

BLOGGERS ROADMAP



THE HIGHWAY TO BLOGGING SUCCESS

Bloggers Roadmap

A no nonsense guide to starting a blog that works

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The Legal Bits

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A Brief Introduction

My name is Dan Sumner and I earn an income from the internet and have done since 2005. I'm not a millionaire; I don't have a private jet or a Ferrari I'm just a regular guy enjoying the ride with the most important part of my life, my family.

My main focus within the internet marketing business is to live a free lifestyle by using the internet as my tool for creating digital products which others find useful. I am not a scam artist, I will not sell products/information that doesn't work and I don't have all the answers. Like you I'm learning every step of the way.

I own, partner, and have been involved with several internet marketing businesses. I own and develop online products for myself and partners, I've built various coaching programs from monthly coaching tips and product development programs, to coordinating modules for huge training courses worth 1000's of Dollars.

In this book I want to show you some of the tips and techniques to creating a better personal or business blog. You will also find in this report links to my [Bloggers Roadmap Video Series](#) which will take your blogging skills to the next level, and beyond.

I have owned various blogs from internet marketing to fitness and wrote for a tonne more. I love what I do and that's why I want to share it with you...

If at any time you want to get in touch with me then please do so. The best way to contact me is via [Marketing From Scratch](#). Please feel free to use the contact or comment sections.

Also if you just want to say hello, then please do.

Enjoy the Bloggers Roadmap.



What is a Blog?

Essentially a blog is a website, nothing more than a simple to setup website with some very powerful features to make web-mastery very easy and usable. Before the introduction of WordPress and Blogger blogs, content had to be created on websites and message boards.

Thankfully this is now not the case and I'm sure there isn't one person in the world that can't create their own blog and benefit from doing something they enjoy.

In this book I will be talking about the WordPress blog platform as I feel this is the best blog platform to work with right now. What makes a blog so special is the ease of use and the ability to add content without the need to use any special coding skills.

Simplicity is the key and the WordPress back office is a fantastic tool which anyone can use to get started with a new blog and see great success.

Key Features

Simple to add new content instantly – The online blog changed the way the world looked at websites. Websites were for big companies who had investment to throw into website developers and websites. It wasn't until WordPress arrived, which allowed the little guy, the people with passion and a voice who wanted to express themselves who could now join the ranks of the big guns.

The ability to add content almost instantly with no coding or website knowledge really was a huge step forward for anyone wanting to get involved. Creating content and publishing it to the web was now as easy as writing and sending an email.

You can update your content frequently – Adding content to a blog is very, very easy, it's also very easy to create a new look on a blog with the use of plugins and themes. Once again before blog platforms, the use of such features was only available from industry experts or big companies who could afford to hire developers.

Fast forward to today, and you will find so many features, themes and plugins which can be used on blogs allowing for greater search engine optimization (SEO), traffic building and mailing list building. This has certainly paved the way for business owners and entrepreneurs to create their own business blogs without the need for webmasters.

Google rankings – With the increase in technology and the development of enhanced plugins, blogs have also become a great tool for reaching top rankings within Google. The ability to frequently update content easily and efficiently, along with the help of clean website code allows the marketer and entrepreneur to quickly update and outrank industry giants and hit the top spots in Google for specific key word rankings.

Blogs allow for interaction – One special feature of a WordPress blog is the ability to create interaction with its readers. Blogs allow comments, and it's these comments that provide great value and a sense of community within your blog. It's

this sense of community that allows for blogs to become a trusted source of information, providing the platform for people to express themselves and share valuable content across the internet simply and easily.

By building a following of dedicated readers and providing helpful content relating to passions, hobbies and skills, blog owners can create a following to build flows of traffic which can be collected and monetized. It's this monetization that can create great sources of income for the blog owner and remove them from the stereotypical 9 to 5 lifestyle the system has ingrained into our lives from an early age.

Throughout the rest of this book I will be looking further into blogging techniques, content creation and monetising strategies which will help you to blog for fun, business and success.

Why start your own blog

The only Impossible Journey is The One You Never Begin

~ Tony Robbins

Take this book for example; I bought the domain name <http://www.bloggersroadmap.com> with the intention of creating a product about blogging, and sharing valuable information with you.

I am now very happy I started this book. It feels good and I highly recommend starting something of your own. Blogging is your gateway to the online world and can lead to a great many things. You can express your interests and hobbies, your passions, your business and a whole lot more.

Mostly your blog will reflect your own opinions and knowledge of a chosen subject, which will lead to likeminded people sharing opinions and benefitting from the information or advice you provide. Starting your own blog is a big commitment. Most people start without knowing where to begin or what to actually write about. Let me tell you, you are not alone, we all have to start somewhere but it's starting that counts. Remember that!

Bloggging can be so much more than an expression of interests in your chosen subject; it can be a gateway to an income. Your blog can be utilized as a tool for creating an income and eventually lead to a full time business. However, let's not get ahead of ourselves here; after all we are just starting but I guarantee you will take a lot away from this book.

Stop thinking about money!

In fact take the monetizing factor as far from your mind as possible. For now, concentrate on creating your dream, concentrate on the idea of what could be, and will be in the future. Money will come naturally and you will know when the time is right to monetize your blog with the right type of ads and affiliate products and even your own products. I will talk more about this later.

You may be a little confused about the whole monetizing aspect and why I suggest not thinking about money? Well the answer to that is simple. Your drive should be fuelled by a passion to succeed and provide information.

I want you to use your passion as your drive and your content as your reward. Once you start creating content, I guarantee you will see how addictive blogging can actually be. If you're not thinking about money, you're thinking about content and what you want to talk about next, not how you can make money from the visitors you have. Trust me this will come when you're ready.

Comments, shares and interaction

Comments and social media shares are the icing on the cake when it comes to your blog. This means two things:

1. You are getting traffic to your blog
2. People are interested in your content

Think about that for a second, I mean how cool is that?

You have people actually taking time out of their day to look at your blog! Now think about those guys who are taking the time to comment? These people are special; you should treat them like gold. These are the guys who will share your info on the social networks and spread the word around about the content you are providing.

They are also the buyers of your products and recommendations!

“Make your audience feel special and return comments to valued readers”

So why should you start your own blog?

Are you passionate about what you believe in and want to share your passion with the world? Would you like to build something which could quite possibly be the best of its kind in the world?

Then why the heck would you not want start your own blog?

Choosing your niche

When it comes to choosing your niche there are a few factors to consider. I regard passion as one of the main focus points of choosing a niche, although sometimes this is not always the case. When you first make the decision to start a blog, it can be done for many reasons.

Some of those reasons are:

- Money
- Personal
- Charity or help
- Community
- Informative
- Fun/hobbies
- Work/business

Whatever niche you decide to blog about, there remains one hard and fast rule. Stick with your niche and don't bounce your content around from niche to niche.

Your goal is to create a following of niche related readers and build a community of likeminded folks who will share your content and join you in conversation. If you start a blog with unrelated posts and content you will soon see a divide in your following and ultimately, all or most of your subscribers will seek info elsewhere.

Think of it this way. Imagine you read a popular sports blog or newspaper. Now imagine that particular source of sports info posts an article about classic car buying in the next issue. What happens? You think "what the heck is this" You as the author might like it, but a large percentage of your readers will not read it.

Now imagine this particular sports blog or newspaper do this every day with different articles, on completely different niches. Soon you are going to become sick and tired of seeing niche content you have no interest in and go read the next best thing.

Focus on one topic

When the average person first starts a blog, or they are told to start a blog from an online training course (sound familiar?), they tend to write and focus on what they are doing, making their blog an extension of their life.

The new blogger will write about content they are working with and what their training course is doing for them. This is a good place to start; it gets the author used to writing content for their blog on a regular basis. It gives the blog author a point of focus before they find their niche. A true point is still to be initiated and quality information is still to be conveyed to the reader to gain a following. This will come!

Choosing a topic

Choosing a topic and remaining niche specific is essential for blog success. By choosing a specific niche and making that niche your topic allows for:

Specific reader loyalty – By choosing a specific content topic or niche you allow for all your readers to be interested in the same topic, this creates interaction.

Community - As well as reader interaction, you create community, people interact with each other. With the introduction of social media, this can lead to Facebook fan page members, groups and Twitter followers.

Expert status - Blogging about a niche specific subject allows you to become, and be seen as, an expert within your niche. Blogging about various subjects makes you seem like a jack of all trades and master of none.

SEO specific - When it comes to the search engines, having specific content topics allows you to target your whole blog to make it easier for the search engines to track your blog and target a niche.

Monetizing and ads - When you want to make money from your blog, you need advertising and products. If your blog isn't targeted towards a specific niche, you are going to have a problem with ads and product advertising.

Choosing a niche

I have been online marketing for a long time. Starting first with eBay in early 2005 and progressing from there to internet marketing and digital marketing. My blog topic (marketing) was also my passion. It's what I loved doing and what I feel comfortable writing about.

Finding my niche was easy!

I simply went with my passion. Unless you have your niche idea and passion already down and your blog planned out it can take a little bit of research on finding your niche.

Try looking at some of the more important factors when it comes to choosing a niche:

Look at your passions - First of all take a look at your passions. What gives you energy and excites you? If you blog about your passion, you are never going to struggle for content. You may get a little writers block now and then, but you will always get over it. In my experience, trying to generate content for a topic you don't like is very hard. In situations like this you need to work extra hard or hire a writer with the knowledge you need.

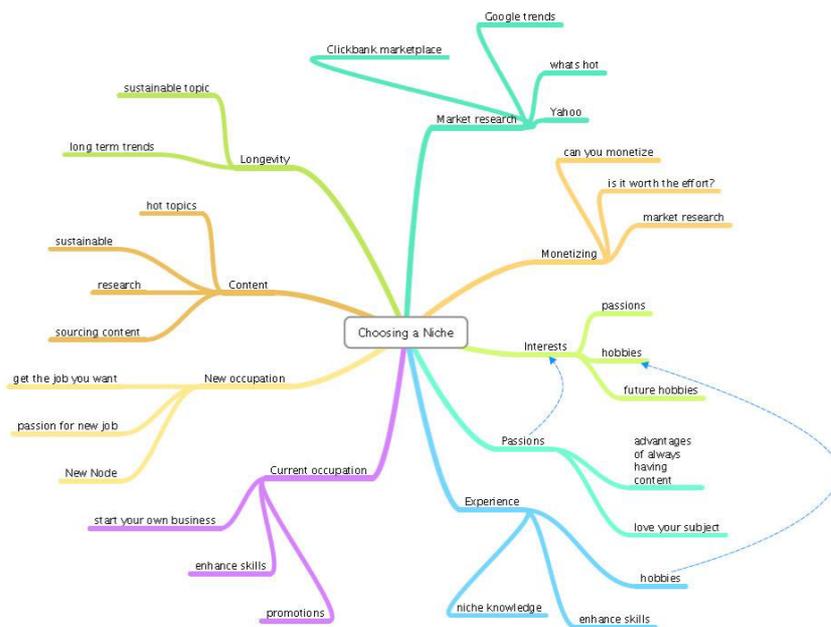
Are you an expert? - If you have an expert hobby or job role then you have a distinct advantage over everyone who is interested in your niche. You immediately command respect as the expert. So many try to fake their experiences online and run out of content very quickly.

Do you have enough content? - You may not be an expert, but you may have the knowledge to create a lot of good content. This way you can sustain your blog and create a lot of content for the search engines. Be careful you don't become disinterested.

Learn your niche - This goes hand in hand with passion. By learning your niche and making it your focus or hobby, you can take an audience on your journey from novice to expert. This is a very good way to create community.

Blogging about the latest trends - Not the way I would blog, but it can be a great way to rank high in the search engines. Blogging about hot topics and trends doesn't tend to be sustainable, but can be good for short term niche blogging and very profitable if monetized in the right way.

Look at the market - I believe if you are passionate about your niche then you can make it work no matter how tough the competition is. No matter what niche you choose if you love what you do, then you will make it work. When it comes to choosing your niche, you have to weigh the factors against each other and find your own specific path of what is going to suit you as the future blogger. Take your time, decide, and then go for it! I have created a mind map which should help you make that decision or at least make your decision a little easier.



[Click HERE to download](#)

Monetizing within your niche

Can you monetize your blog to suit your niche?

In my opinion, you can monetize any topic. If there is enough demand for it then it can be monetized.

No matter how crazy your topic is there is always someone interested. This is where niches come into their own. You are not alone within your niche, there is always someone with the same interests as you.

With the explosion of social media such as Facebook, Pinterest and Instagram it's not just Google people go to to look for niches. Your advertising platform goes way beyond search engines now.

However, try searching for it with the Google Key Word Tool and see how many people are interested in your niches.

I guarantee you will find a market for even the most outrageous niches. Obviously the amounts of revenue will differ from niche to niche and also the demand for ads and products will differ as well. However this is still not to say that your passion cannot take your blog to the top in any respective niche online.

If you command page 1 of Google for your niche, you can create products, advertise and ultimately create customers and revenue from all social platforms.

When it comes to finding your blog topic, there are three main things which you should look for:

1. Passion for writing content
2. Demand
3. Is it lucrative?

“You can create a blog with just one of these factors, but if you have all 3 you have found your perfect niche”

Here are some great niche finding tools which you can use to track and check stats of niches:

- Google Key Word Tool
- Market Samurai

In summary don't rush into looking for a niche. Consider the facts before you leap into blogging. Ensure you have enough content, make sure you can stick with your niche, you don't want to bomb out after a few months of hard work.

Most of all choosing your niche is all about providing long lasting content and having the ability to keep on providing it. It doesn't have to be something you are doing now, try something new you may just find you love it! Beware blogging is addictive.

Hosting and Domains

No matter what type of blog you wish to run, hosting is essential.

You may argue the point that you can use a free shared hosting account or an account from WordPress.com. These are free options which can be an alternative, but they shouldn't be used in the case of a personal blog.

