

Bloggging For Business

To seasoned internet users, blogging is a household word. To business owners it's a new and blossoming addition to their websites that attracts new visitors, customers and clients.

What is a Blog?

A web page constructed of short, frequently updated articles that are arranged chronologically. The word blog comes from web log; an online journal. This suggests a blog is ideal for a news page or 'What's New?' section.

BLOGGING is booming in the business world due to its simplistic nature and relatively cheap installation and most importantly, it is an excellent vehicle for communicating, sharing corporate expertise and connecting with existing and potential customers.

A great business blog has a continuous stream of fresh and interesting content which helps establish relationships with website visitors.

Blogs offer businesses a chance to build their own online communities where people can post comments and updates and interact with one another and your brand.

Benefits of blogging

Easy to use - simply type your thoughts, link to other websites and add photos all in a few easy steps.

Cost effective - many free blog websites are available on the internet or you can fully customise a blog into your website for \$500 to \$1000.

Quick updates - you don't need a web designer to update your blog which means there's no need to wait on content or pay ongoing service fees.

Credibility - you can share your expertise and knowledge with a larger audience, which is a powerful tool for service-based businesses.

Who should have a blog?

If you have thought about publishing a newsletter or e-newsletter, a blog would be a natural addition to your website.

Blogs are centred on frequently updated mini-articles and news items so any business that has information to deliver to customers would be an ideal blog candidate.

Common blogging mistakes

Unfortunately, many businesses fall into the same trap with blogs as they do with e-newsletters - they abandon them after a few months.

Blog abandonment happens for lots of reasons, but mostly because we get too busy. Here's a quick list of common blogging mistakes to avoid:

1. Not posting frequently enough.

Two to three times a week is recommended.

2. Content is not defined.

Carefully consider your target audience before you start writing and continually refine your blog posts to this market.

3. Articles are too long.

A blog post is a mini-article so aim for 200 to 300 words.

4. Poor spelling, awful grammar and typos.

This will turn off lots of readers. Proofread your work.

5. No information on the writer.

Blog readers are curious by nature, so include a photo and detailed information about you.

6. No information on business products and services.

The purpose of your blog is to raise credibility and (hopefully) more money, so make it easy for visitors to discover what you sell.

7. Comments are turned off.

Ensure readers can leave a comment about your posts - this encourages interaction with your brand.

IN WEB

with
Nicky Jurd



What's in it for you?

Blogs give you freedom to express. Many new bloggers love the feeling that comes with expressing their opinion in a public place. It is especially warming when you receive comments from others that agree with you.

A blog is a channel of communication that builds momentum and is ideal for opinionated thought. Many journalists and editors now use blogs through the major media newspaper websites.

Online networking

Blogs that encourage a genuine exchange of ideas offer a great networking platform for industry leaders.

Cheap advertising

As with many internet advertising opportunities, a blog provides inexpensive business exposure. Allowing customers to interact with you through a blog encourages repeat business.

Quickly gauge public opinion

Most small businesses attract a hundred

people every day to their website and many will post comments about your product/service. Within a matter of minutes you can gauge public opinion. For this very reason, politicians and political parties have a strong online blogging presence.

Where can you get one?

Ask your web designer to install one on your website or for a free, non-customised blog see www.blogger.com.

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