

Blog Profits

*How To Start And Profit
From Your Very Own Blog*



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Introduction: Blog Profits

It is amazing how quickly the world can change. Just a decade ago, no one had ever heard of blogs or blogging. Now there are more than 31 million bloggers in the United States alone. Worldwide, that number exceeds 100 million. It seems like everybody is suddenly blogging!

And why wouldn't they be? Blogging is fun and exciting. You get to share your thoughts with people all over the globe, interact with many other people who share your passion for the subjects that interest you, and you can even make money by blogging.

As you shall shortly see, getting started blogging is super easy and 100% free if you use a blog hosting site such as WordPress. Even if you choose to buy your own domain name and lease space on a server to support your own personal website, it can cost just pennies per day and can result in a steady reliable revenue stream through advertising, affiliate marketing and other business models.

There are no limitations on what your blog can be about. Any topic that interests you is fair game. And odds are, there already is an entire community of people who share your interests and will look forward to your next posting. Once you begin writing your blog regularly, it's easy to get dozens, or even hundreds, of regular readers who will frequently leave comments and engage in an exchange of information and knowledge with you.

What Is Blogging?

The word “blog” is an abbreviation of the term “weblog”. Back in the early 1990s, when the internet as we know it today was still in its infancy, weblogs were a form of online diary keeping. The earliest bloggers would share details of their everyday lives on first-generation blog sites such as Open Pages and Open Diary.

By the end of that decade, blog technology improved to the point where readers could leave comments on other people’s blogs, and even include links to other web pages. Very quickly, improvement in search engine technology made it simple for anybody to find blogs written about whatever specific topics were of interest to them.

By the mid-2000s, open source blog hosting sites such as Blogger, Tumblr, and WordPress began to offer free software that any user could use to create and publish professional-looking blogs quickly and easily. These sites, which remain popular today, also hosted and distributed the blogs for free so that bloggers could write as many blogs as they wanted and there was sure to be a steady supply of regular, loyal readers.

Today, there are literally millions of blogs being written every day and on every subject imaginable. Whether you are interested in anthropology, cooking, sewing, movies, sex or sports, with just the click of a few buttons you can be connected with thousands of freshly-written blogs on the topics you like best. Plus, you can interact with the writers, meet other people who

share your interest, and engage in a lively interchange with an entire community devoted to whatever subject you are into.

Benefits of Blogging

The blogging community, sometimes referred to as the blogosphere, promotes the open and free interchange of thoughts and ideas. There are no editors or censorship. You are free to discuss any subject you like and offer even the most radical opinion without fear of being quashed or silenced.

There also is no set schedule, so you can write as often or as infrequently as you choose. Some people like to write every day or even post multiple blog postings throughout the day, while other bloggers post only once a week, once or month or even less. It's entirely up to you.

When you produce a blog on a subject that interests you, it is easy to quickly establish yourself as an expert in your field. As your readership grows, people will begin to respect your opinions and perhaps even invite you to write a "guest blog" on their own blog. Many bloggers are now regularly used as panelists at conferences, interviewed on television news programs and even viewed as celebrities themselves.

The blogging community is also a great place to learn new facts, encounter cutting-edge ideas and technologies, exchange gossip or rumor, and participate in a rewarding online social community where you can

make new friends with people all over the globe, interact directly with experts, and make exciting new discoveries about topics that interest you.

For some people, blogging also provides a revenue stream. There are plenty of ways to make money through blogging and we will be discussing many of them in detail later in this guide.

Examples of Successful Blogs

There are countless examples of people who started out writing a simple blog and were able to turn that into an exciting career or success story.

Among the most obvious examples would be Ree Drummond, a housewife from Oklahoma who began writing her blog, [The Pioneer Woman](#), in 2006. In it, she documents her life as a wife and mother living on the plains, as well as including homemaking tips and recipes. It quickly gained in popularity and by 2010 Drummond was listed as one of Forbes magazine Top 25 Web Celebrities. Shortly afterward, she was given her own weekly television program on the Food Network and has written several successful cookbooks, one of which became a New York Times #1 Bestseller.

Another blogging success story is Jenny Lawson. This Texas-born blogger is the author of [The Bloggess](#), in which she uses her quick wit and irreverent writing style to discuss her life and daily adventures. Some of her

blogs were collected into a book, “Let’s Pretend This Never Happened,” which also was a #1 New York Times Bestseller. Lawson currently is an in-demand guest on talk shows and has received numerous prestigious awards, including being recognized by Nielsen Ratings as one of the Top 50 Most Powerful Mom Bloggers.

You may have never heard of Mario Armando Lavandeira, Jr., but you probably have heard of his blog, PerezHilton.com. He began his blog about celebrities and gossip in 2004 and within six months it was one of the most read blogs in Internet history. Hilton soon became a celebrity in his own right, appearing on countless television programs and even serving as a celebrity judge for the Miss USA pageant in 2009, in an episode of “The Sopranos”, and as the star of his own reality TV series.

And then there’s Arianna Huffington. This Greek-American ex-wife of US Rep. Michael Huffington (R-Mich.) had already a successful career as a political candidate, television personality and writer when she launched her blog, HuffingtonPost.com, in 2005. In it, she wrote opinion pieces, shared articles and featured a stable of regular columnists writing mostly on politics and business. In 2011, Huffington sold her blog to AOL for \$315 million, making her one of the most financially successful bloggers in history.

What Should You Blog About?

You can blog about anything you want because there are no limitations on subject matter or content. Plus, you can create as many

different blogs as you want for free, so if you prefer you can create multiple blogs on various subjects.

Because you probably will be writing fresh blogs regularly, you probably ought to choose subjects that are of genuine interest to you. It may be difficult to produce blogs about topics that you don't care about, or have only a passing or tangential interest in. A better idea is to identify a topic or a couple of different subjects that you are passionate about and focus on develop those subjects.