Take a look at the difference between a free service such as WordPress.com and the alternative paid service:

Free service

Your domain name for a free service will look something similar to:

<http://www.WordPress.yourchosenblogname.com>

This domain is essentially a sub domain of the WordPress domain. Using a free hosting service can and will provide you with a hosting account which you can use your own domain name with. However, free hosting always comes with some kind of reference to the hosting company e.g. they may advertise a permanent banner across the top of your blog offering their services.

As well as sub domain options and unconditional advertising, your free hosting account will most certainly be limited in the size of web space you can use and control panel functionality.

Paid service

A paid service will offer complete unrestricted usability when it comes to control panel access and domain purchasing. Instead of a domain name like the WordPress sub domain above, you can use a completely professional looking domain name.

You decide which domain looks more professional domain 1 or domain 2:

Domain 1 - <http://www.WordPress.yourchosenblogname.com>

Domain 2 – <http://www.yourchosenblogname.com>

“If you chose number 2 you are correct”

The bottom line is, don't try to save on the key items for your business. Hosting is a must, whatever online business you are in, so don't go cheap.

Hosting accounts

You don't need a huge amount of hosting i.e. managed servers. A simple shared server is sufficient. Until the time when your blog grows in popularity you may need more space, power and speed. For now a simple shared hosting account is just fine. I can recommend 2 hosting accounts which provide an excellent service and they are:

1. [Blue Host](#)

2. [D9 Hosting](#)

I have two hosting accounts, Blue Host and 1and1.

Although not in my recommendations, I have a managed server with 1and1 hosting (UK) which runs my blog and most of my business products for ultimate reliability. I also have hosting with Blue Host and D9 Hosting, who are also ultra-reliable. If I was to start again, these would be my choices.

Blue Host is a great hosting program used by a lot of blogger's and is a very popular choice. All of the prices and services are around the same, so the choice is yours.

The one major difference between the 2 accounts which does need to be taken into consideration is that Blue Host and D9 use a Cpanel setup which is super easy to use. 1and1 has its own custom control panel, which a newbie would find hard to setup a blog on the server, due to the SQL database setup.

My blog videos show you how to set this up, and in my opinion this setup is more secure. You may be thinking what is the difference, they all look like a control panel?

The major difference with the two control panels is D9 and Blue Host (in the video below) and Blue Host have a very simple blog setup facility which is a simple point and click blog setup that can be done in a matter of seconds. Yes, I said seconds...

No matter which hosting account you choose, ensure it is a reputable one. The cheapest hosting accounts are not always the best hosting accounts to have. All the hosting accounts I mention here in this chapter have 99.9% uptime, sever backup and more. Don't sacrifice your business visibility with cheap services.

Designs and Themes

When you first upload WordPress you find yourself with the default WordPress theme. As good as WordPress is, people rarely stick with the standard theme and choose to go with an alternative for individuality. There is a lot of debate about what type of theme to use and which theme is better than the next. Personally I am a big fan of individual designs with a premium theme such as the [Elegant Themes](#) which is what I currently use. This setup allows for a greater scope of individuality, thus creating a blog design which you and you alone own.

*Note - Within the [Bloggers Roadmap Video Series](#) I have secured a Premium Theme which you can use.

Free themes

When first starting out if you have a low budget, it is a good idea to go for a free theme. To setup WordPress and upload a free theme costs literally nothing.

With the cost of hosting included, to start your own blog the 'free way' will cost you as little \$5 - \$10 per month with a reputable hosting company. As I explained earlier good hosting is essential.

There are literally 1000s of free themes to choose from. A simple Google search for "Free WordPress Themes" can open the door to all kinds of designs, colours and layouts. There are themes designed for Google's Ad programs, Image optimized magazine style, ad optimized, newsletter, custom look and many, many more for every style of blog.

Free themes are a good way to start a blog, there is no denying that. However if you are serious about blogging and making a success of your blog, taking it a step further is most definitely a recommended option.

To put things in perspective, in the early days I used a free theme attached to my blog. The theme itself was a great theme, it looked great, it was functional and could be edited quite well. However what made me move to a premium theme and my own custom skin was a simple case of duplicates. Seeing a copy of your own theme on someone else's blog can be disappointing.

The more popular your blog gets, the more people will copy you. It's a simple fact of business. Copy what is working for others to succeed and get the same or similar results. It is at this point you need to consider becoming an individual and using a custom theme, or at the very least customizing your existing theme to become an individual and stand out.

Premium themes

Premium themes are a cut above the rest. Typically a premium theme will have a lot to offer in the form of SEO customization and custom coding, making them all round a better theme than a free theme. Typically you can expect to pay in the region of

\$27 - \$97 and upward for a premium theme. There are a number of premium themes which I would recommend and these are:

- Elegant Theme (I'm enjoying these at the moment)
- Thesis theme (Previous blogs have run on Thesis)
- Genesis theme (Excellent for search engines and has amazing coding but harder to setup)
- Woo themes (very good shop themes)

All of the above themes have a lot to offer in the way of functionality. All themes above I have used, and find very, very good in terms of functionality, usability and SEO capability.

You can check out my Elegant theme [HERE](#). These themes come with skins to add to the current theme which also work very well with your blog. Although the skins offered are not custom, they can be customized quite easily with custom graphics packages. Also the likelihood of running into the same theme is slight compared to free themes.

Custom theme skins

With a custom theme and custom created skin, you get the best of both worlds. You get the functionality of a premium theme and also the custom look and individuality of a professionally designed skin. As I mentioned earlier, a custom theme will cost you upwards of \$27. A custom skin for your theme can cost you anywhere up to \$1000 and over depending what type of look, coding and functionality you would like.

If you are serious about your blog and blogging then I recommend going for a custom theme and custom skin for the ultimate in functionality and individuality.

I can also guarantee you will change your theme more than once during your journey.

Designs

Having a good looking, functional blog really does add value. You don't have to have an all singing all dancing blog with flashing banners and garish colours. Your blog should look good, and read better.

There is no need to fill your blog with ad after ad and affiliate banner after affiliate banner. This will just annoy the reader. Depending on your niche and the primary function of your blog, you can build the look and feel of your blog and tailor it to how you want it e.g. If you have a blog that has a primary function of readability. It would be wise to design your blog for this purpose. Use less or no ads, a strategic opt-in placement such as a popup and good clean layout to focus on content.

Here are a few tips you should take into consideration when looking at your blog design:

Take your navigation into consideration - Give your reader a few options but not too many. You don't have to create a new category or a new page for every post. Keep your navigation neat and tidy with limited options. If a reader can't find a specific item, you can add a search bar. No one likes clutter.

Your contact info is important - Have your contact info where your readers can see it and use it. Don't think that people won't want to talk to you. After all you run a social blog, you need to build a community and speaking to people is part of it.

Create a nice header graphic - Appearance is everything and a nice looking header graphic is essential. It doesn't have to be an all singing, all dancing, bells and whistles, so huge across the screen you can't see your content.

Create a header graphic so people can relate to you and your brand. Simple, readable and effective, about 100 pixels in height is nice or a simple design logo in the corner. Your about page will do the rest.

Don't overuse bold fonts and unreadable fonts - Most newbies have a

tendency to create oversized and strange fonts. Your font does not have to be huge but it does have to be readable, the average reader is not blind, nor do they want to see fancy italics either.

Keep your fonts a simple size, use your H1 and H2 tags for SEO purposes, but keep their size to a good standard and font style readable. Stick with fonts such as Ariel, Verdana, Calibri etc as they are easy readable and common, meaning the brain reads them easier.

Take a color scheme and stick with it - Newspapers and magazines are a great example of this. Their color schemes for articles never change. Black/grey on white design with the odd sub heading in an alternative, but never outlandish color. Simplicity is the key here. If you have a rainbow of color on the screen chances are people will leave sooner rather than later.

Treat your sidebar with respect - There is a place for everything on your blog and your side bar is the 3rd most important part of your blog, next to the title space and content. It remains there 99% of the time unless you use special pages without it. What your sidebar does not need is useless lists of ads or unused widgets. Remove all unnecessary widgets and content that don't directly relate to your blog or serve purpose. Less is more in this case.

Create an about me page – As I mentioned earlier, your blog is a social platform, so an about me page is going to help you out hugely. Why? It's the second most viewed page on your blog next to your home page. Make it interesting; add images, opt-ins and free advice.

Add social media sharing options - There are a multitude of social sharing plugins you can use, so use them. You want your readers to share your content with the social media platforms used by other people interested in your stuff, so make it as easy as possible to do so.

This will lead to increased traffic. Don't add the latest Facebook fan page widget if you are not going to use it. The same goes for Twitter feed widget. Why would you want to add something to your blog you are not active on? If you signed up for a Facebook fan page and nothing was happening on that page, would you feel disappointed with the owner?

Don't add stuff on your blog you don't need or use - Your blog is your blog, it's your house so keep it clean. Don't add plugins, social media buttons, widgets and graphics that aren't going to get used, or worse, don't know what they do.

Just because you have seen things on other blogs doesn't mean you should have every new shiny object that comes along. Keep it real and keep it tidy.

Don't over monetize your blog - The first thing most newbies do when they start their first blog is to think that they are going to be rich in a week. Do yourself a big favor and think about content first rather than making money.

Your blog is not a walking ad, it's a place for you to share content with others. Monetize according to your content and don't over do it. Be strategic and research your ad placement.

There will be more on monetizing later.

Don't forget the opt-in - You could survey all popular bloggers and they would all tell you the same answer to the same question. What is your biggest blog regret?

The answer you will receive is **"not building mailing list from the start"**.

Add an opt-in to your blog, build your subscribers from your home page, sidebar and about me pages. Offering free items for subscriptions is a great way to build your subscribers.

The way you want to setup your blog is your choice. Whatever you do create good content and make your blog look professional, readable and easy to navigate. By doing this the reader will never be confused and always want to come back.

Life is Easy With 10 Base Plugins

No doubt you have heard about plugins for WordPress. Plugins are an extension of the WordPress framework and can transform your blog from a basic website into a very powerful tool. Plugins are big business, at the time of writing this there are currently over 40,000 plugins attached to the WordPress database of plugins, with more and more being developed every single day. Like I said, it's big business. Without all the top-notch plugins, WordPress would likely not have enjoyed quite as much success as it has. It is the evolving plugins partnered with the platform that keep current users using WordPress and new users finding their way to the WordPress platform.

I've seen WordPress and plugins go from strength to strength, today they are streets ahead of what they once were and I'm sure more plugins will grow with Wordpress.

What plugins should I use?

The competition is very stiff when it comes to plugins as there are so many plugins that do the same job, some of these plugins work better than others. Choosing a plugin also has a lot to do with user preference and what the blog is used for. Some users prefer one type of SEO plugin over another, some users will find a particular caching plugin better than the next. It really does depend on what you the user wants for your blog.

Take a look at the WordPress Database of plugins or a simple Google search will also help you find what you are looking for. I'm sure you will be surprised at what plugin you can find and the vast array of choice.

“With 1000's of WordPress plugins to choose from it can be a bit overwhelming trying to decide which plugins to use. Let's simplify the process at least a little bit”

Here are 10 essential WordPress plugins that I use and feel are a good starting point for any blog:

1. Akismet or Comment Luv Premium - both these plugins filter out spam from your blog. Akismet comes preinstalled when you setup your WordPress blog. You just have to activate it. It will aggregate information from every Akismet user, which means you will be protected from spammers even if they haven't ever commented on your site. However, occasionally it will mark legitimate comments as spam.

Comment Luv has to be purchased from Commentluv.com and in my opinion does a better job than Akismet. Comment Luv can be set not to move spam to the spam folder where Akismet can sometimes move legitimate comments to the spam folder. This can sometimes lead to comments being missed.

2. WordPress SEO by Yoast - If you are concerned about search engine optimization, this plugin does it all for you. This is by far the best SEO plugin available for WordPress today.

3. WP W3 Super Cache - This plugin speeds up your blog exponentially because of the way it caches data. This does exactly what it says on the tin. It works very well and is used by a lot of the top blogs.

6. Contact Form 7 – A beginner and developer friendly contact form plugin for WordPress. It can be used to add almost any kind of online form to your WordPress website.

7. Opt-in Forms – A simple and free plugin that integrates nicely to your blog to create nice looking opt-in forms compatible with most popular email collection and delivery services such as Aweber. Did I say this was free..

8. WordPress Social Share Buttons- This plugin allows you to show a scrolling share bar for social media shares, likes, tweets etc on your blog side bar, post and pages. It also has a very nice looking slide in share option. Nice..

9. iThemes Security- iThemes Security is the best overall security plugin you can find. It's robust, yet wrapped in a nice interface which makes it easy for any novice to use. This plugin fixes many issues that leave WordPress sites vulnerable, as well as hardening the security. For instance, it will hide the login and admin pages, remove information hackers use to gain access to your site, scan your site for any vulnerability, and make regular backups of your database.

10. Google Analytics By Yoast – Analytics allows you to track visitors and find out exactly where people come from, how long they stay and what they do on your website. Adding Google Analytics to your website is simple and easy with the Google Analytics by Yoast WordPress plugin.

New plugins

It's worth keeping your eyes open for new plugins, as there are always new developments of older plugins or new plugins which can do the job of many plugins which you may have installed. I don't recommend using a non-updating plugin due to the security holes it can cause.

Remember to check on the WordPress Database now and again to ensure you have the latest and best releases. Although when there is an update of your plugin, the WordPress plugin section should alert you of this. If you do find a new plugin that you would like to use for your blog, it is worth checking it out first using a test blog or doing your homework.

