

WDL
CONTENT101

How To Create A Successful Business Blog

————— Successful Inbound Content Marketing —————



Engage With Blog Content

Blogs have had a powerful impact on the web world. At least one blog, if not many more, will be a part of an individual's daily routine at any one time, and both readership and engagement rates are on the up and up across the board.

Whether you spend your time looking at official or unofficial news blogs as a way of keeping up to date with current affairs, visit topic blogs based around your own individual interests, or regularly visit lookbooks or design blogs to spark your own inspiration, you're engaging consistently with some kind of blog content.

Blogs have become an integral part of the internet landscape in 2017, but 20 years ago, they barely existed at all. In 2000, 'Blog' received the accolade of the Merriam-Webster 'Word of the Year', and since then everything's been coming on up for the good old-fashioned weblog.



Understanding from a business perspective how, when and why you should blog can often be the most challenging part of creating a consistent output of content. The first step though is deciding what you should blog about.

60% of marketers say
blog content creation
is their top inbound
marketing priority.

(HubSpot, 2016)





What should you blog about? Aye, now there's a question. For a lot of businesses, having blog topics that are engaging enough to garner any form of readership is the primary challenge to be faced head on. The solution? Well, there isn't one. You still have to come up with the ideas yourself, but try tackling blog topics in advance by putting together a content planner for the next 6 months to a year. If you're ever having a particularly creative day, try coming up with 2 or 3 future topics, so that when it comes to the day/week/month in question, you don't have to think of something on the fly.

Know Your Audience

One of the key things to acknowledge when creating your blog is that, whilst you should maintain your own consistent voice, you need to write for your audience. In the case of business this will largely be existing customers or potential customers, and so you need to develop a continuation of your marketing spiel without being 'too salesy'. Creating an effective balance between providing valuable information, as well as using calls to action that will help to drive additional business, is going to create a platform that is valuable for both yourselves and your customers, with the intention of bringing people back to your blog on a regular basis.



It's also important to account for what your audience won't want to read, which is to say that whilst the majority of your content might seem interesting to you, it may very well come across as not so hot to others. It's important to keep on top of information pertinent to any changes in the way that customers might have to navigate the site by updating readers on any changes to the structure of the website, new pages, new checkout systems, or anything else related to the overall user experience. If necessary, provide a prominent link through to important information such as this on your homepage, ensuring that nothing too important to be missed falls by the wayside.

Understand the Benefits

In some ways, it's almost nonsensical not to have some kind of ongoing blog content on your site, as it can not only have a profound effect on your traffic, but also on your search engine standings. SEO is a wily beast, but the fundamentals of adding business-related keywords to help a search engine's understanding of what it is your business actually does in order to rank you more effectively within SERPs, still stands. If you are writing consistently, and naturally, about the day-to-day of your business, then not only are you secretly updating Google that you're still operating, but you're also proving to them that your website is relevant to a range of particular search queries relating to the industry in which you operate.

SEO



The wily old fox



It's also important not to be overzealous with keywords as 'keyword stuffing' can have an adverse effect on your SEO, so just write naturally and throw in relevant keywords organically ensuring that your content makes sense.

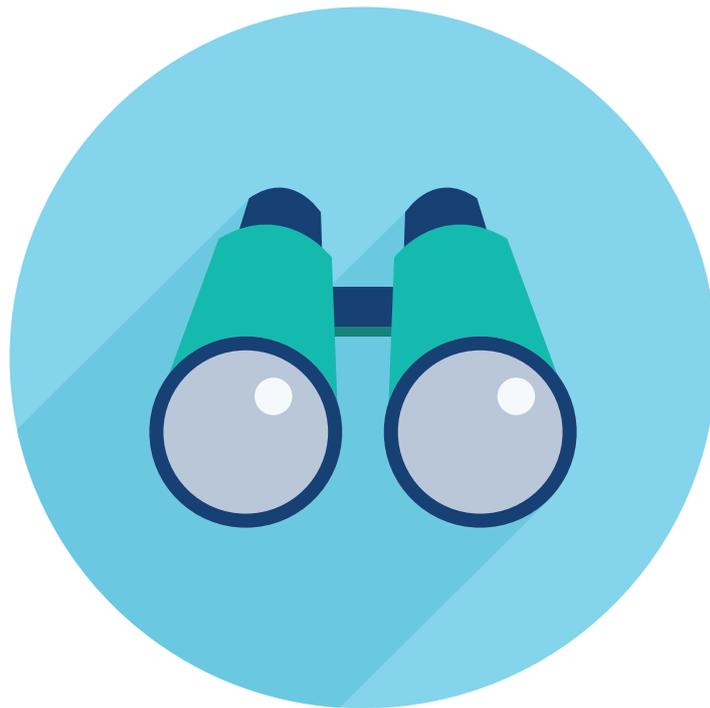
The ultimate aim of your blog posts are to develop your relationship with your customers by offering them something of value. Don't turn content writing into a selfish exercise by concentrating solely on your own rewards.