For example, if you are mad about the movies, than a film blog may be the best option for you. Or if you are the world's biggest fan of your local sports team, then you might consider producing a blog devoted to all the news, happenings and opinions of that team. Think about subjects that you could talk about all day: Those are the ones you will be most likely to be able to produce fresh, interesting and compelling content on a daily or weekly basis.

Your enthusiasm for your subject matter will make your blogs more appealing for readers. They are going to want to share in your passion and interact with you, exchanging stories and ideas and participating in your topics blogging community.

It's a bad idea to select a blog topic just because you think it may be profitable, especially for your first blog. If you have no passion about a subject matter, that will shine through in your writing. For example, if you identify that blogs about Forex trading are among the most financially

successful, but you know nothing about trading foreign currencies nor do you have any interest in the topic, then it's probably not a good idea for you to launch a Forex blog.

Follow your passion and you will have a greater chance of writing a popular, successful blog that hundreds or even thousands of people are going to want to read on a regular basis.

You probably already have an idea about what you want to write about. But if you don't, you can develop topics for your first blog or blogs by thinking about interests or hobbies you have had in the past. For example, if your favorite courses were in English literature, then you might consider producing a literary blog. Or if you were a passionate enthusiast of sewing and needlepoint, then those subjects probably would make a great blog topic for you.

You don't even need to have a blog topic if you don't want one. There are many bloggers who simply write about their daily lives, or their families, or their struggles to lose weight or get in shape. Others share their opinions on whatever subject happens to appeal to them on any particular day. There really are no limitations on what you can write about.

If you need inspiration, try visiting one of the big blog hosting sites, such as Blogger and WordPress. Both sites let you search for and browse blogs on any subject, or simply review the most recently published blogs. Once you find blogs that interest you, with the push of a button you can subscribe for free and each time a new post is published it will

automatically be sent to your email inbox or RSS feed. Or if you prefer you can have blogs sent to your Facebook news feed or Twitter feed.

Often, once you find a blog you like it will lead you to another on a separate topic. This in turn can lead to more and before you know it you have spent hours reading and enjoying other writers' blogs while gathering ideas and inspiration for your own.

Determining the Hottest Blog Topics

One of the best ways to attract new readers to your blog is to write about the hottest topics. While these issues are constantly changing, when you leverage what's trending for creating new blog content, you can ensure a steady stream of visitors to your blog.

So how can you determine what's hot at the moment? There are several free tools available online that you can use to identify the most popular topics. By frequently checking websites that keep tabs on trends – such as Google Trends or Twitter's Trending Topics – it's easy to keep up to speed, even when the most popular subject matter is continually changing.

[Google Trends](#) provides a constant update on the topics people are searching the giant search engine for the most at any given moment. If you are looking for ideas to write about, it can be a great place to start. Often

it's possible to use hot topics posted on the site as a starting point for your blog, even if they are not directly related to your subject matter.

The screenshot shows the Google Trends interface for the United States on Friday, December 14, 2012. The top search is 'Les Miserables' with 50,000+ searches. Below it are '121212 Concert' (500,000+ searches), 'meteor shower' (200,000+ searches), 'Jenni Rivera' (200,000+ searches), 'Chase' (200,000+ searches), and 'Golden Globes' (200,000+ searches). Each search entry includes a small image, a title, a search volume bar, and a list of related searches and news snippets.

Another great place to start is [Quora](#), a question and answer site that is similar to Wikipedia. Users post questions and respond with answers to questions posted by other users. It's categorized according to topic. When you sign up for a free account, you indicate which topics you are most interested in. Then, whenever you sign in you are presented a list of the most recent Q&As for those particular topics.

The site also allows you to browse any other topic you like. Quora also lets you know which topics are most popular moment, so it can serve as a kind of cultural barometer that you can use to find the topics people are most interested in right now.

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Question added to topics Healthy Eating and Health and Wellness. 17 Aug
Paleo Diet: What do doctors, nutritionists and highly educated health specialists think of the Paleo diet?
I would love to learn what professionals in the health care industry think of the Paleo diet.
... (more)
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Board Better eating with Quora by Jonas M Luster, and 5 more promoted in topics Food, Cooking, Healthy Eating. Follow Board

Question added to topics Authors and 2 more. 16 Jul
Languages: What is the most delightful combination of words you have ever heard, seen or thought?
That makes sense.
✓ Follow - 71 Answers - Share (7)

Question added to topic Books. 22 Dec, 2010
What are some mind-expanding books to read?
...in the vein of blink, linked, processes, genius, behaviour, freakanomics, neuroscience. not looking for dense technical books but some... (more)
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Question added to topics Nutrition and 2 more. 16 Aug
Vegetarianism: What does science say about vegetarianism?
I'm a longtime vegetarian, and interested if what I'm doing is supported by the scientific literature. But I'm also quite interested in a... (more)

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Another great site is [Alltop](#). This site monitors news stories online as well as social media sites such as Twitter and Facebook to determine what people are talking about the most. It includes links to the biggest news

sites, blogs, social opinions sites and YouTube. It can even tell you the top sellers on iTunes.