Dealing with new plugins

Just as I mentioned it is always worth looking into a new plugin first and doing a little home work. Many times I have installed a plugin and found that it has corrupted my blog in some way. This is not usually due to a problem with the plugin, it's more likely the plugin is conflicting with another plugin. If you decide you would like to install a plugin, then I recommend testing your plugin first. It's very easy to setup a test blog on your webspace. Simply duplicate your blog, theme and plugins and then upload

the new plugin and test its functionality. If it works fine you can roll it out on your own blog.

If the plugin you have chosen causes problems and corrupts your blog for some reason, then you have lost nothing and your current active blog can still continue to run without error.

Tips for choosing plugins

Depending on the nature of your business and its needs there is most certainly a range of plugins which you can and will use. However don't always be tempted by the latest and greatest plugin and install every new plugin that is released.

Too many plugins can really mess things up. It's not that all the plugins conflict, they don't. But like I mentioned earlier, WordPress looks at every plugin during the loading process of your blog. This can lead to a very slow loading blog. And if you have a lot of plugins and your blog is loading slowly, impatient people will leave. Be ruthless and remove any plugin that you are not using. Don't just leave them sitting on your blog doing nothing. Keep a clean blog at all times.

Here are a few simple rules to follow when using plugins:

1. Only install what you need.
2. Remove any waste plugins from your blog
3. Check the plugin website for compatibility
4. Test any new plugins on your test blog
5. Keep them up to date

Follow these plugin rules and you should have no trouble with your blog in the future.

Getting Started With Content

Content is the lifeblood of your blog, and rightly so. It's the content you write, shoot or record that people want to view. Fresh new content keeps the readers coming back and the search engines happy. It's this content that makes up your blog and it's this content you have to create.

If you are blogging for the first time then you should have a bunch of posts ready to go.

“If I was to start from the beginning I would create at least 10 posts to post to my blog. I would then upload all the posts to my blog in draft format. This allows a buffer for me to fall back on”

Starting your own blog is an amazing experience, you have your niche, you have your blog uploaded, you have your theme all up to date and a few plugins installed.

You tell yourself...

“I'm ready, let's do this”

You launch your blog to the world! You start off well with, Twitter posts, Facebook posts, shares emails to associates etc. Then it hits you?

You have posted your content for the past few weeks and surprise surprise you have run out of content ideas. Your niche knowledge is not as strong as you thought it was.

It's true, this happens a lot, and to more people than you would expect. Even I have content problems, but this is my business so I always find new material.

I see so many newbies fall into the same trap over and over again. Too much content too soon and their blog post ideas turn into a blank page and eventually fall away.

Sad I know.

However, there is hope! I will talk about stealing content in a moment.

If I can give one piece of advice when it comes to creating your first blog post, it's have some content pre-written to fall back on when time becomes short or the dreaded writers block hits.

As well as having 10 posts pre-written I recommend having some prewritten back up posts. Depending on your blogging frequency, you should have some backup content available as well as your ideas list of future content to create. At the time of writing this, I will be honest with you and say I am having a problem completing posts at the moment for the simple reason I am working on this book. I will use a backup set of posts to help me get through this sticky phase. (I bet you are thinking how can you be stuck?) Believe me it happens.

Here are some ideas of posts you can have prewritten to save you some time, or when, like me at the moment; you are busy with another project.

Write a tutorial series – Tutorial series of posts are brilliant. They teach people how to get around problems and complete things they could not do otherwise. The main feature of a tutorial post is you can spread them out over a few posts. This could set you up for 2 to 3 weeks depending on your posting frequency.

Write a list post – List posts are easy as well as engaging. How many headlines do you see every day that have a list in it? Take a look next time you are reading a magazine or newspaper. They are everywhere and work very well.

Write something personal – This is another easy post. What is your most knowledgeable subject? You, right?

Of course it is. Write about yourself or something you have done or achieved. This type of post lets people see the real you, the person behind the blog. It allows people to build a mental image of who you are, and build a relationship. This works well. When completing a backup post, ensure your posts are evergreen.

Don't date any posts or have content in there that could go out of date. Stick to these rules and you shouldn't have a problem.

Generating content ideas

When it comes to starting on your content, there are no hard and fast rules for the order of headline or content first. Sometimes I can't think of a headline until the end, sometimes a headline can create a post. Don't govern yourself by any hard a fast rules here, just go with it. The choice is yours; don't sit for an age thinking of a headline when you know what you want to write about. You might think that generating content is going to be the hardest part of blogging. Well I can guarantee it isn't.

We will get to the hardest part of blogging in the next chapter, but for now let's concentrate on writing content. When it comes to writing content, it must be epic. When I say epic I mean your content should be awesome in a way to make people want to read it, share it, talk about it and come back for more.

The key to creating great content is the pillar post. The pillar post is your best and most comprehensive material. These are the posts that are read the most, commented on the most and shared the most and lead to higher search engine rankings.

There are a few rules you need to adhere to when creating a pillar post:

- Your post should be evergreen, so no matter when it's read it stays relevant.
- It should be your best content
- Your pillar posts should be easy to find and well displayed on your blog
- Your headline should be very appealing (this applies to all posts)
- It should be your best content (yes I did say this twice)

Some great pillar article content can be found below. Remember a good solid foundation of pillar content is a great start to any blog.

Here are more great post ideas you can start with.

- 1. The List Post** – A good old favourite of mine which is great Google food for high search engine rankings. E.g. 5 Product Launch Tips.
- 2. The Review Post** – Product review posts are always great ways to rank your blog next to the websites you are reviewing. [I have some review posts on my Bonus Blog.](#)
- 3. Book Reviews** – I have reviewed one or two products on my Bonus Blog which have turned out quite successful. You can also affiliate link to the product you are reviewing and earn commissions.
- 4. The Huge List** – A lot like the list post, but a lot larger e.g. 101 things to do with SEO.
- 5. The How-To Post** – How to add widgets to your blog, or how to make your blog an authority blog.
- 6. Themed Post** – Post about a particular time of the year or an event
- 7. News Post** – You could write a post on a local topic and mention a service you're offering.
- 8. The Advice Post** – Ask the reader what topics you'd like to discuss in the next post. This is a great idea and a cool way to involve your audience.
- 9. Round-up Post** – Which blogs do you actually read and which bloggers do you respect? A great way to share other blogs online and also a great way to grab the attention of other bloggers from ping backs and track backs.
- 10. Ethical People to Follow** – Which people are you most intrigued by and follow? You could talk about inspiring people, heroes and mentors.
- 11. Personal Post** – Allowing people into certain aspects of your life when it comes to blogging is a great way to build trust which can and will lead to sales of products and services.
- 12. Controversial Post** – There is nothing like a little controversy. Controversial posts go a very long way with readers and always generate a ton of comments.
- 13. Mentors and Coaches** – Case studies and a review of your training experiences on any courses you have taken part in.
- 14. The Biggest Mistakes** – This one speak for itself. People love to hear about the mistakes you have made, especially in business. These posts project a real person with real achievements.
- 15. Problem Solving** – Post on something that happened to you and/or your blog and what you did to solve or fix the problem.

16. Hold a Contest – Create content on your blog which people can take part in. E.g. The best interview post or the best video post even as simple as the best comment. I have held competitions where I have given prizes for the best comment.

17. Traffic Tutorials - I find that the question I get asked the most is always something to do with traffic generation, so anything that helps people generate traffic to their own blogs, websites, products or squeeze pages always helps. I also find that short videos can help, some people struggle to put words into actions.

18. Personal Challenges Post– Create a post about overcoming your fears. People can usually relate to the same problems and fears you have.

Stealing

I mentioned earlier about stealing content. Think of it like this; how many books have you read that were very similar?

- How many TV or Movies have you seen that were basically the same?
- How many blog posts have you seen or read that were completely 100% original never seen before content?

I read a lot, and after reading this book I have a feeling that you will find that the content produced by people is not always 100% unique content.

There are a lot of posts out there with their own spin on the same topics. You don't have to reinvent the wheel every time you create a post you can just modify it a little and add your own opinions.

Today I compiled some information about free graphics websites from another source. I took the links to the free sites and will add my own content. It's not stealing I simply researched.

There are going to be times when you don't create pillar posts, times when you read something or become involved in something which you want to write about. Don't be afraid to write about the same topics as others and add your own opinions, it's not stealing; you are simply putting your own ideas into play from the ideas of others.

You could spend the whole of your life writing unique and individual content when you should be writing quickly and efficiently. Using researched content in this manner isn't stealing, it's being efficient. To really become a great blogger you need to read and research your own niche and improve on what others have done or put your own opinions across to what works and what doesn't.

Choosing your killer headline

Creating a killer headline for your blog is essential. It's the door to your blog post and a one we need to make as interesting as possible. Paint your door with pink and blue spots and it will be recognised.

I'm not saying create a crazy headline, not at all. However you don't want to create a boring one either do you? The fact is if your headline doesn't appeal, your blog post

has a lesser chance that it will be read. Let's call it "curious". The more curious you can make your headline, the greater the chance you have of people reading your posts. The more people you have reading your posts, the more interaction you have and the more influential you can be when it comes to providing saleable info.

Does this not say that your headline has got to be just as important as your content?

Here is a tip - we all read the local tabloids and have a favourite magazine don't we? The next time you take a look at a newspaper or magazine, take a look at the headlines. Or more to the point, be mindful of what catches your eye. I will guarantee it will be the headline that you read which will determine if you will read the article.

More Stealing

Headline stealing is a great way to create great headlines. Magazines have been stealing each other's headlines forever. There are certain headlines that are always used to catch the eye. Not every single newspaper, advertisement or magazine uses a completely unique headline, this is obvious. They use what works, or at least variations of what works.

Below you will find some great examples of headlines you can use on your own blog. These should help you grab some attention and give your readers some attraction.

Different types of headline could be as follows.

Mistake headlines:

- Do you make the same mistakes as me?
- Have you made these [blank] mistakes?
- 10 writing mistakes you never knew you were making
- Do you make the same blogging mistakes as me?
- 15 mistakes that can make you look stupid
- 5 mistakes you never knew you were making?
- Don't regret not doing [blank]
- The biggest online shopping mistakes you will ever make

How to headlines:

- Learn how to [blank]
- Learn how to speed read in 10 minutes
- Learn how to write 500 words in 10 minutes
- Learn to speak Spanish in 5 easy lessons

- How can you make \$1000 per month on complete auto pilot?
- Learn to lose weight without dieting
- How to make the most of out a small wage
- How to be the best at what you do
- Learn how to work from home today
- How to [blank] and [blank]
- How to manage your time more effectively
- How to be the best at [blank]

Threat headlines:

- The shocking truth about [blank]
- 10 things about people you can't trust
- 5 warning signs for [blank]
- The truth about the dangers of social media
- 5 warning signs about your blog layout
- 10 ways you will fail online
- How to protect yourself and your business from online fraud
- 8 things you need to be afraid of
- The shocking truth why your blog sucks

Minimalist headline:

- 5 ways to simplify your [blank]
- How can you be super simple?
- I can reduce your stress levels in 5 minutes
- 30 seconds from now your junk mail can be gone
- Minimal cooking guide
- How to travel the world with nothing but 20 items
- Get rid of [blank] once and for all
- Too many projects? Here are 5 ways to minimalist heaven
- How to fix your [blank] in 5 Minutes

Popular brands headline:

- Market like [popular brand]
- 7 ways to launch a product like [popular brand]
- Increase your fitness levels and be like [famous athlete]
- Write like [famous writer] in 10 easy steps
- Learn the secrets of success just like [famous person]
- How to look like [famous film star]
- The greatest marketing headlines of all time by [brands]
- [brand]/[famous persons] secrets to total success
- What can [famous person] teach you about [blank]

List headlines:

- 20 Ways to [blank]
- 10 Ways to Become a Better Writer
- 10 Effective Ways to build your mailing list
- 5 ways to create a killer book
- The top 10 ways to modify your blog
- The Top 10 [blank]
- 101 reasons to [blank]
- Grab these 15 tips on how to [blank]
- The Top 20 List posts of The Year so Far

As you can see from the examples above, there are a lot of headlines you can use to attract the reader to reading your posts. It's headlines just like these that the top magazines and tabloids use every day to grab the attention of their readers. And guess what? They work.

How to end your post

A good end to a post can be the difference between your audience returning or leaving you for good. A good ending to your post is the key to communicating with your audience.

There are a number of post endings you can use to create engagement with your audience to keep them coming back for more and more.

Ask the opinion of your audience – Asking your readers what they think is a simple and very effective way to create comment engagement. These simple statements work well below:

- Your turn
- Let me know what you think?
- Have you ever tried this?

Let them know what's next – Once you have finished your post, you can let your audience know what your next post is about. Simple statements such as “Don't forget to look out for my next post about [blank]”.

Calls to action – A call to action at the end of your post can mean a lot of things, but for this example I'm talking about sales of affiliate products. Imagine you complete a product review via an affiliate link. A simple statement like “don't forget to check the [product] it really is one not to be missed!” or “don't forget your huge subscriber discount”.

Ask the readers to Share your content - If you want more tweets and shares, then the only way is to ask for them. Don't be afraid to ask your readers to do something for you. Remember you have just given them a ton of information. Your readers are sure to help you out.

By leaving a clear set of instructions for the audience you can lead them to do almost anything for you. Remember, you have just provided them with a lot of free knowledge, people are glad to share your content with others.

Don't forget these post ideas can be used for almost any niche. Creating great content is essential if your blog is going to rank with the best of the best.

However your blog can't survive on pure content alone. You need traffic. And that is exactly what I want to talk about in the next chapter.

Traffic and Building Your Audience

Let me place a real world example in your mind here, please bear with me. Imagine you have a brand new bricks and mortar business in a dark insignificant part of your local shopping mall (this is your new blog). Why? It's simple, no one knows where your business is, no one knows you exist, and no one knows who you are at all!

You may have the best stock/products (content) on the planet, but without exposure you are still in the dark. Your products mean nothing to anyone because there are no maps, banners, flyers or information to find out where you are.

