

BLOGGING – AN OVERVIEW

What is a business weblog (blog)?

- An **electronic newsletter** that contains interesting information related to your industry, your business, and you.
- An **online conversation** with your prospects, clients, and friends...open to anyone who happens by.
- A way for **people to become comfortable with you** before they meet you, to feel they know you.
- In it you **talk to people**, you **display your expertise and niche services**, but you don't advertise. You want people to come back, and if you push products or services blatantly in your blog, they won't.
- **Personal**, and unlike a web site, it is **interactive and reactive** to what's happening in your world.
- It is **not to stroke your ego and it is not a soapbox** – unless that's your business. If you want to champion a particular political, religious, or philosophical point of view, do it on a personal blog and keep it separate from your business.

How can a blog help your business?

- **Keep your name in front** of your clients and prospects
 - Every time they read a new post they see another aspect of your **expertise and service**.
 - Visitors can leave comments – the positive ones become **testimonials**. Any negatives can be responded to immediately or, if they are flames, can be removed by you.
- **Establish you as an expert** in your field
 - Getting your name out is what it's all about.
 - When you are the expert you are called by the press for comments and background on stories.
 - Combine your blog entries to create a book – columnists do it all the time – and you have another level of credibility and standing as an expert.
- **Ways that a blog can drive business to your Web site:**
 - Your blog should **link to your Web site**.
 - Your **contact information** is in front of everyone who reads your blog.
 - Give a **taste of some valuable information** that is on your site and then link to it.
 - Make it easy for **people to email your blog** postings to friends – increases traffic to your blog and to your site.

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How do you create a blog?

- First, answer some important questions:
 - What's the point? What do you want your blog to do?
 - Who are you talking to? Who is going to read your blog, and what is important to them? Why are they reading **your** blog?
 - What's your niche? What do you do better than anyone else?
 - Are you willing to commit the time and effort? You need to post regularly – once a week is a good minimum.
- Next, choose a host:
 - Your blog can be part of your web site (to do this you will need to work with your web developer) or it can be hosted online by a blogging service.
 - Choose a free service or one that charges – some are easier to work with than others, some have more features than others:
 - Blogger
 - TypePad
 - MovableType
 - LiveJournal
 - WordPress
 - And others for specific business types....
- Next, go through a setup checklist that will determine what your blog will look like and how you will manage the technical and writing requirements.
- Finally, get blogging!
 - Make regular posts
 - A blog that hasn't been posted to in months is irrelevant and worse than non-existent.
 - If you can't keep up with a commitment to post, why should clients expect timely service from you in business?
 - Add value, respond to comments
 - Connect with your readers.
 - Keep it short, focused, informal, and conversational.
 - Add relevant, good quality photos to create visual interest.
 - Offer expertise without asking for anything in return.
 - Respond respectfully and immediately to all comments.
 - Bring people to your blog with links, comments, and publicity.
- Have fun! If it's not fun, it isn't worth doing.

Call or email for complete weblog design, setup, and content.
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