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NPR: MOST E-MAILED STORIES PODCAST

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- One Running Shoe in the Grave
- Defending Home, From Afar
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- No more LOUD TV commercials will be jolting you, thanks to
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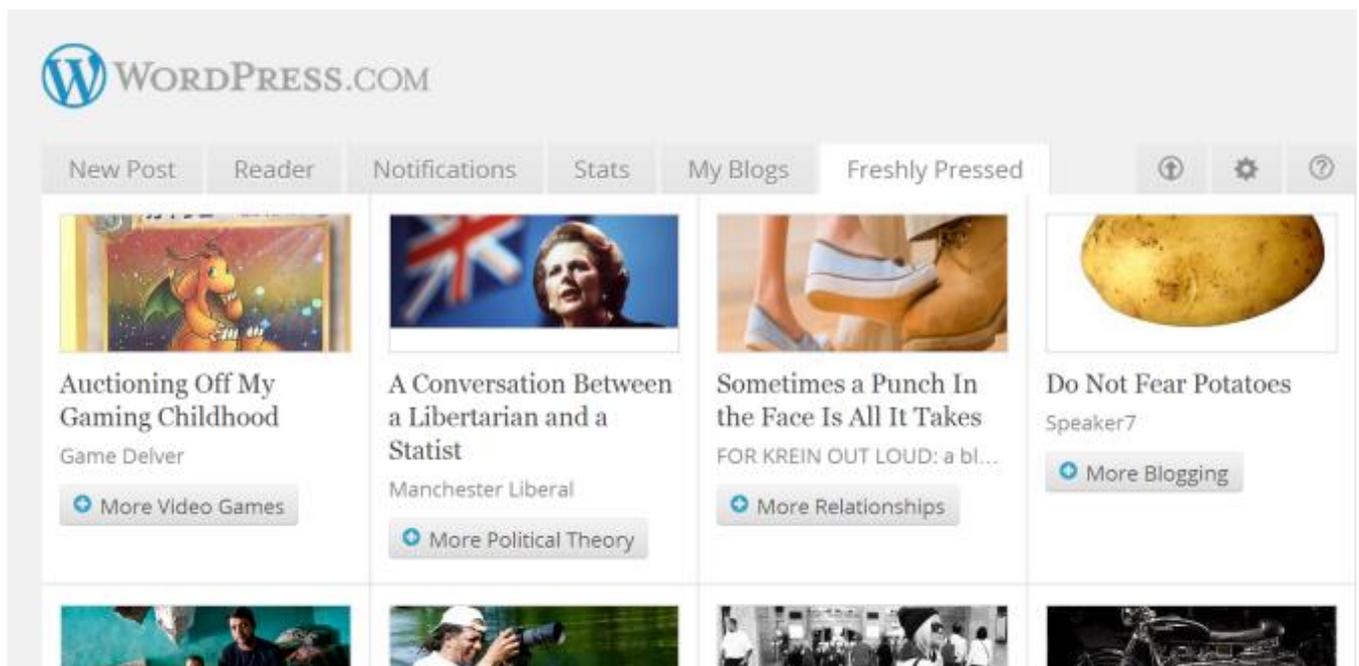
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If you plan to focus on the more offbeat or humorous, the website [Fark](#) provides up-to-the-minute links to the most popular ridiculous, strange and unbelievable headlines from around the world. It's actually one of the most popular sites that news organizations use when they need human interest stories or for a funny story for the end of TV news programs.

The Most Popular Blog Platforms

For the new blogger, choosing a blogging platform can be a challenging prospect. That's because there are a wide variety of blogging sites available for you to use. Nearly all are free to use, but there also are some that require a fee. Even the free blog sites usually will offer to sell you extras, such as additional storage or paid themes.

By far, the biggest and most popular blogging platform is [WordPress](#). This is an "open source" site, which means it's free to use and people can upload and download new tools to the site as often as they please. The biggest benefit of WordPress – and the cause of its popularity, no doubt – is that it is very easy to use. It also comes with tons of instructional videos and guides to help you get your blog up and running and looking exactly the way you want.



If are new to blogging or don't have a lot of experience working with code and web page design, WordPress is a good choice because everything on the site is essentially point and click and drag and drop. You can choose from more than a thousand free "themes", or pre-made templates that you can upload and simply use as your blog's background. The site also offers paid themes or you can create your own theme, although this requires a little knowledge about CSS coding.

WordPress allows you to add custom functions to your themes and create plug-ins, such as linking your blog to your Facebook and Twitter pages. It's easy to add polls or contests to your blog. Plus you can use keywords and tags to make it easy for users to search through your blog postings.

But perhaps the biggest benefit of WordPress is that it will host your blog for you for free. That means you don't have to buy a domain name or rent space on a server, or even worry about blog maintenance because WordPress will take care of all that for you. Or, if you prefer, you can use the free tools on WordPress to get your blog set up and looking the way you want then migrate it to your own domain.

Another popular blogging platform is [Tumblr](#). Like WordPress, it is free and is very easy to use, even if you are a beginner. But Tumblr is targeted more toward bloggers who want to share interesting things they find on the internet that they want to share with their followers, almost like a mixture of blogging and Tweeting.



humansofnewyork

312



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Other popular blogging platforms include [Blogger](#), [ViralNetworks](#), and [Instant Blog Subscribers](#). While all of these platforms have their benefits, they don't offer as many options and flexibility as WordPress, so we will be focusing on WordPress for the remainder of this course.

Creating Your First WordPress Blog

Although all the blog hosting sites are a little bit different, they share many of the same features and all are fairly easy to figure out even if you are not especially experienced in creating web pages or blogs. WordPress is the most popular and provides the most tutorials and learning tools, so from this point on we will be focusing on using it as the site to create your blog.

If you simply want to create content and not worry about selling ad space, then you can also use WordPress to host your site. There are a lot of benefits to this. First, it's free. You can create as many blogs as you want and you are not limited in what you can write about. WordPress will publish and manage your blogs, handle your comments and even provide you with a vast array of in-depth analytics to help you track how often your blog is being visited, who is looking at it, and even where in the world they are located.

With a WordPress hosted blog, you can select any domain name you want as long as it is not already being used by another WordPress-hosted blogger. Your address will then include "WordPress" as the center part. For example, if you want to call your blog "Cooking with Tim" and that name is available, your URL will be www.CookingWithTim.wordpress.com.