“How you can you get people to your business?”

A steady stream of visitors to your blog is what you are looking for (This is Your Traffic).

Without people visiting your blog you will not make any sales or at the very least a lead or some kind of word of mouth e.g. “Did you check out that new store in the mall yet? It's cool check it out!”

No visitors pose a very big problem. If you have no visitors to your blog you have

NO SALES

NO LEADS

NO EMAIL SIGNUPS

NO LIST BUILDING

And most of all NO PROFIT!

How can you rectify the problem? How can you grab the exposure you need? But most of all, how can you get the visitors (your traffic)?

The answers to all these questions are the same for your online business as they are for a physical bricks and mortar business. You need to generate exposure by putting in place certain techniques to bring in the traffic you need to generate profits. By doing this your traffic streams will grow and so will your PROFIT, LIST BUILDING, LEADS, AFFILIATE SALES and EMAIL SIGNUPS.

I'm sure you can see now the importance of traffic and why we all need it. One of the key elements to making money from your blog is to generate traffic. One way or another we all need visitors to our blog to create income from our products, PPC ads, advertising and affiliate links and so on. Without traffic your site may as well be dead. Harsh I know but this is the truth. There are no two ways about it. No traffic means no visitors and ultimately no income.

You see without traffic we would not be able to gather subscribers and regular visitors to our blog. Having none of these streams spells disaster, without them you are going to find creating an income very hard indeed.

One single source of traffic will not usually create all the traffic you will ever need to your website. The secret is a combination of traffic streams to create those explosive traffic stats you always wanted.

Below you will find some great traffic sources which you can use.

You've built it...But they won't come!

Didn't the old expression go, "If you build it...they will come?" Yes, so imagine how disappointed you will be when you have your new blog setup, new graphics, opt-in's content etc etc and nothing happens.

However, it's important to understand that building a blog is merely 'step one'. Creating great content is 'step two', and then there all of the steps afterwards, and this is what many blog owners forget. Creating a blog is just the first part of an aggressive campaign of content development, community relationships and link building..

How your blog is found by search engines

A refresher course on how websites are discovered may prove helpful as you start your traffic campaign. No website is instantly searchable by Google. Rather, a site's content is written and then you as the owner will 'inform' the major search engines that there is new content to 'crawl' and then 'index'. Based on each search engine's unique algorithm, your site will then be ranked and your Search Engine Results Pages (SERPs) returned based upon keyword requests from users.

The question is: "How do you get the attention of search engines?"

When the Internet was young, the best way to do it was to simply submit your URL to a search engine's 'Suggest' page. However, times have changed and there are simply too many sites and too many pages to take into consideration. Now, companies prefer that you notify search crawlers by way of 'pinging' search engines when new content is available. There is an automatic way to do this (which we will discuss a little later), as well as a manual submission method involving visiting the site you want to be indexed by, and submitting your sitemap document.

Keep in mind that just because a search engine has been 'pinged' does not mean you're going to get the royal treatment. While some popular sites and search-friendly sites have the privilege of practically 'live' search results, less popular, new and rarely updated sites will only be crawled and indexed on a periodic basis.

If your optimization methods are poor, you may actually be listed, but appear far down in the rankings that you might as well not be listed at all. This usually happens when you disregard advice about proper "optimization" techniques. For example:

- Each page should have a proper title
- Each page should contain meta tags and descriptions

- The domain should be keyword friendly
- The website should be updated on a regular basis

You also have to remember that some search engines customize their own SERPs. While Yahoo is powered by Bing, results can vary. Yahoo definitely plays favorites and favors websites that:

(A) Pay the Yahoo business listing fee

(B) Link to multiple subdirectories within the Yahoo URL universe.

Many search engines are powered by Google, but actually individualize search results based on various algorithm 'tweaks', and their own human editors' judgments.

There are multiple factors a search engine application will consider when listing your site for various domains and they can include everything from content-centric reasons, to keyword usage, to local interests or even personal affronts—that's right, you can inadvertently annoy the search engines and they will penalize you! Hot topics at the moment are mobile optimized sites. Google is allegedly overlooking any sites that don't have a mobile optimized blog... Check your new theme supports this or pay the price.

Free vs Paid Traffic

There are so many variables when it comes to paid vs free, I could write a whole report about it. The basics come down to how you want to generate traffic and how you spend either your time or your bank balance. There are pro's and cons to both, but both can be equally as good as the other.

Personally, I don't use a lot of paid traffic; I rely on link building, auto responders, products launches and social media shares. It works.

However if you want laser targeted traffic on tap instantly, it's time to get your wallet out and start spending.

However, if you can do this right and generate qualified leads and sell them for less than you paid for them, then congratulations, you have mastered paid traffic. Most people end up spending a fortune and walk away feeling unsuccessful and hurt. I've been there.

But hey let's take a look at a few techniques below.

Step 1: Develop a complete step-by-step strategy.

Step 2: Create a list of realistic goals, specific and based on your online progress. (i.e. total number of links, PR rank, #1 for targeted keywords, total traffic, sales conversions, leads, total sales, profit in sales, etc.)

Step 3: Create a means of tracking investment for time spent, any expenses you use, and compare profit/loss to determine if you are generating cash flow.

Step 4: Install analytics software on your site with Google analytics.

Step 5: When you are ready to begin the campaign, make changes to your site (based on our upcoming recommendations) and notice positive trends that you can capitalize on.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

SEO is a skill, there is no doubting that. You can't just rock up and become an SEO expert it's not as easy as it once was in the early days. Now there is competition to deal with...

WordPress or should I say content is by default highly key word rich. We write to provide information and Google loves this. Google relies on the content provided by websites by crawling them for information gathering keywords along the way to make the search engines more efficient.

On a side note, you may have been a victim of Google's infinite wisdom when they change their search engine algorithm and decimated a tonne of websites in the Panda updates. This is just a fraction of the power Google has over ALL websites across the web.

A fitting analogy for this would be "Don't have all your eggs in one basket". Multiple traffic streams are always the best course of action.

Although with that said, if you have good SEO and good quality links back to your blogs from repeatable sources, then you should be just fine.

So when it comes to SEO, you should keep an ear to the ground so to speak with regards to Google and their changes.

Recently, Google have been rumoured to penalize sites for non mobile responsive websites. If you are not down with your SEO you could miss out. It's not just about links and key words, there are more factors to consider such as engagement from human interaction, social media, quantifiable content and more..

Fortunately for bloggers we can create searchable content by default and good key words by default. Plus with the invention of some very cool SEO plugins by Yoast we are in with a shot.

But remember, just because you have a plugin, doesn't mean that you are going to hit page 1 of Google with every key word optimized post. For a good search engine optimization routine, go for:

- Good key words related to your content
- Good quality links from other sources
- Page title and headers using the H1 and H2 tags respectively
- Internal linking with your own websites
- Good social media interaction and links in from sites such as Youtube and Facebook
- Also human interaction in the form of visitors and comments and shares.

I'm not an SEO expert and will never claim to be one. It's a skill I wish I had.

More Content

A great way for bloggers to get noticed by search engines and to reach your audience is to create excellent content. Now we're not going to spend dozens of pages taking baby steps. You probably already know the difference between good content and low quality, keyword-inflated 'fluff'.

Good content is:

- Professional (Grammatically correct and with proper spelling);
- Readable (In the same sense as news articles or magazine articles);
- Informative (Teaches the audience something about the subject);
- Entertaining or Conversational (Not merely dry information); and
- Original (Is not merely a copy of another article).

You know good content when you read it because the language is riveting, it keeps you interested. This is the type of writing that is rewarded, and that's regardless of how many 'Panda' or 'Penguin' algorithm updates are invented.

More and more, we see evidence that low quality sites, particularly content mills and some article directories (notorious for low quality 'expert articles') are being penalized by rapidly improving search engines. It's important to remember that search engine companies are striving to invent artificial intelligence with their algorithm changes, so that robots can start picking up on poor quality writing, as well as other unethical practices.

Poor quality content is very quickly losing its value online. Customers are not finding it helpful and in turn, search engines are burying the pages (and in some cases the entire site) in SERPs.

What is poor quality content?

Who is to say what is low quality content and what is 'magazine' or 'expert quality' writing? Poor quality writing can be identified by the following trademarks:

- Many sentences that merely take up space
- Various grammar or spelling errors
- Hyperbole and 'sales' type writing rather than thorough coverage
- Common knowledge rather than expert insider tips
- Duplicate content

Here we see what is at the root of the problem; lazy writers and company heads that really don't care enough about human traffic. They prefer to play games with "robots" (the web crawlers looking for keywords) rather than to create interesting and lively content. So ask yourself, "Is the content I am paying for or writing about truly

informative? Is it written for human beings, just as a magazine or a newspaper article?”

We can safely say that if you’re planning to launch an SEO campaign built on high keyword density and “filler” articles, you are wasting big money! Your blog readership is important...don’t let them down!

More on Key Words

One thing I want to point out here is don't let keyword research effect the quality of your writing as bloggers we already have amazing key word rich content by default.

Always be aware of the keywords you wish to target when writing but never ever let this effect the quality for the reader. The key point here is to write for humans and not search engines.

Not only should you be striving for quality content but you should also be focusing on popular and niche keyword phrases. After all, regardless of what great content you come up with, if you don't strategize with your keywords you are not going to reach that targeted audience. Targeting your traffic is key, otherwise you might as well be buying mindless, redirect traffic. (You know the type of user that closes your window before he or she even reads the first line).

Devote some time to keyword research using a Google keyword research tool or any number of other research applications. It is best to factor in all avenues including:

- Estimating what phrases your customers search for
- Viewing the chosen keywords of your competitors
- Looking up low competition keywords
- Looking up high request keywords
- Taking online or offline surveys of some of the market segment
- Researching keywords that tie seamlessly into a sales presentation
- Keywords for local area traffic
- Niche keywords or 'long tail keywords' (long phrases or entire sentences)

Once you determine the most important keywords to your campaign, you can begin building content. It is far better to use this approach rather than prepaying for content and then trying to work in strange keyword phrases in at the last minute. Search engines place high priority on articles and features that read 'naturally'.

This is an important factor to remember when planning keyword density. In the past, a high density of 5% or more was acceptable. This manipulated outdated algorithms and helped build site popularity in a short period of time. However, the newest algorithm updates penalize sites for the practice of 'over-optimizing'. Besides the implication of low quality writing (or 'recycled writing'), that phrase likely refers to the overuse of keywords.

Ideally, high quality writing does not require 'keyword density'. Quality writing is governed by the theory of natural repetition, using recurring words and statements only for emphasis. This was a flaw of the early Internet world, which could only index webpages based on their page titles and high density of recurring keyword phrases.

The newest algorithm updates seek to correct this issue and actually penalize websites that needlessly increase keyword repetition. Your safest bet is to research your keywords carefully and aim for below 1% density, whatever the article dictates based on intelligent human reading.

So let's say you've got the writing and the keyword research part nailed. What comes next? Beware that improper optimization techniques are not bringing down your otherwise ready website...Let's look at some forms of distribution.

The Press Release

Press releases are articles that are written solely for news purposes, and are intended to get attention from editors, website owners, agents, and all sorts of other news sources. Whereas writing a press release that gets picked up by a national magazine is somewhat difficult, writing a press release that passes online syndication's standards is fairly easy.

Press releases have to be:

- In professional article format, not conversational text or sales copy
- Newsworthy, as in a mainstream news story
- State an item and then provide increasing detail with a link and contact information

Press release distributors will not pick up poorly written press releases, and this is an especially rotten feeling to experience, especially if you've spent big money on press release distribution. (Some sources like PRWeb charge upwards \$200 for each submission). The good news is that a press release can easily make the 'news' tab and receive maximum exposure in a small period of time, if it is deemed truly newsworthy.

Topics for news angles could include subjects like inventive new products, customer incentives, celebrity endorsements, big name client signings, news trends, charity partnerships, and the like. Stuff that would actually make the news and not just a conversation between search bot and WordPress.

In fact, sources like Yahoo and Google only pick up popular stories that are published and syndicated. Most of the top press release distribution sites don't archive old press releases, and so are limited to 30 days of maximum exposure. Some press release sites do archive old stories permanently and these are usually free sites, not major publicity companies. Still, free press release submission can certainly help you build quality links, and certainly cannot hurt your standing as long as you keep the content high caliber.

Social Networking Mastery

Are you living under a rock, or did you not notice the online social media giants controlling everything! If you aren't integrating social media into your blog and business, then you should seriously think about the potential leads and subscribers you are missing out on.

Just a quick check of my blog today and [my post](#) has been shared over 133 times in the last two days.

Can you see the power of sharing in social circles and the power it has to go viral?

Just what happens when you go viral?

Your business grows at an exponential rate. Social media is big business and in many opinions bigger than the search engines themselves. The power of the people really has a foothold and social media is here to stay.

Facebook Features

Since the explosion of social media into blogging, social media sharing is now one of the most popular methods of blog traffic. If you don't have social sharing buttons on your blog, you are leaving a lot of traffic and engagement on the table. I assure you, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Google + etc etc will all play a huge part in the future of your blog, no matter what niche you are in.

Blogging is very effective when you combine it with social media, your blog becomes that much more powerful through the power of the public share. It breaks down like this:

You create content – your content is shared – your content is read – your content is shared. The viral effect is now in place.

Food for thought – “Create awesome content that people want to share!”

Through the use of social media, your blog's popularity will grow and the amount of traffic to your blog will grow exponentially. The number of doors that can open for you by using social media is mind-boggling.

Facebook and WordPress

Facebook has worked hard to become main gathering place for socializing. Since its inception in 2006 the number of users has grown by the millions, not so long ago they celebrated 1 billion users online at one single moment! It truly has become the “hottest” social site on the planet and you can take a slice of that traffic paid or free.

