emphasize:

Once you published your latest post and have shared across social media and have let your list know that it's live, step away!

The only time you should need to come back to your blog between posts is when someone leaves a comment. So long as it's a genuine comment and not spam, you should always reply. If nothing else, it's good manners. But it also contributes to your blog being a hub of activity, which is precisely what you want it to be. The more active your blog, the better impression it gives to others and, in turn, the more of an authority you will appear to be.

Once you have stepped away from your blog, find a blog in your niche (it's a good idea to keep bookmarks or some other kind of record of the active blogs you find). If the blog is active and isn't simply an automated thing, read through the latest post and if the content is good, share it across all your social platforms, just as you did with your own post. If the latest post doesn't resonate with you then move on to the next post and so on. Don't just share and comment for the sake of it.

Once you have shared the post, leave a comment of value that reflects that you have actually read the post. You want to stand out, not only in the eyes of the blog owner, but also to other people who look through the comments, because that is where you will get your traffic from.

Make sure that your comment has something to offer to the discussion. Even if you don't agree with something in the post, say so! You don't have to be confrontational, insulting or an idiot. But you also don't have to just agree to everything you read. You might have an insight into a particular point that the author doesn't. Or perhaps you just have another way of looking at things. Either way, there is nothing at all wrong with disagreeing.

Once you have done there, then move onto another blog.

And how do you find other blogs?

There are many ways, such as search engines, forums in your niche and social media. But the obvious one is, as I referred to a moment ago, the comments section of the blog you're currently on. Most of the commenters will have entered their website address in the appropriate section when making their comments. So you will simply click on their name and this will take you over to their blog.

Not every link will take you to an appropriate blog, but it won't take you very long to find someone suitable. Once you do, then you simply 'rinse and repeat', doing exactly as you did before.

Imagine how many bloggers you can connect with in an hour using this approach.

In two hours.

In half a day

A day.

A week...

And the key word there is "connect". As I said before, this needs to be done from a place of giving, not simply about getting traffic.

You want to be engagement oriented, looking to connect with as many people as you can and give as much value as you can.

It's this that will get you noticed and it's this that will get you your traffic.

And here's the really cool thing:

What you're actually doing with this is attracting traffic. You may have heard the expression "drive traffic". And we know what is meant by that. But how would you like to attract traffic instead, bringing traffic because those people are actively seeking you out based on what they know about you already?

Does that sound appealing?

Well, that's exactly what will happen if you approach blogging and blog-hopping correctly.

The traffic that you will be attracting will already be warmed up before they even get to your blog! These are people who perhaps didn't know you before. But because they have seen something about you that they like, they take it upon themselves to check you out further. They don't need to be 'driven' - they find their own way there!

How cool is that?

You don't get that kind of laser-targeted, hot traffic even with buyer traffic at times!

Are you starting to see how powerful this method is?

Taking Things Even Further

By now, you should be able to see the potential of blogging. Yes, it requires consistent work and dedication, but the rewards can be huge, not only with regards to the connections you can make and how people view you, but also financially.

Because of the amount of time that proper, effective blogging can require, you want to make sure that you not only have high-converting offers positioned on your blog, but also offers that deliver a high pay-out.

If you would like to find out how to do just that then I invite you to a special webinar that will teach you how to do exactly that. [<<Click here to secure your place right now>>](#)

In the meantime, if there is anything further that I can help you with, please don't hesitate to [<<contact me by clicking here>>](#).

I look forward to hearing from you!

Wishing you much success with your blogging!

Steve Turner