The downside of letting WordPress host your blog for you is that it limits the amount of money you can make because you are not allowed to sell ad space, promote affiliate products or use other monetization

techniques. In fact, WordPress will advertise on your blog page and you will not receive any of that revenue. That is the cost of using the site to host your blog.

Yet you can still use nearly all of WordPress' free tools – including any of hundreds of free themes – to design and create your blog, then host it on a separate website that you own. Then you can do anything you want with it.

WordPress also includes thousands of plug-ins, mostly free, that you can use to customize your blog, enhance the features you offer, and make your blog as interactive as possible.

Because the ultimate objective of this guide is to show you how to create the best-looking, most popular blog you possibly can while still being able to make money from it, this is the option we will be exploring from here on out. If you simply want to create a WordPress hosted blog, providing content without worrying about monetization, don't worry. Nearly all the steps are the same. You just don't have to spend any money.

Registering Your Domain

A domain name is what your website is going to be called. Examples include Match.com, CBS.org, Amazon.com, and so on. If you are going to host your own site, the first thing you need to do is to buy a domain name. They are offered for sale by hundreds of sites. In most cases, you pay for

the right to use that domain name for one or two years at a time. At the end of that period, you have the option of renewing your domain name.

You won't be able to buy a domain name if somebody else is already using it. Contrary to what you might think, telling if the domain you choose is available isn't as simple as typing it into your web browser and seeing if something comes up or not. If you get an error message, it may mean that the domain is in fact available, but it also could mean that the owner is working on the site and doesn't have it up yet, that the owner purchased the name for future use, or that the owner bought the name hoping to resell it at a profit. There are people who buy hundreds of domain names on a speculative basis, hoping to sell them at a profit.

If you have a name that you really like and somebody else is already using it, you can find out who has it at [this site](#). They may be willing to transfer it to you if they are not using it, or you can offer to buy it.

If neither options work for you, there are a couple of other things you can do. The first is to use [SnapNames](#) to "back order" the particular domain name. As soon as the current owner's rights to that name expire, it automatically will register that name to you. Or you can use [ExpireFish](#), a site that will "fish" for the name you want then buy it when it expires. Both sites require you to pay more than you would normally pay if you were to purchase an available domain outright from a domain seller, however.

So you might just want to select another name that isn't already being used. While the costs vary from site to site, you can expect to pay between

\$10 and \$35 per year for the use of the domain name. While pricing varies and changes all the time, the top five domain registrars and their most current basic pricing for one year are:

- [Namecheap](#), \$9.98/year
- [1&1](#), \$4.99/year
- [Name](#), \$9.99/year
- [Gandi](#), \$16.85/year

Any of these sites will give you the option of selecting a suffix for your website. These include .com, .org, .net, .edu, etc. If the domain you want is already being used with a .com suffix, for example, you may be able to buy with a different suffix. Generally, however, you are better off selection a domain in which the .com suffix is still available. It usually costs a little more, but it's worth it because that is the default suffix most people use when searching for websites.

Your domain name should be related to the topic of your blog. If you are writing about dog training, for example, you might choose something like "DoggieCanineCollege.com" (which is available as of the time of this writing). Although you can use up to 63 characters, the shorter it is the better off you will be because it will be easier for people to type and remember. Stay away from domain names with special characters like hyphens and underbars because they will make it harder for people to find

them. Also avoid clever abbreviations such as Sk8rBoi.com or NRGsolutions.com because they may confuse your readers.

Setting Up Your Web Hosting

If you are creating a website – and your self-hosted blog will be its own website – then you need to host it somewhere on the web. Unless you own your own web server (which odds are you don't), you will need to lease space on a server somewhere with a service that will provide your site with internet connectivity. There are many different companies to choose from and – like domain sellers – the prices vary greatly from place to place. In fact, many domain sellers will also host your site for you if you want, though you probably can find a better bargain by shopping around a little.

While there are many sites you can use to host your blog, we recommend [OkTeck](#) because it allows you to get web hosting for as little as \$4.95. According to the website [Lifehacker](#), the other most popular web hosting sites are:

- [DreamHost](#)
- [Blue Host](#)
- [NearlyFreeSpeech.NET](#)
- [1&1](#)
- [HostGator](#)
- [A Small Orange](#)

Any of these hosting sites will host your blog or website. The costs vary, as do the options they offer. For example, some sites will simply host your page that you already built using WordPress or another blogging platform while others allow you to build your own website using their own site builder system.

To get the deal and options you need, visit as many hosting sites as you can and compare their costs and features. One of the most important factors to consider is the quality of customer service each site provides. If you experience “technical difficulties” with your blog page, you want the site that can resolve them as quickly and efficiently as possible. Beware the least expensive hosting sites because they tend to have the worst customer service. If you are blogging for profit, any down time is going to cost you money.

Another option is to ask other bloggers which hosting site they use and whether they are happy with them.

Installing the WordPress Platform

Signing up for WordPress is free and easy. Simply go to [the home page](#) and click on the “Get Started” button. This takes you to a registration page where you can set up an account and choose a name for your blog. WordPress will tell you right away if somebody is already using the name you select. If the name you want is available, you will be sent an email with a link that activates your WordPress account.