Use Your Own Images

Whilst it may be common sense for most, using your own imagery in your blog posts is imperative. Not only due to the overlying copyright issues that come from taking images from other sources, but also because, if used correctly, imagery that comes from yourselves can be used to promote your own products. You can also make sure that each image is consistent with your own website branding and make sure that they're formatted and edited correctly for your own web platform.

It's also worth taking note that an effective file size and image alt text are going to work additionally in your favour when it comes to SEO.

43% of people admit to skimming blog posts



Keep it Short but Sweet

Not every blog post you write has to be the next Game of Thrones. There are countless studies around what constitutes the most effective blog length, so allow us to contribute to the several thousand contradictory numbers by saying that anything over 300 but less than 3000 is usually a good window, both from an SEO standpoint and so you don't lose your audience after having made them read 24 paragraphs about air conditioning repair. You need to make sure that all the information you're providing is relevant, and doesn't come across as rambling, opinionated (unless that's representative of the tone of the rest of your website), or self-aggrandising. Write as a professional version of yourself, presenting the information, rather than just listing it. You're also not looking for the Man Booker prize, so try to keep language easy to digest (refer to the above point about knowing your audience).

The More the Merrier

Frequency is going to be one of the most important tools at your disposal when it comes to creating blogs. The more frequently you post, the more you're engaging with your audience, and the more you engage with your audience, the more responsive they're going to be. Continually posting is only going to nurture your existing audience and help to garner new visitors through consistent, quality writing.

It may be that you don't have time to sit and blog 3-4 times a week, which is fine. Blogging once a week, or once fortnightly is perfectly acceptable. Alternatively, you can outsource your blogging to a Digital Marketing company (like us) who will dedicate their time to creating the best quality posts possible. You shouldn't have to overstress yourselves over writing heaps and heaps of content on a regular basis, or worry about what you're going to write about next if it means that other elements of the business are going to suffer as a result. But it's important that you recognise the significance of having a consistent stream of fresh content coming from your website.



The more blogs you write, the more it means that others will start taking notice, and will begin to reference your posts across other sites. This also means that you can begin building a steady list of backlinks to your site, which is another huge ranking factor when it comes to SEO. Once you start building a reputation for producing quality content, your audience will begin growing and you'll start getting more traffic to the parts of your site that are the most valuable for your business.

B2C companies that blogged 11+ times per month got more than 4X as many leads than those that blog only 4-5 times per month.

B2B companies that blogged 11+ times per month had almost 3X more traffic than those blogging 0-1 times per month.

(HubSpot, 2015)



Understanding that not only are you cultivating an audience that already exists, but actively seeking entirely new readers is key when it comes to identifying exactly how you go about marketing your blog. Doing something that is primarily designed to inform and capture at the same time is going to double your chances, and blogging provides the perfect blanket platform to ensure that you are bringing in new interest whilst keeping regular visitors happy.

Strongly consider engaging with other blogs yourself by commenting on anything you read. Not only is it a good way of bringing in additional traffic, but it will also count as a backlink to your own website, helping your website achieve an additional SEO boost. The more links, and the more blogs available, the more pages there are to be indexed, and this could lead to up to 55% more organic search traffic.



B2B blogging could lead to up to 55% more website visitors.

(HubSpot)



Fundamentally, blogging is going to provide the best possible foundation for broader content marketing, as well as inbound lead generation. Focus on sharing your content as much as possible through your own social channels, and encourage others to do the same. Work hard to syndicate your content, whilst working to avoid any negative impact on your SEO from duplicate content. Writing is hard. Writing continual, high-quality blogging content is harder. But whilst the work might be tough, the benefits are considerable. As the hippie blogger says, 'write on!'.