With that in mind it makes a lot of sense that you would want to incorporate it with your blog and enjoy the traffic it can drive. To add your WordPress blog content to Facebook you can use posting services such as Hootsuite to automate your content to Facebook, allowing your posts to schedule at optimized times, such as lunch times, mornings and evenings.

You can setup a feed to deliver content to Facebook after you post each article on your blog, but in my experience it's better to add your own written posts to engage the readers on a more personal level. Anything manufactured or automated tends to get ignored. Remember that sometimes a little work goes a long way.

If you have a Facebook fan page, you can also integrate it to your WordPress blog. You can have the Facebook Fan Box plugin display on your blog and it will show any recent updates you've done on your Facebook page, as well as all new fans that join. This is an excellent way to encourage visitors to your blog to become your Facebook fans. You can see mine here:

<http://marketingfromscratch.com/12-steps-to-killer-sales-pages-for-the-novice-copywriter/>

You can also add Facebook functionally to your WordPress blog. This way your visitors can comment on your blog by signing into your Facebook account. The comments then show up on their Facebook newsfeed as well as on your blog. A nice little traffic generator with a simple setup.

This is an excellent marketing tool that will help you grow your blog's community. You can display items you've recently posted to Facebook, and you can use the Facebook Live Stream plugin, which is an excellent marketing tool if you have live events occurring.

Facebook also have their own plugin which now connects directly from your WordPress blog to your Facebook account. The plugin allows various features such as likes and the ability to replace your comment thread with the Facebook comment thread. As well as these cool tools you can also link to your fan pages to advertise your new posts and subscriber information about up and coming events, sales and product launches.

The Facebook plugin is a very powerful tool and worth looking into for Facebook interaction. A simple search in the plugin section for “**Facebook plugin**” will find the plugin without issue. Using Facebook marketing is an excellent way to significantly boost your business brand and increase your targeted traffic. You can use these tools to build a strong community following around your WordPress blog and who will spread the word and help you grow.

Facebook Pages – A great way to interact with your Facebook audience is through your Fan Pages. I'm sure you have seen fan pages; I have one right here: <https://www.facebook.com/marketingfromscratch> this page allows me to communicate directly with my list of subscribers about content related issues driven from my blog.

Not only is a fan page a good place to build relationships, it's a great place to share your content and have your content shared by others. If you can build up a big enough following, the ability to drive large amount of traffic from Facebook to your blog can be quite an easy task.

Think of Social media traffic and your blog as a two way street. You send traffic to your Facebook page via your blog and Facebook sends traffic back to your blog. The viral aspects can be fantastic using one to feed the other and vice versa.

Facebook also has the option to boost a post that you have posted on your fan page to increase the reach. Let's say you have 1000 fans. The boost option will allow you to reach many many many more than that. This service is paid of course, but it's traffic on tap and if you get it right, it can be very helpful for building business and converting visitors to subscribers.

Facebook Groups – groups differ a little to pages and as the name states it's a group where group discussions happen. People join the group to be part of the interaction and community which surrounds that particular group. Check out the [Bloggers Roadmap Group](#) where people share posts and ideas.

If you have a business or something you want to share it is always a good idea to create a group or page. This way the people associated with your business or product can interact. It saves time with support and also creates community around your niche allowing for relationship building, progress sharing and support.

So next time you think about creating a product or service, don't forget the Facebook group. Paid or free it's always worth creating a group for information sharing and advertising.

Twitter's Tips

Twitter is the abbreviated version of Facebook, and while its options are not as complex, many people find its simplicity very useful. One great thing about Twitter is that it allows you to develop more professional and casual relationships, not necessarily 'friends' but followers. In fact, Twitter is far more often used as a means of advertising new pages of content, recruiting employees and clients, answering customer service concerns and other business concerns.

The Real Time Search - This option allows you to search topics on what people are talking about and is a great to discern trendy new subjects and other market research. In fact, one of the latest rumors is that Google may buy Twitter, and incorporate an even more effective means of searching the entire web and matching keyword content. Twitter and other social networks are arguably more popular than email services, since users can check their messages from any location (including mobile devices), and thus are easier to contact.

Interact with the Latest News - You have a choice of interacting with the latest news stories or commenting on the website's most popular keyword searches. You can click the 'Discover' or the 'Connect' tabs to explore your options. You can find more friends or even surf the new categories option for a Yahoo-like approach to various channels in the Twitter zone.

Followers - The key to earning traffic through Twitter is to create a huge list of followers. The best way to do this is to focus on writing excellent niche content. Give serious thought to your tweets and try to make all of your microblog posts informative and/or entertaining.

Some individuals (not celebrities!) have actually earned millions of followers just because they kept a running journal of thoughts and stay in touch with their circle. One way to earn bigger traffic is to take a look at other users who are operating in your niche. Find them and look at their followers. Follow them and correspond with them about the subjects they find interesting. In this respect, you can use Twitter like your own blog, to build your own community of users.

Just remember to keep tweets regular (there are actually programs that help you schedule tweets, remember Hootsuite) and, once again, to avoid repetitive company promotion and actually hold a conversation with your followers. You can gain more traffic by reposting good tweets, by linking to excellent resources, and replying to all tweets sent to you, thereby building online relationships. (And these sources may eventually become your customers).

Integrating Twitter with WordPress

A tweet here and a tweet there – Twitter is truly one of those tools that you should take advantage of on your WordPress blog. The power of retweeting is not fully understood by most bloggers.

Twitter and WordPress go Together like Strawberries and Cream – you just don't want one without the other. There are tons of Twitter tools available that you can

combine with WordPress, to turn your blog into the best marketing platform around. You can attract new followers and readers to your blog in no time at all. Let's look at some of those tools:

Tweet This Plugin – This is a WordPress Twitter plugin that places a “retweet” button on your blog post so visitors can quickly and easily tweet your post through their own Twitter account.

Twitter Tools – This is another WordPress Twitter plugins that offers you a some cool but useful functions, that will automatically tweet your blog post to your own Twitter account.

TwitterLink Comments – This plugin is from the producers of CommentLuv. It adds a link to your Twitter profile every time a comment is posted to your blog post.

WordPress Greetbox – This is not a Twitter tool but it is an excellent plugin. Greetbox detects where your visitors are coming from and then provides a personal greeting message.

Twitter Widget – TwitterCounter is the creator of the Twitter Widget WordPress plugin. It works great on a blog as it tracks Twitter users who come to your blog often.

Tweetmeme Retweet Button - I had a look at several different Twitter tools you can use with your WordPress blog, but there's one other that' deserve special mention. This great little plugin installs a button on your blog posts so that your visitors can easily retweet your posts to all of their Twitter followers. You can add the button by adding a short code API function. Twitter has become an integral part of blogging, don't discount twitter and the power of the retweet!

LinkedIn's Linking

LinkedIn isn't as popular as Facebook or Twitter but it is quickly gaining a reputation as a serious business site. And when you first log in to LinkedIn, you may be alarmed at its setup, which is far more complicated than your typical Twitter or Facebook page. LinkedIn, although it has been following some of Facebook's new layout designs, is actually more interested in creating connections with business associates than socializing with friends.

The question is, how can you boost traffic to the site since you won't be relying on Facebook's viral sharing aspects, fan pages and groups? Note some of LinkedIn's best features.

Questions and Answers - While Yahoo Answers may be a top rated site for questions and answers, the LinkedIn Q&A section actually is taken far more seriously, and thus has better quality answers to pertinent questions. These are questions asked by professionals and answered by professionals, all parties eager to represent their brand with class and intelligence.

By showcasing your knowledge, in this rare instance, a case where people actually DO want to talk about business concepts, you can draw people to your profile which contains all of your social media links and website URL. Another idea to consider, carefully choose the questions you answer, knowing that "big name" company spokespersons will be among the first to reply.

Rest assured, they all read the comments, and will notice your name (and company representation) if you impress them. LinkedIn is special in that it's a great place to meet new customers and new clients at the same time. Just be sure to avoid giving the same answers to all new questions.

Profile Stats - You can actually see trends and statistics on who viewed your profile, a great way of finding potential new business links or customers.

Find Jobs - You can search for jobs directly using the jobs tab and can post jobs, apply for jobs or post a resume online, which could lead searches to you.

Find Companies - You can search for individuals as well as company-grouped profiles, or follow companies you find relevant to your industry.

See News - Check out the latest news from the 'news' section and see how various companies relate to it. Follow influential people and their actions. You may even link with them, which will work wonders for your traffic if a big name ever blurbs you.

Do you know

- There are more than 107 million users of LinkedIn in U.S
- More than 1 million professionals are now publishing on LinkedIn
- 94% of business-to-business marketers in North America use LinkedIn to distribute content
- Over 80% of leads generated through social media for B2B marketers comes from LinkedIn
- 60% of LinkedIn users have clicked on an ad on the site

If you want to get professional, look professional and promote your blog in a professional way. LinkedIn is worth considering as an option to move forward with.

Google+ Greatness

Google Plus, to some, seems like a bit of overkill, or at least it did when it first debuted. It's not as sociable as Facebook or as simple to use as Twitter. However, some of the newest features of Google + are making the site extremely competitive, perhaps even more so than before since Google is buying up so many companies and dominating the entire Internet when it comes to searches.

Like Yahoo, Google gives credence to its own sub-company links. Therefore, being friends with Google, by integrating its technology, is a win-win situation for everyone. Google Plus also boasts the following traffic generating features:

- Video chat (ideal for conferencing or hosting video Q and As).
- Easy integration with file storage, thanks to Google Drive.
- Sparks is a trending content option that lets you find inspiration or lets you monitor how people search for you or link to you searches.
- The Circles option lets you group your followers so that you can better target pitches and status updates. This may go a long way in helping you to effectively target certain groups for certain messages, and thus not upset the entire association of your followers with niche type postings.

The +1 feature is the Google equivalent of a like button, but it promises more search friendly options, as 'popular sites' will inevitably be the ones with hundreds or thousands of +1 links.

However, and this is my however, G+ is and always will live in the shadow of Facebook. Maybe G+ will get there in the future, but for now Facebook and Twitter it isn't.

Pinterest Power

A relatively new phenomenon in social networking is Pinterest, a website that exclusively uses pictures, art, photography and motivational imagery, in the creation of its social network. Pinterest is all about branding and it has to be as subtle as possible, since no blatant advertising is going to work. Instead, users concentrate on creating communities, inspiring responses and photo shares (or re-pins in its own terminology) and in finding mutual interests in relationships.

Most experts state that the secret to gaining traffic with Pinterest is to be yourself, to be real and true to you and your company's values, and to let the pictures tell the stories. Pinterest doesn't have much in the way of advanced interaction features, but it does have an easy setup, and a simple process that allows users to 'pin' images of the same size.

All of these images can include a link back, available upon a double click. Statistics show that Pinterest is one of the fastest-growing social networking sites, and all the more so when it comes to generating external traffic. Make sure that all of the photos and images you post match your business, which is a key point in integrating all of your different pages.

Like any site, be sure to update the content regularly and launch daily pin themes. Don't limit yourself to products, use Facebook style multitasking and post images of tidbits, tips, and even products of other users. Last but not least, use the key phrases on the board to reach out for those targeted viewers.

Remember, social media is what you make it and what platforms you interact best in. I find using 2 maybe 3 at the most is enough to concentrate on depending on the time frames you have to work with. If you start to find you are spending too much to socialising rather than generating links leads and content, it time to cut it and get back to promoting your content.

To sum it all up

Social media is a powerful tool that can bring tons of targeted traffic to your blog site and increase your following. And remember the search engines love the social media sites so overall it's a win-win. Make sure you give social media the attention it deserves.

Your blog has the potential to directly or indirectly generate revenue for you. You've put a great deal of time into writing your blog posts, so you want to make sure that visitors actually make it to your blog to read it. You also want that traffic to be targeted so that you can get maximum benefit from your visitors.

If you are new to blogging and social media, then start with Facebook, create a fan page and drive some traffic to your blogs with Facebook boost posts and ads. Practice makes perfect here and I assure you results will come back to your posts and offers.

Killer Traffic Tips and Resources

Social media is not the only way to generate traffic to your blog, there are alternative methods out there which are very good for creating links and traffic on a regular basis.

To create floods of traffic, try to adopt a 'be everywhere' attitude. If your blog links are everywhere, then how can people ignore you?

Blog hopping

Blog hopping is a free source of traffic and a good one. The principal of the whole thing is to hop from blog to blog posting comments and gaining respect of the blogging community, providing information and additions to other blog posts via comments.

You will gain traffic by placing your own blog link in the website link box in the comment system, which will show on your comments. Like minded bloggers will check your site out and repeat the process of commenting on your website. Remember to add value to your posts when posting on other blogs, this will go a long way when others read your posts. If you simply post „good post' in the comment box this is not going to make the reader want to look at your blog at all.

So remember the golden rule Add Value!

Try to visit between 5 - 10 blogs per day and post a comment to each one. Get signed up for blogs and be the first to comment on the latest posts, this will give you a good traffic source back to your blog via the website link in the comment box.

What you need on your blog

Once you start posting on other blogs you need to provide equal value on your own blog. If your blog is empty and without value, your reader is not going to stay and subscribe, comment or read. Just as I mentioned in the content section previously, the need to provide good content is essential. Another vital part of your blog should be a free download of some type.

I use an Aweber subscription and delivery service which I will talk about later, however it is essential for you to have this in place on your website. A free subscription or download will allow you to collect email subscribers adding more value by supplying them with a free informative reports and books and also alerting them to when you have any offers or blog updates.

Using techniques like this will bring in more traffic to your site and also retain subscribers hungry for your information. Once trust is gained you will also be able to turn your subscribers into buyers of your recommended products and services.