Get started with WordPress.com by filling out this simple form:

<p>E-mail Address</p> <input style="width: 90%; height: 30px;" type="text"/>	<p>We'll send you an email to activate your account, so please triple-check that you've typed it correctly.</p>
<p>Username</p> <input style="width: 90%; height: 30px;" type="text"/>	<p>Your username should be a minimum of four characters and can only include lowercase letters and numbers.</p>
<p>Password</p> <input style="width: 90%; height: 30px;" type="password"/>	<p>Great passwords use upper and lower case characters, numbers and symbols like !"\$%&^&().</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Password Strength</p>
<p>Blog Address</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; display: flex; align-items: center;"> <input style="width: 80%; height: 25px;" type="text"/> <div style="margin-left: 10px; text-align: center;"> .wordpress.com Free ▼ </div> </div>	<p>Choose an address for your blog. You can change the WordPress.com address later.</p> <p>If you don't want a blog you can signup for just a username.</p>

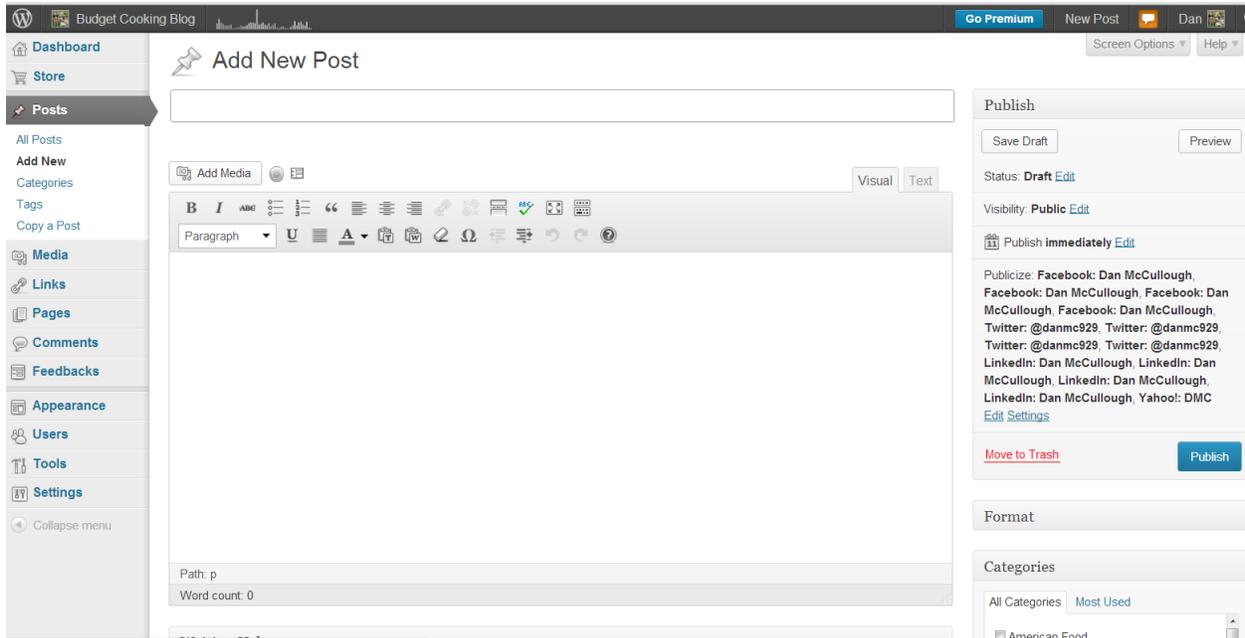
You are now ready to create your first blog. The page you will build it from is called the dashboard. This is where you determine what your blog is going to look like, which features you want to include on your blog page, and what tools you want to use to manage your blog.

The screenshot shows the WordPress.com dashboard. On the left is a sidebar menu with options like Home, Comments I've Made, Site Stats, Akismet Stats, My Blogs, Blogs I Follow, Store, Posts, Media, Links, Pages, Comments, Feedbacks, Appearance, Users, Tools, and Settings. The main content area has a 'Dashboard' header and a tip: 'Update your about page so your readers can learn a bit about you.' Below this is a 'Right Now' widget showing 1 Post, 1 Page, 1 Category, 0 Tags, 1 Comment, 1 Approved, 0 Pending, and 0 Spam. It also shows the theme 'Twenty Eleven with 6 Widgets' and storage space usage: 3072MB Space Allowed, 0MB (0%) Space Used. To the right is a 'QuickPress' widget with a title field, an upload area, and a 'Publish' button. At the bottom right, there is a 'Recent Drafts' section stating 'There are no drafts at the moment'.

The buttons on the left are what you use to create your settings, make changes and add new features to your blog. You are going to want to learn how these work. Fortunately, each comes with a quick tutorial, mostly video, that tell you what each button does and how to use it.

The dashboard will be the command center for your blogs. It is where you will go to write new blog posts, manage comments, check the analytics on blog posts you already have posted, control the way your blog looks, and add new plug-ins. You also can use the dashboard to create entirely new blogs instantly.

Writing a new blog post is as simple as clicking on the “Posts” button on the left side of the dashboard, then selecting “Add New”. This will create a page where you can begin writing. There’s a box for your headline and another box underneath where you write the text for your blog post. There also are a bunch of icons for the different functions you can use, such as adding photos and videos, using bold and italics, adding bullet points, including links and so on.



As you write, WordPress will automatically save versions periodically, or can click “Save Draft” button” at any time. If you want to see what your blog post is going to look like when you publish it, click on the “Preview” button. When you are finished writing your blog post, use the “Categories” and “Tags” in the right hand column to add keywords and categories that will make it easier for people to find your blog post online.

When you have completed writing your blog post and are satisfied with the way it looks, as soon as you click on the “Publish” button your blog post will be posted on the WordPress “Freshly Pressed” page and also sent to any subscribers you might have.

