

BUSINESS BLOGGING

15 COMMON MISTAKES



— Common Hiccups That Drive Visitors Away From Your Blog —

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BUSINESS BLOGGING MISTAKES

Business blogging can be rewarding. When done well, a successful blog can bring attention to your business, attract new customers and turn your current customer base into fans, followers or even brand evangelists. According to HubSpot research, companies that blog generate **55% more visitors, 97% more inbound links, and 434% more indexed pages than companies that don't blog.** Successful business blogs are not just about attracting more eyeballs to a page or promoting products and/or services, they offer a value proposition for readers.

Does it make sense to blog for your business? Jumping on the bandwagon and writing blog posts for clicks rather than writing about content that is newsworthy and compelling will serve little purpose, affect your business' credibility and alienate prospects and customers. We've outlined the most common mistakes that businesses make when writing a blog – and how to avoid them.



Businesses that blog at least 20X per month generate over 5X more traffic than those that blog fewer than 4 times per month. (Source: HubSpot)



Your blog should provide conversational content that is relevant and interesting to your readers.

15 BUSINESS BLOGGING

MISTAKES YOU MIGHT YOU MIGHT BE GUILTY OF



1. NO GOALS OR CONTENT STRATEGY

Do you know what your business is trying to accomplish by creating a blog or have you jumped on the blog band-wagon? As your blog deadline looms, you scramble to find something to post. With no plan behind it, the post does not align with your company's overall marketing goals and is out of tune with your target audience. Think about the goals of your blog. What is your company trying to accomplish by visiting your blog? Is there a specific industry-related topic on which you or your business can share experience or knowledge? Develop a content strategy and set goals to help validate each blog you post.

2. NO EDITORIAL CALENDAR

Not aligning your content strategy with your editorial calendar may result in inconsistent contributions and posts. Your editorial calendar is the command-centre for your blog. Create an editorial calendar to keep you on track for regular publishing. Decide how many times per month you would like to publish your business blog and plan for the topics you will write about on those specific days. Your editorial calendar reflects your priorities and sets the editorial tone for the year.

3. NOT INTEGRATING YOUR BLOG WITH YOUR WEBSITE

Hosting your business blog on a separate URL and linking to it from the main navigation of your company website is counterintuitive, as you are sending visitors away from your main website and you are losing out on valuable Search Engine Optimization (SEO) opportunities. Your blog should act as a subdomain or an extension of your corporate website. Attract visitors to your main website by using your blog as bait. Visitor engagement should happen on your main website, and blog visitors should associate your blog with your brand name. search engines.



Commit to devoting 12 months developing your blog and cultivating your readership.” (Source: HubSpot)

4. NEGLECTING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SEO

Not integrating your business blog with your company's main website can impact your company's Search Engine Optimization (SEO). One of the biggest benefits of business blogging is its impact on SEO. Each new blog article you publish creates a new webpage that can be indexed in search engines to help your business get found online. More indexed pages mean more opportunities for keywords, so develop an SEO strategy for your blog and implement that strategy for every piece of content you create and publish on your blog. Hosting your company blog on a free platform URL such as Wordpress will only guarantee that the SEO credit you've built gets applied to the blogging platform, not your own website. Use Google's free Keyword Tool to help you choose realistic keywords related to your blog's topic.

5. ME, ME, ME

The content you publish on your blog is too heavily focused on you – your products or services. Business blogs are not meant to serve as an advertisement. Utilize your business blog to exhibit thought leadership and expertise. Change the way you think about the content for your blog. Take a look at blogs on company pages that show different types of content that is engaging, conversational and share-worthy. Spend more time on educational (industry best practices, news topics and take-aways) or data driven content (market data) relative to your industry. People will start to associate your business with being an industry expert, translating to more credibility and trust in the products or services your business offers. Write for the audience you want to attract and try to tell a story. Focus on providing value to your readers instead of pushing a sale.

6. BORING CONTENT

Offering no variety is boring. Keep your readers interested by offering engaging content. People like to consume information differently, and by not offering variety, you are limiting the reach of your content only to people who like consuming information in one specific way. Types of blog content you can use include: charts or graphs, podcasts or interviews, cartoons, infographics, guest blogs, commentaries on e-books or white papers, questions and answers and videos.

7. PUBLISHING INFREQUENTLY & INCONSISTENTLY

Not publishing your business blog on a regular basis or not publishing enough articles to make your blog effective means you are leaving prospective customers on the table. Visiting a company blog that has not been updated in several months conveys a lackadaisical approach to how you run your business. According to HubSpot, **46% of companies that publish a business blog have acquired a customer from a blog-generated lead.** The more often a company blogs, the more likely that the company is to acquire customers from its blog. Make a commitment to the upkeep of your blog and start by striving for a least one blog post per week. The most successful blogs release new content at least a couple of times per week and stick to a regular schedule. Remember, the more you blog, the more traction you get and the more likely you are to generate a lead.

8. OFF-TOPIC CONTENT

Your business blog is unorganized, all over the place, and lacks a concrete, unified theme. Without a clearly definable purpose and focus your blog will suffer. If you're expecting to generate a community of subscribers, readers, and fans that you're hoping to someday nurture into paying customers, you need to give them a reason to keep coming back. Spend time determining what your focus/topic is on that blog. Think about the persona(s) you are aiming to attract and consider what information they might find valuable. Consistently releasing quality content will keep readers returning and over time it will help you build a community and turn your customers into fans. Content is king but quality is queen.