The thrill of going viral

Ultimately, you will never earn 'big' traffic unless one of two things happens:

1. You get a big following after years of building a loyal subscriber base
2. You go viral and get a little instant fame fast. Remember what Andy Warhol said about everyone getting their 15 minutes of fame? Well, when you create 'viral' content online you can actually get multiple sessions of 15 minutes. You can get literally thousands of unique visitors within a few days, or perhaps even within a few hours if you hit it big.

Just how does one create 'viral' content, the type of content that creates a media sensation and causes the “snowball” effect? The snowball effect is essentially what happens when visitors share content, and alert more people to do so, and then eventually everyone wants to see it because the world starts discussing it. And it has happened countless times before, whether we're talking about an adorable baby video, a great article, a swell interview or even an urban legend that spreads all over the world!

Of course, it's not so easy to simply create something “viral” and wait for the snowball effect to happen. Very many pages have been created, sometimes according to the formula of viral content and with every intention of creating a storm of controversy...but then they were ignored.

It's hard to predict what the Internet (and what a million of friends of friends) will find interesting and what they will deem worthy of sharing. Bear in mind that no one feels compelled to share anything, just because the content is there. In order for someone to want to share interesting new content with other people, that person has to emotionally respond to it.

To some extent, it's reasonable to say that people want to share “unique content.” Something that is new and hasn't been seen a hundred times before does sometimes get a big reaction.

This is precisely why many people choose to create video content in hopes of branding their image.

Video and Audio Content

As recently as 10 years ago, small to midrange businesses usually never thought in terms of visual presentation or virtual face-to-face sales. This is precisely why many businesses are now creating video content online—because of the idea that no one else is doing it. Well, that was the attitude when the big viral boom first began.

Nowadays, video is an integral part of blogging and sharing information. It's actually an easier method of sharing information. Blog posts can take some time to write but a video can be shot and uploaded within 15 minutes!

Video also has a viral effect if uploaded via YouTube. YouTube itself is a search engine. It's actually the second largest search engine in the world next to Google.

Before the birth of YouTube there wasn't a great deal of traffic generation methods from internet video apart from videos on websites which people were looking at via word of mouth or email promotions. With the invention of YouTube all of this can now be centralised and we have the ability to harness it and spread the word very easily by integrating it to our blogs with a simple copy paste of code.

How do we harness the power?

YouTube grab about 25% of the online world's attention per day. That means 25% of the people surfing the internet globally visit YouTube on a daily basis.

It is the second most used search engine on the planet as well. Now that's a lot of traffic to get mixed up with! With the invention of newer technologies it's easier than ever to create an online video. You can even create video content on the move with your smart phone and upload to YouTube at the touch of a button. The key to video traffic is to take some time and build up your YouTube channel.

Use your video camera, flip cam, your smart phone and your screen capture software and create a video series for your blog or website and add them all to your YouTube channel and embed them on your blog. My favourite screen capture software is Screen Flow for Mac and Camtasia for Windows for creating video tutorial screen casts (recording the screen). Both Screen Flow and Camtasia have 30 day trials so check them out before you buy.

Both software sites also supply you with a large amount of tutorial help and info to get the best out of your videos.

“You need to provide value to give the viewer a reason to check out your website so give it your best shot”

Who are you?

Creating a video allows your website visitors to know exactly who you are. You are no longer a faceless email address with a random Avatar or online picture on your website you are now a real person who people can relate to. Your visitors and subscribers alike can now see the real you.

Showing who you are gives you the opportunity to build trust and a relationship between yourself and your new visitors. By using video and showing people who you are, it is easier for your viewers to trust you more and therefore listen to what you have to say.

The more trust and influence you have, the more traffic you will generate to your blog. This will ultimately lead to more subscribers and sales of products and services.

Choosing your video title

Your video title is a very important part of your video, in most respects just as important as the video itself. Always remember to create the best description and tags when uploading your videos as these are very important for people searching for your particular video.

A great tip for generating video traffic is to copy the same tags as the most popular videos and piggyback your own video on the same page. Your own video should now show on page one along with the most popular videos.

Your description should also contain specific keywords relating to your video. Your tags should again contain all your keywords that you think people may be searching for when looking for a video like yours (or use the piggyback method above).

The key point is making your description look good and your key words specific to your video. Do a little research to find similar videos and competitors. In addition to the description section, it is also beneficial to add your URL to the start and end of the description and to the start of your video. Remember that you want to grab visitor's attention, so people need to see your blog URL. Use all the tools YouTube have to offer to grab maximum exposure.

Adding your videos to your blogs and Facebook allows you to get more exposure, thus creating more traffic from more than one location. The next time you complete a video think about uploading it to YouTube then adding it to your blog and your Facebook page as well for more exposure. The more exposure you get the more traffic you will see.

Audio presentations are also very big right now, especially if you plan on reaching targeted customers on Smartphones, PDAs, book players, multimedia players and the like. Some bloggers have found great success in hosting a radio show or podcast, and speaking on issues that are directly related to their business. Not only can an audio show (or audio clips) help to improve listening traffic on your site but you can also direct the show's listeners back to your website to push products and signups.

The most important things to remember when preparing video or audio content is:

- Keep it professional (rehearse dialog and prepare the scene with a director's eye, paying attention to detail)
- Use only quality cameras and microphone to shoot video

- Keep all videos and audio content relevant to your business
- Do not hard advertise; simply reflect your own professional values in the content you distribute
- Make the content informative or entertaining, not merely video covering familiar or “done to death” subjects
- Remember also to tag your content with text, or else your content may not be searchable at all. However, it may surprise you to know that Google is already promoting new audio search technology that may vastly improve in the near future.

Where to Host Your Video Content

This is an easy step, right? Not necessarily. Many people actually do want to host heavy video and audio content on their main site...they will definitely benefit from all the traffic if the content goes viral. However, this will take up huge amounts of web space and “bandwidth” (trust me...you don’t really have “unlimited bandwidth”) and you may end up having to opt for a dedicated server sooner than later.

* Side note Dedicated servers are a good thing, but they do cost more money. If you are starting out for the first time in business, then it’s a good idea to start small and upgrade as you grow.

No wonder many business owners prefer to work through a free storage site, or perhaps a social networking site that allows the storing of very large files. Some of the most obvious sites for storage include YouTube (you can even create your own channel and links and store all of your videos in one location), Facebook (you can store videos on your own page) and a handful of other sites like DailyMotion, MetaCafe and so on. (For some reason though, Mega Upload doesn’t seem to work anymore...)

Besides these two options, you have a third one: host your large content on a storage site and then simply link to it with your social networking page or your official website. The good news is that a few cloud storage services (the biggest thing in online business today) are free. Cloud servers are a great idea, as they allow you to remotely back up your content so that data damage is never an issue anymore.

Some servers even have auto update features (meaning you auto save new files on the cloud server just as soon as you save it to your hard drive), and the ability for a user to access his content from anywhere and using any device. Some even allow video playback!

Free cloud servers include:

- DropBox (2 gigs free)
- SugarSync (5 gigs free)
- ZumoDrive (2 gigs free)

- Team Drive (2 gigs free)
- Ubuntu (2 gigs free)
- iDrive (5 gigs free)
- OpenDrive (5 gigs free)
- Syncplicity (2 gigs free)
- SpiderOak (2 gigs free)
- SkyDrive (2 gigs free)
- Google Drive (5 gigs free)

So if you do decide not to host your videos on YouTube and have more control, you can use the list above to get some free storage. However, I save none YouTube video for members' area private content only. Working this way allows you to take more control and keep private video to paying customers only.

My video software of choice is [Easy Video Suite](#). It's super slick and super easy to use. Check it out and increase your professionalism instantly.

Creating Unique Content

If you would rather write, then just write - but focus on creating outstanding creative text pages that can go viral and earn you lots of traffic.

Oh, your work is cut out for you, all right. Basic texts and even fairly good articles don't go viral...they simply get occasional traffic. If you want to get loads of free traffic then you have to focus on making your content thoroughly unique and dynamic in concept. You want your audience to think that they cannot and will not see anything like this ever again and this will move them to share it with their friends.

That emotional reaction is pivotal. Now I'm not saying you have to write something that's going to get everybody misty eyed. (Might not work very well if your goal is selling beer) But the emotional reaction you are looking for can result from anything that the audience sees as useful, including content that:

- Is useful in achieving their own ambitions
- Is very entertaining; makes them laugh, or produces another positive emotion
- Conveys important news or trends developing
- Makes them think about nostalgia
- Makes them think they are learning something top secret
- Helps them to be sociable and find other people with their niche interest
- Identifies a problem and solution that has not been explained anywhere else
- Introduces new ideas
- Shows something amazing, outrageous or hard to believe

Of course, you have to be sure that the unique content you're developing is both relevant to your industry, and that it identifies a "need" that already exists. So be careful about introducing new ideas that are not proven to have a need or a market yet. These can oftentimes amount to time-waster pages.

Great ideas...but no audience for them.

Email Marketing and Joint Venture Campaigns

Direct response email marketing plays a large part in my business. I bring together the perfect combination of blogging, affiliate marketing and product creation. Providing content on a regular basis and building my email list through the channels discussed above and below.

The process is simple:

- Build a following
- Create Good content
- Promote worthy offers via email

Does it sound that simple? That's because it is...

People make email marketing and affiliate marketing hard, but when you boil it down to the bones it really is a case of building subscribers and emailing information and offers of value.

There are a few rules that you need to stick to, to prevent your new subscribers from bailing on you due to constant promotions. This is called burning your list, but opinions new vary in the circles I reside...

How many times should you email your list?

Every day is the answer you are looking for. Give your subscribers a mixture of value in the form of business info and promotional products to build an affiliate income.

Sure people won't like being sold to, but hey you are an online marketer, how else are some going to sell things? It's your job to sell and give value.

Where is the traffic building element here?

Traffic and subscribers come from your own products via Joint Venture campaigns. The ultimate goal from blogging is to have your own working blog generating traffic, but what do you do with that traffic? Creating your own products and services is the ultimate goal.

Having your own products is the doorway to 6 figure incomes. By giving your blog visitors and subscribers content, you also expose them to your products and product funnels and that's where the money is.

Here is an example:

From November last year to March this year I have had two product launches. One of them generated a total just over \$36,000 the other over \$70,000, can you tell me why there is such a big jump?

- Different products? NO

- Market demand? No
- More affiliates promoting the offer? No, but always important
- Product cost? No they were both similar front end cost
- Sales funnel? Yes, Yes, Yes...

This is why savvy internet marketers are making multiple six figure incomes from product launches and the same on the back of product launches.

It's not just about the front of the product it's about the whole sales funnel and flow. Allow me to explain a little more for you here with some numbers close to the numbers which I have experienced in the past to show you where the BIG money is.

1. Front end sale \$19.99
2. Upsell 1 – Primary upsell offering additional products and services \$47.00
3. Upsell 2 – Greater upsell offering additional products and services \$97.00
4. Downsell – The offer given if the lead does not buy 'Upsell 1' usually a cut down version \$17 – 27
5. Downsell – The offer given if the lead does not buy 'Upsell 2' \$17 – \$47

So looking at option 1 – 5 above you find that it's not just the front end product that creates the money. In actual fact it's the combination of all sales options that create the big numbers.

In actually fact, based on 1000 sales and 50% of buyers taking upsell 1 and 50% of these buyers taking upsell 2 this product has a potential of generating \$67,740 in total revenue.

These values are for this example only. But as you can see, this is the outcome of a good launch which was the model of one of my launches at the start of this year.

So where do Joint ventures come in and traffic?

Imagine giving all those sales above 50% commissions to anyone who wants to promote the product?

Before you say, "I'm not giving away 50% of my profit" think about this? Would you give 50% of your profit away if you could double, even treble your sales?

Sure you would, and this is how it works.

You give affiliate (joint venture) partners 50% revenue in exchange for a promotion, which send traffic and build your mailing list by default.

Simple.

Guest Posting

Another great source of traffic is the guest post. By asking for a guest post spot on another blog, (most importantly a popular blog with a good following) you can automatically qualify as an expert in your field. If you make a top class post, traffic will come back to your own blog through people craving your knowledge of your chosen niche. Guest posting is great source of traffic and you should try to guest post on a regular basis.

How to get the guest post

Asking for a guest post can be very intimidating indeed. You see these superstar bloggers with tons of traffic and great content, and you think to yourself why would these guys want to have my post on their blog? Believe it or not even the best bloggers need content and they welcome it from guest bloggers. However there are a few rules to follow such as:

- Epic content is essential
- No affiliate links
- No PLR (private label material)
- No duplicate content
- Must be informative (epic content)
- Keep to their niche

Once you have a great post to give, you may be tempted to place it on your own blog. But before you do this think of the traffic potential and what you stand to achieve from it – a lot of traffic and equal amounts of new readers if you give the right content.

Asking for a blog post is as simple as sending an email. Don't send a 1000 word email to the blogger you want the attention of? A simple 3 or 4 line email will suffice. Something as simple as:

Title: Guest post opportunity

Hi [blogger],

I am an avid reader of your blog content and write in the same niche as yourself and your guest writers.

I have created a great post which I think will work very well within your niche and for your readers.

I have attached my guest post to this email, Please let me know if you like the content.

Thank you for taking the time to view my post.

Kind Regards,

[Name]

Most bloggers read all of their emails and usually respond within a couple of days. I find the best time to email a blogger is right after a post. Sometimes bloggers are online to catch the first few comments, and communicate with their readers.

Some blogs actually invite guest posting on their blogs via a special page which is located on their blog. These are usually a set page with a contact form where you can submit your blog to the blogger for a guest spot. Guest posting is a great way to build a following. Just remember to give your best content and traffic will come and stay.

Linking to blogs

There are two ways you can do this type of linking:

1. You can add other popular blogs to your own in a Cool Blogs section or your blog then get in touch with other niche blogs of the same type and ask for a reciprocal link between blogs. This helps with track backs and back links and increases your search engine rankings. This is old school and not done much now. The blog roll method is rather outdated.