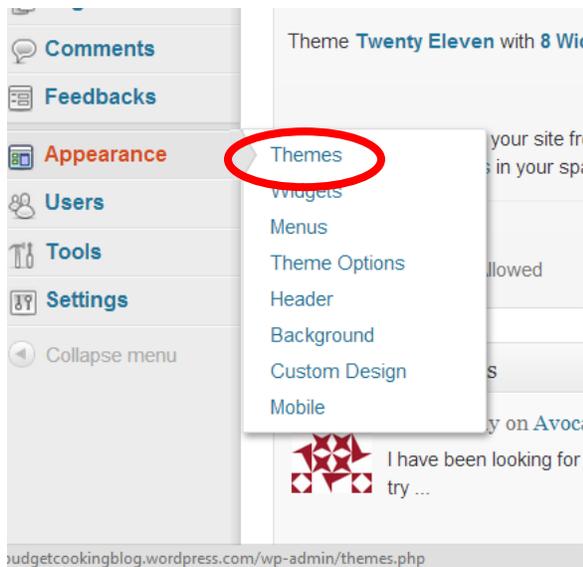
If you want to edit or change your blog post after it has been published, you can go in and make whatever modifications you want and save it. Then anybody who looks at your blog post from that point on will

only see the corrected version. You also can delete any blog post whenever you want.

To install WordPress on your hosting site, simply install it using [cPanel](#) and through Fantastico. All you need to do is choose the WordPress option and install it and it will be loaded automatically.

Choosing Your Theme

Themes are pre-made templates that you can use to change the way you blog looks. WordPress offers thousands of free themes, with new free themes being offered every day. There also are paid themes that you can buy or you can opt to design your own theme if you prefer.



Selecting a pre-existing theme is simple. In the left column of your dashboard, click on the “Appearance” button then click on the “Themes” button from the dropdown menu. This will take you a page where you can search thousands of different themes for the one that is right for your blog. Most are free, but some you have to

pay for.

You can search according to the most popular, the newest, the most commonly used, paid themes, and other categories. You also can change your theme anytime you want.

When you find a theme you like, if you want to see what your theme looks like, just click on the “Live Preview” button and a sample page will appear with content from our blog. If you like the way it looks, click on the “Activate” button and that theme will be applied to your blog. Anybody reading blogs you already have posted will see them in the new theme you have selected and any future blog posts also will be published using that theme.

Using Plug-Ins and Widgets

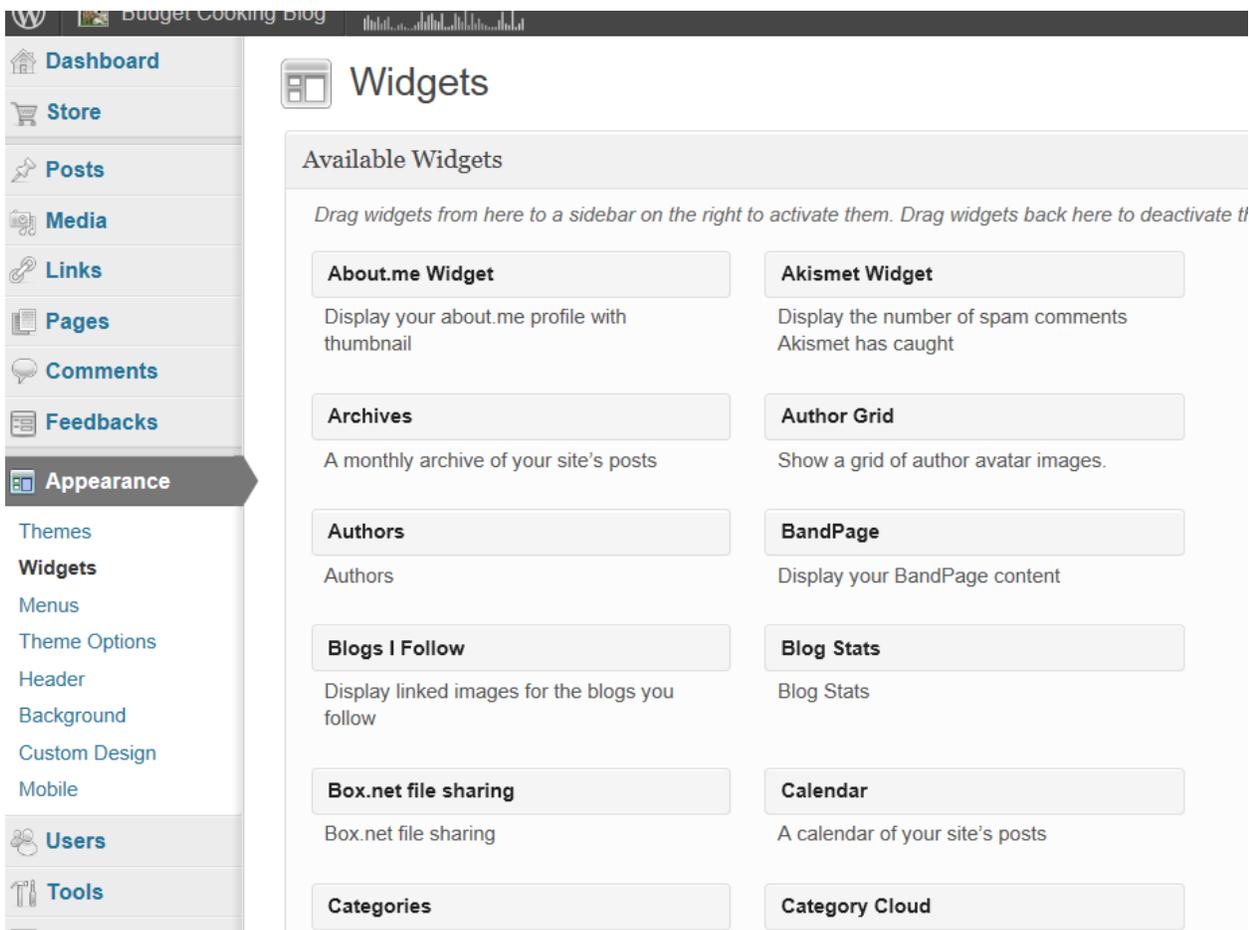
Your theme accounts for much of your blog design, but you can also add an almost endless number of options to your web page to customize it. For example, you can add buttons that make it easy for readers to “Like” your posts, send these “likes” to Facebook, re-Tweet your blog on their Twitter feeds, add a +1 button on Google+, and all kinds of other things.

