

THE POWER OF BLOGGING

10 ways to write blog posts that will increase your visibility, credibility and revenues

By Susan Young, BA, CPNLP



According to *Technorati*, a popular search engine for blogs, there are 71 million blogs floating around. That number has probably jumped since you read these words! It's amazing to think so many people have so much to say. One of the major challenges I hear from coaches, entrepreneurs and business professionals is that they don't know how to write blogs. So they do nothing. It's no fun being stuck or afraid. The technical part of Wordpress and widgets is one thing. To the reader, content is king.

Your blog is your moment in the sun. It's your voice at the podium with the microphone, basking in the spotlight, talking about whatever you care to discuss.

There seems to be a lot of confusion about how important blogs are

to growing your practice. I know my marketing and public relations goals are twofold: create curiosity and become known. After all, your presence affects your prosperity.

Merely having a blog is very different than proactively using it as a key marketing vehicle to drive traffic to your website. Blogging increases your online visibility and allows you to tie your posts in with search engine optimization strategies. Blogs build your credibility and help to position you as an expert in your field. They also enable you to showcase your knowledge and intellectual capital in a fun and casual style. In addition, blogs give you the chance to help people solve their problems and deal with challenges.

Another benefit to creating regular posts is that the link to your post can be shared in social media cir-

cles. Viral marketing quickly helps spread your message. Above all, blogs create curiosity which prompts readers to visit your website and learn more about your services, products and expertise.

Here are some quick tips to writing powerful blog posts:

- **Write about something you are knowledgeable about and enjoy.** Stick to what you know. If you're a spiritual coach, don't blog about public relations or tax tips. When people see your name, they should know what to expect from you.
- **Be transparent.** Be authentic and avoid hidden agendas and negativity. Write with integrity. Your reputation is on the line. Your name is on every post. Be proud of who you are and what you share.
- **Write in short, punchy and easy-to-understand sentences.** My



theory is that we should write to express, not to impress. People are so busy these days that we all appreciate concise and succinct communication. Look at Twitter – 140 characters!

- **Weave in your personality.** Blogs are not typically written in a formal business style. Blogging is more casual, which allows you to inject your personality into your posts. This in turn helps to connect with your reader.

- **Avoid J.A.R. – Jargon, Adjectives and Rhetoric.** Your readers are probably not looking for a stuffy dry sales pitch, but for something that’s compelling and thoughtful. Deliver it and you’ll develop a loyal following.

- **Connect your posts with timely news stories.** The news provides us with plenty to blog about. By mentioning current events (and reacting to them as you desire), you show people you are interested in what’s happening in our world. You

can also tie in the news to your business, customers and prospects and create attention-grabbing posts. Using timely and fresh information helps drive traffic to your website.

- **Speak directly to the reader.** Use active verbs and first-person language. Ask them a question or write a statement such as, “Consider

- **Solve their problem.** Provide useful tips (like this!). The tip-sheet-style approach is effective because it’s reader-friendly. The bullet points allow your reader to skim the content and glean nuggets of key information.
- **Forget about the length.** There is no right or wrong when it comes to writing blogs. Some people post only a few lines a day while others have several paragraphs or a tip sheet. Longer doesn’t mean better; sometimes it just means longer (see earlier point).

“Why would anyone care about what I have to write about or say?” This question was posed to me during one of my recent blog content webinars. It’s a legitimate question

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from a professional coach who is looking to find her special place in the big world of blogging.

My answer is simple: People will want to read your blogs and hear what you have to say if you connect your experiences and knowledge to them. Let’s be real. People don’t care a whole lot about me or you.

They care about themselves, their own success, their own challenges and their own worlds. That’s the key to connecting with them. Your blog

may have your name on it but the content must address a problem or challenge that directly impacts your reader. Show your reader value and a willingness to help them. Share a short story or anecdote from a situation that you’ve overcome that they may be dealing with. They will relate to you, read it with interest, and as a sign of appreciation, they will share the link or reTweet with others.

“Viral marketing quickly helps spread your message.”

This reveals another question: “How do I know what challenges people are facing?” Another simple answer: read their posts, watch the news, listen to colleagues at networking meetings, eavesdrop on conversations others are having in the cafeteria, at a seminar, or in the elevator. What’s the buzz in your industry? What is keeping people up at night? Pay attention, then start writing.

Shift the focus of your content away from yourself and onto your reader. Then they will care about what you have to say.

By writing powerful blog posts, you can increase your visibility, credibility ... and ultimately, your revenues. So get blogging! •