2. You can link directly to other blog posts from your own posts. This enables a community like effect where all bloggers share good posts and express a comment or reference to other posts to provide additional information to support their own.

Using this technique allows for track back links from your blog to the blog you linked to in your post. For example if I link to another blog post from my blog post, the blog I am linking to will get an alert to say that I have linked to a particular post of theirs.

Now depending on if the blog I am linking to has pingback or trackback enabled, the blog post I am linking to will see my link from within their admin panel. This way the person I'm trying to get the attention of knows I have been writing about them. They can then choose to share the link on their blog or visit my blog and check out what I have written. Alternatively, you can simple contact the blogger via social media and tell them about your post and the link you have given them.

Here is a real world scenario for you to imagine.

You have written a post about internet marketing and you decide that my blog, Marketing From Scratch, is worthy of a mention and you would also like to grab my attention. By simply linking to the post in the way I just have in this book with an active hyperlink, a trackback will be sent to my blog admin panel. I will now know that you have linked to one of my posts, thus getting my attention. As well as this, you can tag me on Facebook and Twitter to alert me about the post and the kudos you have given. Simple and effective.

Viral Marketing With eBooks and Reports

Writing a free report or an eBook and placing it on your blog is another great way to generate traffic to back your blog. Also if you can negotiate a promotion from another marketer then you have a possible tidal wave of traffic coming your way.

Give your book away

How disappointed would you be if no one opted in at your blog ever? Here is a simple way to increase your list, brand and reputation.

Do you have your own free book?

A free book can be used as leverage to gain subscribers, loyalty and reputation. I have created 4 personal free books during my time of blogging and Internet Marketing. All of these free books have allowed me to build subscribers, provide information for free and gain trust. So ask yourself why creating an book isn't a good idea?

With a free book you can:

1. Increase subscriber loyalty
2. Increase your reputation
3. Build trust
4. Build your brand
5. Show your expertise in your niche
6. Increase your opt-in
7. Earn an affiliate income (if that's what you want from your book)

As humans we are naturally lazy. If we can find a shortcut we generally take it. If there is a way of having or doing something quicker we probably will. This isn't necessarily a bad thing, it helps us to move forward faster and grow quicker. But is it the best practice?

When I created an opt-in course for my blog, I supplied everyone who took part in it 3 books which they could brand and distribute from their own blog. This was a fast, quick solution to the harder task of creating your own book. The people who decide to use the free book benefited from some great, instant free information to supply their readers with. As well as the opt-in, they also have the opportunity to benefit from an affiliate commission to 3 alternative products. At this point everyone is winning, the reader wins as they are grabbing some great free info, and the blog owner wins as they are getting the subscription and the possibility of an affiliate commission. I also win as I supply the info and it links back to my blog and online products.

If you own your own blog you should create your own free book. Creating your own book can provide you with so much in the long term and give so much to others. It really is rewarding on a personal level, as well as having the benefits of trust and list building I described earlier.

Here they are again:

1. Increase subscriber loyalty
2. Increase your reputation
3. Build trust
4. Build your brand
5. Show your expertise in your niche
6. Increase your opt-in
7. Earn an affiliate income (if that's what you want from your book)

What can you create an eBook about?

This is probably one of the most asked questions when it comes to creating your own books. And it really isn't that hard. If you already have your own blog then it really shouldn't be a problem. You already have your passion. You just need to channel that passion into a larger book size blog post, or take an existing post and expand on it.

You can even take a group of posts and create an book by repurposing these posts. As long as you have your knowledge and passion, you will have no problem creating an book. You have the knowledge, you blog about it on a regular basis, you just have to put it all together.

Writing without passion and knowledge

For me this is a hard task. I like to know my niche before I commit to writing a report. This is not to say that I haven't done it, because I have. I used to write content for PLR monthly in the early days. This included lots of reading and researching niches. If you don't have your own blog or your own passions, then you have to research and research good.

Take your time and immerse yourself in your chosen niche. Read it well and absorb all the content you can before you start to create your free product. The last thing you need is to create content that doesn't work or gets a bad rep. Do your homework so to speak and you shouldn't have a problem.

Tools For The Job

There is not a great deal of tools you need to create your own book. A simple word processor and PDF converter are the tools of the trade. You will also find that most word processors have these tools integrated into the control panels anyway.

To create a free book you will need:

- 1. Word processor** – Microsoft Word or Open Office (free) are both ok. I use IA Writer for the Mac which is awesome. All of these have a PDF convertor integrated.
- 2. Opt-in service** - Aweber or similar email subscription service to collect opt-in subscriptions.
- 3. Graphics** – eCover for your book. This will cost you somewhere in the region of \$10 - \$20 for graphics creation.

These tools are the basics that you will need to create an eBook. You can add to the book by adding graphics and images inside the book from sites such as fotolia and iStock. There are also some free images from Microsoft, but please check the usage rights if you use them. The rest is easy, just create your book and insert it into your Aweber auto responder.

Once you have it on auto responder you can advertise it on your blog as a free download in exchange for an email address. Using the free book technique will substantially increase your mailing list. I have over 3000 downloads of the book Cycle and every one of those was an opt-in to my subscribers list. This is from one simple technique.

If you need some help creating a free book then check out [The eBook Cycle](#). This book is jammed with information on how to create a great book.

The viral effect

The effects of viral books can be huge and keep going on forever providing you keep to a few rules.

- 1.** Keep your book evergreen by staying on top of your content by providing an update link in the book to check for the latest edition or version.
- 2.** If you choose not to have an update link, avoid dated content and images that can also be dated, this way the reader will not immediately think the book is old news and hit the “X”
- 3.** Ensure you have links to your blog or other evergreen websites in the header or first pages. These are the pages that are viewed the most. You will be surprised but a lot of readers only read the first two or three pages then close the report and never come back to it.
- 4.** Provide 100% value at all times. There is no point giving a free report or book away that does not do its job. Make your book content rich and free from typos and

grammatical mistakes. Most of all, make your book readable! Follow these rules and you will find people passing it on and coming back for more from you and your blog.

List Building Extraordinaire

We touched on list build in the previous chapter when we discussed product sales and joint ventures and affiliate sales. This is how to build an opt-in.

An opt-in is a place where your readers can become a subscriber to your blog and be kept up to date with the most recent events and blog posts. By having an opt-in on your blog you have the ability to start building your mailing list, and by building your mailing list you have the following advantages:

1. Alerting your readers of new recent blog posts – By alerting your subscribers to your latest blog post, they don't forget about your blog and the information you are supplying. By alerting your subscribers of your latest blog posts, they will continue to read and comment on your blog. Direct emailing has a much better success rate than simply placing your blog online and hoping your RSS feed, Facebook and Twitter pages update to alert people of your new post. Email is much more direct.

2. Sending out an auto responder sequence – Most email collection services allow you to have a follow-up sequence of emails e.g. a reader opts-in to your email list for updates, you first send a welcome email, you can then use the follow-up email sequence to provide your new reader with a further series of emails which are all automated. Some of the emails in your automation sequence could point the reader to some of your more informative posts or an information loaded email newsletter. Once you have plugged in the auto responder emails it's „set and forget'. All subscribers will get the same sequence of emails. It's a real hands off approach once you have set the email sequence up. This gives you more time to concentrate on other developments.

3. Sending out affiliate offers – Now that you have readers on your email list you can send out offers and updates for new, existing and affiliated products. These offers allow you to make a further income stream. Please remember if you are going to promote offers and/or affiliated products to treat your mailing list with respect. You will sell far more products and make more commissions if the people on your mailing list trust you. This is why it is a good idea to keep your blog up to date and also provide information in your auto responder. Don't jump right to offers! Earn trust.

4. Communication with your subscribers – having an email list allows you to interact more with your readers. By utilizing the auto responder feature mentioned above, you can ask your subscriber's questions e.g. are you enjoying the content? Is there anything you can help your list of subscribers with? What about opinions? Do you have any specific questions you ask your readers?

What is Aweber opt-in email facility?

My opt-in of choice has always been Aweber, in my opinion they are the best of the bunch. Others include Get Response, MailChimp, iContact and Constant Contact to name but a few. Aweber is the one I have always used; they have a great reputation and lots of tools to use to help you along the way. By using an opt-in facility such as Aweber you are open to a lot more options than RSS feed which only delivers content from your blog and can't be managed like Aweber can.

Here are some benefits of using an Aweber opt-in subscription on your blog:

- Direct email contact
- Auto responder service
- Custom email templates
- Subscriber management
- Custom opt-in templates
- WordPress Webform plugin

With Aweber you are not just tied into a single broadcast every time you update your blog. You can control what you do with your subscribers as I have already mentioned above.

With Aweber you have the power to pick and choose what to do rather than just send out RSS feed. In short, you need an email auto responder or you will lose out on massive amount of potential subscribers and revenue.

Monetizing Your Blog

A blog can be started for fun, for charity, for business, for personal reasons and even to make money. When it comes to monetizing your blog it can be done in a number of ways from affiliate advertising to personal products. In this chapter we will look at the best ways to monetize and what works. Your niche should determine what advertising or monetisation techniques you want to use. There are some techniques that will only work for some niches and not for others. Before we take a look at this, I want to take you through what you shouldn't do. This will give you an insight into how your strategy can work without getting into trouble first.

What not to do

Rule number 1

Don't set out to make money. I know it sounds crazy, but the more you concentrate on content, the more people will trust your judgment and buy recommendations from you in the future. Get to know your blog, and get to know your readers and the ways to get traffic before you monetize.

By providing nothing but free info with no ads, people will soak up your content and become loyal readers. When the time comes to monetise your blog, you will know what people want and what ads you can make the most profit from. You can then target your readers and maximize profits.

I see so many people monetizing from the very start with the view of making an affiliate income instantly without any content. 1 or 2 ads you may be able to get away with at the start, however it's best to concentrate on building your blog rather than thinking about money. When the time comes for monetizing your blog, don't over monetize. I have seen so many blogs with masses of ads on the home page which look more like fairground lights than ads.

Imagine you are looking for some information on a certain subject which you are interested in. You complete a Google search and you find a blog which looks to be the one to provide you with the correct info, only to find a ton of ads trying to sell you anything related to the chosen subject. My guess is you will 'X' away from that blog very quickly.

More ads do not mean you are going to make more money. Less is more in most cases. Be strategic in your ad placement and selection and you will reap the rewards. When you get to know your blog and your readers, you will know exactly what ads to place on your blog and what works for you. Keep your ads related, keep them simple and make them look professional.

Affiliate ads and income

My primary blog focus is Internet Marketing (IM) and the “make money” niche. This makes affiliate ads a great asset as they are perfect for the “make money” niche. Some of the best and biggest commissions can be made from the “make money” niche where commissions are typically 50%, with recurring income advantages also.

If you can harness a good ad with a recurring income, you can create a true passive income and earn on autopilot for the length of the buyers membership. If you can retain a good click rate and buy rate, your monthly recurring income will always rise.

There are some great market places you can use to place affiliate ads on your blog and make some great commissions. These ads are free to use and typically the developer will give you 50% commission. You can get these ads from the sources such as:

- Clickbank
- JV Zoo
- PayDotCom
- eJunkie
- Warrior+

Using a recommended marketplace where affiliated products are found means you get paid regularly and on time.

Product specific affiliates

Staying with affiliate ads and promoting programs that you use is always a good idea. The readers of your blog will always want to know what you use within your business, with a view to mirroring your business model. If you can provide information on a certain tool you use or a certain bunch of tools and services you use then people will use the same tools and services.

Take an online auto responder and email subscription service such as AWeber. I have used AWeber since day 1 and could not do without it. I consider AWeber to be one of the most important marketing tools I use. And since I use this tool daily, I talk and write about it a lot. It's in my resources section of my blog, I have written posts about it.

And guess what? I receive cheques from AWeber regularly from people signing up for their auto responder program. When you use a tool regularly and explain it's necessity, people who want to emulate your business will choose the same tools as you.

Some common products which are advertised on a lot of blog sidebars and resource pages are usually related to the running of those blogs. These are essential products which people need to run their blogs and services. Some of these tool are:

- Hosting services
- Key Word Tools
- Auto Responders (Aweber)
- Traffic Guides
- Blog specific products

All the above services work well for all types of blogs as they are so generic. When it comes to your own blog and your own niche, you will find the tools and services that work for you. You can then tailor your ads to suit your readers, who will see them as services and not adverts.

Google's AdSense program

Google's AdSense program is a content based ad program in which you can insert a select code to your blog and Google inserts the relevant adverts according to certain algorithms based on your content.

You can check out Google's AdSense program here. The popularity of your blog does determine the amount of revenue you get paid from Google. Google places ads on your blog based on page rank and traffic. The more traffic and value your blog has the more revenue you should earn from clicks due to the higher Pay Per Click (PPC) advertisers.

My first experience with ads was from Google's AdSense program back in 2005 where I was using AdSense on mini sites linked from books to make an income. Some days I was making \$5 per click from high end money/banking and loan sites.

Moving forward to the present day, the payouts are a lot less and don't rival affiliate promotions as much as they used to. For a first time ad campaign, Google AdSense is a great way to get started and earn your first few dollars. It's easy to implement into WordPress with a plugin and runs itself; and depending on your niche you can earn a good income. However, using AdSense in the make money online niche will not earn as much as affiliate ads targeted to your readers.

The payments I have experienced are a few dollars at most. Although due to the simplicity of Google's AdSense program it is worth taking some time to create a campaign and run it on your blog. Test it for a while and if you find it isn't working for you then move in to affiliate ads or another form of advertising.

Direct advertising

As your blog grows in popularity, you can start to seek direct advertising. Think of it like an ad you see in a magazine or a newspaper. The concept is the same, you can charge the advertiser for the privilege of exposure on your blog, it's very simple.

Depending on how popular your blog is, you may be approached by advertisers, or alternatively you can seek out your own advertising and offer them a spot on your blog for a set fee.