You can scroll through these options by clicking on the “Tools” button in the left column of your dashboard. You can add and remove these add-ons and widgets as often as you like. Most of them are free to use.

Widgets are free tools that can be dragged and dropped on to your blog page and include such things as customized archive menus,

calendars, grids of author avatar images, calendars and a wide variety of other free tools. Scroll through the free widgets by holding your cursor over the “Appearance” button and then clicking on the “Widgets” button on the drop down menu.

While many of these tools can make your blog unique and encourage your readers to interact with your blog, too many can be distracting. So be careful not to overfill your blog page with a bunch of clutter that is going to distract from your content. A good idea is to look at other people’s blogs and pay attention to the widgets they use, then add only those you like and think are cool to your blog page.



Adding About, Contact Us and Other Pages to Your Blog

WordPress lets you write either posts or Pages. If you are just writing a regular blog entry, you write a post. These blog posts automatically appear in reverse chronological order on your blog's home page.

Pages are for content such as "About," "Contact Us," "Legal", and so on. Pages exist outside of the normal blog chronology, and are often used to present timeless, or "evergreen" information about you or your blog site. Evergreen information is information that doesn't change from day to day. You can use Pages to organize and manage any content.

In addition to the generally required "About" and "Contact" Pages, other examples of common pages include Copyright, Disclosure, Legal Information, Reprint Permissions, Company Information, and Accessibility Statement.

In general, Pages are very similar to Posts in that they both have Titles and Content and can use your WordPress Theme templates files to maintain a consistent look throughout your site.

To create a new page, simply hover your cursor over the Pages button on the left side of the dashboard, then click on the "Add New" on the drop down menu. This will create a template that you can use to create any page you want. You can include text, images, links, videos or whatever you want on your pages.

When you are finished creating your page, just save it and it will appear as part of your blog home page whenever anyone visits it. You can delete a page at any time by clicking on the "All Pages" button on the Pages drop down menu, checking the page you want to get rid of and then clicking on the delete button.

Writing Your Blog: A Primer

Once you have your WordPress account, have selected a theme and have added whatever plug-ins and widgets you would like, it's time to start creating content for your blog. If you have been thinking about creating your blog for a while, you probably have lots of ideas.

It's a good idea to create a "tickle file" that you can use to record blog ideas as they come to you. This can be a Word file on your laptop, a notepad on your smartphone, or even a paper notebook that you can carry around with you in your pocket. As an idea comes to you, wherever you are, jot it down. This will serve as a great resource tool later when you are looking for new blog topics.

Before you start publishing your blog posts, you probably want to have a few timeless "canned" posts that you can keep on hand for when you are too busy to write or are struggling to come up with new ideas. These can help bridge any content gap that you have.

How Often Should You Post?

When you first start your blog, you probably are brimming with ideas and will want to publish all the time. That's fine, but just remember that a month or six down the line, you may not have as much enthusiasm for writing on your blog as you do when you are just starting out, so if you get your readers accustomed to receiving a new blog post every day, it may be

hard to keep that pace later. A better plan is to start out with just a couple of blogs posts per week. That way you aren't committing to a publishing schedule that you may not be able to sustain.

You should try to stick to the same general publishing schedule all the time because as you grow a loyal readership following, they will begin to look for your blog on certain days. For example, if you publish a new blog post every Monday and Friday, they can expect to see fresh content on those days.

Types of Blogs & Blog Posts

There are as many types of blog posts as there are blogs. In other words, millions. The type of blog post you publish will depend on what you want to achieve. You may want to share your passion for your subject matter with other enthusiasts. Or you may want chronicle occurrences in your everyday life, such as your career advancement, battling a serious illness, or your social life.

Generally, blog posts can be categorized into seven major categories:

- **Personal** -- This is the broadest category and includes blog posts people write about their own lives or topics that interest them, such as politics, music, family, travel, and fitness.

- **Top Ten of Top Tips** – These types of blog posts typically list your top ten choices of whatever subject you like, or offer your top tips on a subject.
- **How-to Blog Post** – These are blog posts that education people on the best ways to perform individual tasks. They are frequently in form of video blog posts.
- **Reviews** -- There are lots of blog posts that share reviews about restaurants, movies, games, music, books and so on.
- **Rant Post** – These are blog posts that let you give your opinion on whatever topic you like. It's your blog, so you can be as opinionated as you like.
- **Video Post** – This is when you make a brief video and post it on your blog. It also can be posted on YouTube.
- **Audio/Podcast** – Make an audio recording and post it as a blog post. You also can post it on iTunes.
- **Promotional Post** -- These are blog posts that promote specific products, offerings and events.
- **Resource Posts** – With these blog posts, you list top resources for whatever topic you are writing about.

Developing Blog Topics

As a regular blogger, you will need to be continually looking for new ideas for blog posts you can share with your readers. That means you will need to take time to gather ideas. One of the best and easiest ways to do this is by looking at what other people who write blog posts on your topic are doing.

Whenever other bloggers subscribe to your blog, you should consider subscribing to theirs as well. Not only will it keep you in touch with the online community that shares your enthusiasm for your topic, but it also will provide you with a steady supply of new blog post ideas delivered directly into your inbox.

Before you write a single word, your first week should be spent gathering ideas, clarifying your subject and looking at what other people are doing in order to solidify the concept of the new blog post you want to create.

Organizing how you develop your blog will depend on your own abilities and needs. Some bloggers prefer people specific blog posts scheduled for weeks ahead of time so they know exactly what to write about all the time. Others have no idea what they are going to write about when they turn on their computers.