9. FAILING TO ENGAGE WITH READERS

If your blog is a one-way platform for your ideas it offers no way for you and your readers to engage in conversations, interact and provide feedback or insightful commentary. Keep the comments on your blog open in order to facilitate conversation about your blog. Directly encourage engagement by asking readers questions. Ask readers how they feel about the topic or if they have any additional resources, best practices or advice. Blogging is a conversation – it offers a way for you to connect with prospects and customers on a completely new level. Participate in the conversation on other blogs in your industry by leaving comments on posts as this will help establish your "blogging brand" and attract new readers to your business blog.

10. DISABLING COMMENTS

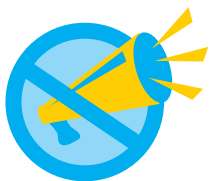
Many bloggers disable comments to avoid spam or negative comments. Disabling the comment feature can impair your ability to connect and engage with your readers. Encourage readers to share their comments, questions, concerns and stories on your blog. Ensure to respond appropriately and keep the conversation going.

11. MODERATING COMMENTS

Moderating comments will only deter people from comments on your business blog. Utilize negative comments as constructive criticism. Publish a page that outlines your business blog's comment policy and encourage people to comment intelligently and respectfully.

12. NOT ADDING A RSS/SUBSCRIBE BUTTON OR SOCIAL SHARING BUTTONS

If you neglected to add a RSS/subscribe button or social sharing buttons to your business blog, you are probably missing out on new subscribers. Make it easy for readers to share your content with their networks. The more you put options right in front of them, the more likely they are to share your content and become engaged. Add an RSS button that links to your blog's RSS feed to the top of your blog's sidebar so it can be easily located by readers. Include social sharing buttons for Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, Pinterest and other social networks according to your preference or the specific social networks your audience populates. Include a widget such as AddThis or ShareThis within your blog template, so individual posts can be liked, shared on Twitter, and posted in a variety of other sites by your readers.



Blogging is social, and treating your blog like a megaphone instead of a platform for two-way communication will suck the life out of it. (Source: HubSpot)

13. EXCLUDING CALLS-TO-ACTION (CTAS)

By not including calls-to-action on your business blogs, you are limiting its potential to convert visitors into leads and consumers for your business. Make sure every blog post includes a [CTA](#) that sends readers to a landing page. Each CTA should be aimed at making the reader do something such as interacting with your company by subscribing to your blog or downloading a free white paper. Include CTAs in the sidebar and/or at the top of your blog. Utilize your blog to convert your site visitors into leads for your business. Revisit old blog posts and add CTAs to them too. For a more in-depth look at how to write effective CTAs download our new [white paper](#).

14. NOT PROMOTING YOUR BLOG IN SOCIAL MEDIA

You've launched a business blog and are publishing articles on a regular basis, yet you're not taking advantage of the power of social media to promote your blog content and increase your readership and subscriber base. By not promoting your blog content via social networks and social media sites, you may be missing an opportunity to reach a large audience of readers who may be interested in your content but don't know it exists. Spend more time building your reach in social media and promoting your content. Create a brand presence on the social sites your audience populates, expand your reach, share links to blog content and make social sharing easy for your readers by incorporating social sharing buttons to all of your blog posts.

15. IGNORING BLOG ANALYTICS

By failing to analyze your blog's effectiveness, you are ignoring information and data that can help take your blog to the next level and increase its effectiveness. Analytics such as measuring monthly visitors, subscribers, comments generated, page views, inbound links, tweets and retweets, can give you valuable insight into the success of your blog and help justify your efforts. They can also help determine which topics, titles and types or articles are preferred for your blog's audience. Pay attention to analytics to be aware of how your business blog is performing.

KNOWING HOW TO BLOG IS KEY FOR A BUSINESS' ONLINE PRESENCE

Are you not seeing any results with your blog? Giving up on your blog means you will be missing out on a valuable opportunity for lead generation and new customers. Building a successful blog takes time, effort and commitment. Think about a good title as it's usually the reader's first impression of your content. Try different methods of structuring your blog titles to see which resonates best with your audience.

Make sure your blog is easy to find and that your readers are able to easily comment and share posts with others. Optimize your blog for search engines, as this can help increase your keyword ranking and grow your organic search traffic. Think of your blog as a digital publication, a trade magazine for your industry. Display only an excerpt and an image from your recent post. This will entice visitors to scan some of your blog's content and read further on.

While many companies are starting to recognize the powerful impact a blog can have on a business, that doesn't mean they are doing it right. Spend time taking the steps outlined in this white paper to tweak your blog and stay dedicated. If your readers are not responding well to a particular topic or type of content, show them you are listening by improving and modifying your content. Conduct a regular audit of your blog and its performance.

Business Blogging Resources

Want to learn more about business blogging? Download these free resources

15 Business Blogging Mistakes And Easy Fixes – HubSpot - <http://www.hubspot.com/15-business-blogging-mistakes-and-easy-fixes/>

8 Common Mistakes of Company Blogs – Hollis Thomases - Inc. - <http://www.inc.com/hollis-thomases/mistakes-of-business-blogs.html>

7 Blogging Mistakes That Small Businesses Make – Lou Dubois - <http://www.inc.com/guides/201103/7-blogging-mistakes-that-small-businesses-make.html>

12 Blogging Mistakes to Avoid at All Costs – Neil Patel - <http://socialmedia.biz/2012/05/03/12-blogging-mistakes-to-avoid-at-all-costs/>

Blogs Will Change Your Business – Bloomberg Magazine - <http://www.businessweek.com/stories/2005-05-01/blogs-will-change-your-business>

20 Mistakes to Avoid So Your Business Blog Succeeds – Brad Dalton - <http://wpsites.net/how-to-blog/business-blogging-25-things-to-avoid-so-your-business-blog-is-a-success/>