When it comes to fees for advertising on your blog, try to negotiate a monthly fee which is set on recurring billing. This ensures a regular payment. If this option is not available to you and you still want to use the advertiser, try to negotiate something with them that will make it as easy as possible for you to manage. You don't want to be changing adverts every week or changing ads every day, managing clicks and tracking ads. Keep it simple.

By using direct advertising and approaching, or being approached, you can cut out the middle man and save on fee's from advertising companies. You can manage your own fee's and be paid direct from the advertiser via PayPal for example. If you want to attract advertisers to your blog, you create a dedicated advertising page on your blog, which has all the information, fees etc and a contact form which your potential advertisers can use to get in touch. You can also place an „Advertise HERE' banner ad on your blog to show you are open to advertising. You can then link this to your advertising page. Remember to have your traffic stats at hand for advertisers as they will want to see them. Using the Google Analytics plugin can solve this very easily.

Your own products

I have been running my own products on my blog for a while now with great success. Having your own products on your blog allows you to keep all of your readers within your own sales funnel. This means you get to keep all the profits from your products and do not have to split the affiliate fee's.

The advantages of having your own product on your blog are:

- More revenue
- You keep your subscribers within your own circles
- Your subscribers stay in your sales funnel
- Further commissions from more products in your funnel
- More authority and trust
- The potential for more affiliates

The last option above is very important.

By creating affiliates of your own products, you ultimately increase your revenue and your subscriber base. The only disadvantage to using your own products is supporting your buyers questions and problems. If you don't have someone handling your support, time could be an issue. If you do have enough products and services related to your own niche, advertising your own products is certainly one of the best monetizing strategies out there.

Advertising brokers

There are a lot of brokers who will work for you to advertise on your blog links and banners that will appeal to your readers. They do charge a commission, but it does take the work away from you. This type of advertising is not geared toward a personal blog, it may however work well for niche blogs. **Some advertisers to consider are:**

1. AdBrite
2. BlogAds
3. Chitika

Very similar to the above brokers, also a lot like Clickbank, you have companies such as Commissions Junction and Affiliate Future. These companies have a very large network of advertisers, usually consisting of high grossing and very well known companies who outsource their affiliate programs to brokers.

Companies like Commission Junction can be joined for free, but some of the affiliated companies which are attached to them do require you as the affiliate to have a high ranking niche compatible website. These companies are great for niche blogs and promotions to mailing lists in certain niches.

Text link ads

If your blog has a page rank and a decent amount of traffic, you can also use text link ads. Text links ads are exactly as described, a text link on your blog either in the sidebar or the footer which advertises another product or blog. You can use <http://forums.digitalpoint.com> to advertise your blog as a platform for text link and charge a fee for the privilege. This is very similar to direct advertising where you negotiate a price for the link. You can also use Text-Link-Ad's which is a brokering service that allows paying advertisers to provide links which you can place in your blog. They have a good, simple, automated setup; however, they do take commissions for the privilege. Ultimately, the higher the page rank the more revenue you will get in return for link placement.

Ad Swaps / Link Exchanges

Speaking of trading links, is it true that trading banners or text links with another company similar to your own (or in a related field) is a waste of time? Not exactly. True, there has been a lot of publicity lately stating, in so many words, that link exchanges are not as effective as you once thought them to be. And this makes perfect sense.

Consider, that for a while, many poor marketers online were creating “mutual benefit” link exchanges with each other in hopes of artificially inflating their external links—and thus getting special attention from Google for being a high PR site. That's not

really the same thing as a small company that actually works hard for its links by creating press releases, blogs, articles for directories and other mediums.

So yes, many SEO “experts” were stopped dead in their tracks as Google and other big wigs informed the world that link exchanges are simply not valuable in most cases. Namely, when companies just use them as a means of leverage.

This is not to say that mutual link exchanges are always a bad thing. When there is a good reason for a link exchange, as in a “blog roll” of authors who write on the same subject, then the search engines will count that as a legitimate link. In some cases, mutual link exchanges may work...but only if you prove to search engines that you are actually working together (such as, guest blogging) and are not mindlessly exchanging links for cheap traffic boosting purposes.

PPC Advertising / Text Links

PPC is an alternative to SEO, and while it does use similar logic to the search engine algorithm, it is more about whoever bids the most per click.

Not only do you publicize your company through text ads, but you also benefit by “impressions”, which are the number of times your company text (or banner) is seen by an online audience. They don’t have to “click” to get an idea of who you are. PPC companies (like as Google and Facebook, the two most well known examples) make money not only by the total number of clicks you pay for, but also because they demand a high impression count so that they continue to make money.

How does this concern you as a business owner going after free traffic?

First, there are free introductory PPC deals you can look into. Why, even some web hosts are now giving away \$50-100 of free text ads. There are also true-blue free PPC sites out there, such as seen at Squidoo (a popular directory that lets you create individual web pages).

Of course, “free PPC” is only a few steps away from “affiliate linking” opportunity (our next topic to discuss), since both methods involve trading clicks and impressions from one company to another. Of course, with affiliate networks, you also have the option of making money or paying money.

Don’t forget the opt-in

“This is the 3rd time I have mentioned opt-in in this book. That’s how important it is”

Your opt-in is by far the most important part of your blog after content. Ask any blogger what their most valuable asset is and my guess they will say subscribers list.

Ask any blogger what their most common mistake is or was, and I would bet that most will say not building a mailing list from day 1.

Your opt-in can also be used for monetizing your blog, which is why I have subscription boxes in more than one place on my blog. By placing opt-in boxes in various positions on your blog, you maximize the chances of building your list. Try placing your opt-in in places such as:

- Sidebar
- Footer
- Individual pages
- Below the post
- Directly under the banner
- Popup (can be annoying but converts well)

You can then use your list to promote affiliate offers from marketplaces such as Clickbank, WSO's, JV Zoo, Aweber, or basically anything that has an affiliate link. Stat building your list from day 1 it's vital!

Great ad placement

Earlier in this chapter we spoke about how ads can annoy the reader if placed in the wrong place, turning your blog into a huge advertising board, taking away the main purpose of your blog which is supplying information. There are some key areas which you need to focus on when it comes to placing ads on your blog. These areas are:

- Main post area
- Sidebar
- Above the comments section
- Footer
- Header
- Pages

Obviously you have a lot of choice when it comes to advertising your blog. I find the best places for advertising are above the post, where your eye first looks when you hit the page. The sidebar as everyone looks for navigation and below the post after the reader has read the post. Remember, don't over advertise, remember to look professional and limit the choice of ads on your blog. Too much choice will lead to your blog looking cluttered and unprofessional.

Top tips for success

When it comes to monetising your blog, it's all about testing what works for you. I see so many people slapping ads on their blogs and forgetting about them whether

or not they are performing or not. If your ad is not performing, then the obvious course of action is to try another ad or even a whole new style of campaign.

Test your ads and find the best ads to suit you, your niche and your readers. Don't settle for the easy ads like Google. If you can make more revenue from other types of targeted ads, then go for it.

But remember, less is more and your own products and product funnels are always the best way to make income and build business.

Concrete Blogging Tips

You are not alone in the blogging world and the front leaders are paving the way to make your job easier. You can spot the trends of the top bloggers and by reading and analysing their blogs you can determine what works and what doesn't. Here are 10 techniques to be sure to use with your new blog.

1. Provide well written content – Successful blogs all have well written content and great posts full of top quality information. The next time you write your blog post, take some time to think to yourself about the following:

- Are there spelling errors or grammatical mistakes?
- Am I staying on topic or filling it with fluff?
- Am I getting my message across to the reader?
- Am I inviting comments throughout the post or at the end to enable interaction?

Is my post set in a readable format using extra features such images, bullets and numbered lists to aid?

2. How easy is it to connect with you and your blog - RSS and email subscriptions and social media interaction are the best ways to create repeat visitors. If you provide well written content and also make it as easy as possible for your readers to share and subscribe to your feeds and mailing list, then you can steadily build your subscriber base.

Try placing your email subscription boxes at the top of your blog. Also add incentives to join your blog list with giveaway items, such as books and software.

Try placing an ad at the end of every post for email subscription.

Take a look at the Comment Luv plugin which you can also send out a thank you message for commenting.

Place your link to a free product in the response email to collect subscribers and email addresses.

3. Connect with your readers – Connecting with your audience is vital to the success of your blog. The whole point of your blog is to spread your word and interact with other like minded people. It is recommended you comment on every post if you can and build a relationship with your readers. You provide the information, so back it up with added comments, thanks, and extra information in your comments sections:

- Always have your readers in mind when commenting and interacting. They made the effort to comment, return the favour!
- Keep up social relationships with your readers in the form of Facebook Friends and Twitter contacts.

Offer further advice and links to other posts which may help and also products which can be used to help your readers. Going the extra mile will benefit you greatly and build your

4. Search Engine Optimization (SEO) - When you have completed your post, take some time to analyse your post and add the following. Header tags to your titles and sub headings. Use H1 for titles and H2 for sub headings. You can also add key words to your SEO section of your blog, which will help you gain ground within the search engine rankings. If you don't have a theme with integrated SEO, then try a plugin called 'WordPress SEO by Yoast' this will help. You can also relate your post tags to your SEO key words. Using this technique will also gain you a larger reach.

5. Organise your sidebars better – Think about it for a second, what have you got in your sidebar? Is this going to affect your zero leakage rules? Are your sidebar promotions, graphics and widgets going to turn your visitors away? Are you promoting programs which have no relevance to your website? In short are you benefiting?

Try following a few simple rules:

1. Avoid promoting programs immediately at the top of your sidebar, try an about me or an opt-in. Building your subscribers is important.
2. Avoid big in your face ads, you are providing information foremost.
3. Don't overdo it with advertising, overloading your sidebar with ads looks bad.
4. Remember, less is more get people on your mailing list and into your funnels.

6. Get social – By Simply adding a social media plugin to your blog. There are a ton of them to choose from within your WordPress admin panel under the plugin section. By using social networking plugins you give yourself the advantages of Re-Tweet, Facebook likes, Google Buzz and so on, The potential traffic advantages and shares which will generate more traffic.

7. Good blogs are simple to navigate – Your blog is not a maze! It's supposed to be easy to navigate and allow the reader to find exactly what you want in a few seconds. Your visitors should not require a map to navigate your website. Load up your blog, think about its purpose and be honest to yourself when trying to navigate it. Are you getting the results you want?

Try to go for a zero leakage look. You want the visitor to stay, not to leave at the first affiliate link or banner add which is not your own.

Don't overdo it with navigation links and pages. Direct the reader to your posts; after all they are there to read your info.

During your posts, it does help to have link to alternative posts during and after the initial post. This adds to the amount of time spent on your blog and Google likes internal linking.

8. Individuality succeeds – Individuals who have their own style, ideas and ways of blogging are more likely to succeed. However this can be very, very hard to do in a

world where there is allegedly a blog created every second! What people tend to miss is the fact we are all individuals! Just be yourself and provide great innovative content:

- Try to give your readers something they can't get anywhere else
- Be original
- Do I have a design that will keep the reader on my site?

9. Design your blog a little different –Why is it that your own sites look more attractive to you than they do others? Take an outside the box approach to your blog. Is it really as good as you think or are you blinded by your own creation.

If you have a popular free template, could it be that visitors will be put off by seeing the same template over again?

Could it be that some people will see a familiar skin and back out before reading your content? This is highly possible.

Create a blog that looks individual and branded to you and you only. This way you become instantly recognisable.

10. Get with the Media – Blogs are about content. Good, original, well written content. However we do need to mix it up from time to time so why not add a few images, audio and video to your blog. They say a picture is worth a 1000 words! If this is true then how many words is a video worth?

Use YouTube to add video to your blog. You can shoot with a smart phone without any problems; you don't need to be an expert.

Show off your skills and connect with your readers on a personal level. People will relate to you more in a video than as text on a page.

As you move along on your epic blog journey, try to implement some of these strategies above. See how they work for you, see how they change the way you blog as you grow to become your own individual author.

Taking Action

Taking action on what you have learned today will help you succeed in your quest for blogging greatness. I have provided some great information for you today and I'm sure you will take action. Maybe you only need to focus on a couple of the areas I have mentioned, or maybe you need to focus on them all. Whatever you decide to do, take it one step at a time, but most of all take action. I can't stress this enough.

Still Unsure?

Being unsure is fine, don't worry about it. I have you covered. I have created a personal training course just for you to get you started and to continue your blogging lifestyle.

The Bloggers Roadmap is a full training program which will take you step by step through the whole blog process covering the core fundamentals from setup to posting your first article to getting your first comments and even making your first dollar from blogging. I will personally give you all the training you need to make your blog a complete success.

If you liked this book then you will love the Bloggers Roadmap video series [HERE](#). Take a look at what it has to offer. I'm sure you will not be disappointed.

Here is the link you need:

<http://bloggersroadmap.com/video-special>

Final Words

I hope you enjoyed The Bloggers Roadmap. It does mean a lot to me that you have taken the time to read the information I have provided for you. If you wish to discuss any of the topics or just want to let me know what you thoughts, then get in touch via my blog at MarketingFromScratch.com or join our Facebook group <http://www.facebook.com/groups/bloggersroadmap>

I know I have provided you with some great value within this book and I sincerely hope you take action and start now! Why put this off until tomorrow, your business needs action. There is no point in waiting when you can do it now while it's fresh in your mind. Plan your strategies on a daily basis, think about your week and structure your days to complete certain tasks.

Before you go, please take a look at the <http://bloggersroadmap.com/video-special> I have spent a lot of time creating a really great training course which I'm sure will help you a lot. Thank you for your continued support and again for reading.

If you would like to comment on this book good or bad, please drop me an email at my blog. I would love to hear from you!

To Your Success,



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THE HIGHWAY TO BLOGGING SUCCESS