The majority of bloggers fall somewhere in between, keeping a file with a few vague ideas that can be developed further during the blog writing process.

You may be brimming with ideas for your new blog right now, but use caution and try not to bite off more than you can chew. Blogging requires time commitment and focus. While you may be chomping at the bit and filled with great ideas now, start slow and build on your success as you go along. You can always publish as frequently as you want, but when you create expectations for your readers, it can be difficult to sustain those expectations indefinitely.

Video Blogs

Videos can be added using the same media tool you use to add photos and other images to your blog post. They can be downloaded from your computer, from a video camera, or you can add a link to a video from another site, such as YouTube.

Video blogs are increasing in popularity because of the wideavailability of high definition video cameras on smart phones, tablets and laptops, as well as the near universality of playback devices. Video lets you show – as well as tell -- your readers how to do specific tasks. Video blogging is a great way to give your readers high-value content.

You also can post your video on YouTube and link in the description to your blog post to increase your potential audience size. The videos you make don't need to have professional-quality production values. In fact, people tend to enjoy videos that appear

My Favorite Dog Obedience Sport

February 2nd, 2012

Posted By:
Minette



Dog Biting



Dog Obedience



I have recently mentioned my resurgence into the dog obedience and trialing world.

The first time I trialed and showed, I was egged on by my client who challenged me and my dog to an "obedience dare" to see who could title their dog first. I REALLY, REALLY didn't want to, but I had help to get her ready for her competitions and she wanted company *IN* and around the show ring.

I never wanted to trial my dog or get titles, I never cared and was terrified of competition and getting up in front of people. But the irony of the situation is that the trainer she left me for fashioned herself as a competition training aficionado.

I happily admit I took her up on her dare and not only did I title first, I beat her former trainer 😊 But, for me its not about the competition it is about spending time not only training with my dog but also the short time spent in the ring together!

I intend to get as many titles on my little girl "Fury" as I can! It is my challenge to myself!

And, my favorite obedience sport, you ask? [Read more »](#)

Tags: Rally O, Rally Obedience

Posted in Dog Training, Dog Tricks, Dog Videos, Uncategorized | No comments

to be homemade and less polished because they are more genuine.

Audio Blogs and Podcasts

Another option is to record and publish audio blog posts using the microphone built in to your laptop, tablet or smartphone, or by purchasing

an inexpensive digital recorder and a microphone. This is great for providing content your followers can listen to on headphones while they are on the go, at the gym or in their cars.

You can also upload your podcasts for free onto iTunes, where they can be found by people who are interested in your subject matter. If you regularly post podcasts, you can quickly build a loyal following of regular listeners.

Promotional Blogs

As businesses discover the power of blogging, there has been an increasing number of promotional blogs in recent months. These are blogs that promote specific products, offerings and events. Blogs are being used to gain attention for everything from television shows, movies, clothing and even services such as tax accounting and babysitting.

There have even been cases of popular bloggers being approached by companies to endorse their products in their personal blogs in exchange for free products or even money.

Resources Posts

The resource blog post is one that directs your readers to sites they can visit to learn more about a particular subject. These can include links, lists of agencies and their phone numbers, and email addresses.

The resource post is a good way to give your readers high-value content because they provide helpful information they can actually use and are actually quite easy to create using the free research tools provided by the Internet.

You also can add a page to your blog for resources so that visitors can have access to them all the time. This list can be updated any time you find a fresh resource you want to add.

Monetizing Your Blog

While most bloggers start out writing their blogs simply because they are passionate about their subject matter and want to share their enthusiasm with others, once they discover how easy it is to start making money from blogging at the same time, they quickly adapt to monetizing their blog.

Blog monetization is actually quite easy, especially once you have yet attracted a large number of followers or have produced a lot of high-value content. It can be a double-edged sword, however, because if your readers start to suspect that you are only blogging for commercial purposes, they may be less likely to follow your blog.

Unless you are creating a blog for your business or organization, a better idea for personal blogs is to follow the 4:1 rule: For every blog that promotes products or services, provide your readers with four blog posts that are non-commercial and simply provide helpful information they can use in their everyday lives. This will make them much more receptive when you do ask them to buy something.

Promoting Affiliate Products

Affiliate products are those that are promoted by you but are actually sold by somebody else. Whenever one of your readers follows a link and buys the actual product, you receive a percentage of the sale as a

commission. WordPress doesn't allow you to promote affiliate products if you are using the free service to host your blog, but if you have a self-hosted blog you can do anything you like, even if you use WordPress to create and maintain your blog.

Probably the biggest player in affiliate marketing is [Amazon](#). The world's largest online retailer has a program called [Amazon Associates](#) in which you can sign up for free, select products from among the tens of thousands they offer for sale, and promote those products on your blog posts. When you sign up, whenever you pick a particular product, Amazon gives you a link that has your ID embedded into it so that when people click on the link and buy the product, Amazon knows who to pay the commission.

There are lots of other places to find affiliate products to promote. Two of the biggest are [Clickbank](#) and [Commission Junction](#).

Installing Viral Plugin

The [ViralURL Wordpress Plugin](#) makes it easy for you to insert affiliate links all over your blog, turning them into cash links. All you have to do is select the keywords that you want to be hyperlinked.

Links are cloaked with [ViralURL](#) so they are shortened and protected against affiliate commission fraud.

You can also earn credits on each view, so that you can get free advertising for your site(s) and blog(s).

You also have the potential to refer someone to ViralURL from your ViralBar, and when they upgrade you earn up to 60% commission.

To get started, all you need to do is install the Viral Plugin available at: <http://viralplugin.com/wordpress/> . There are instructions you can follow to install and work the Viral Plugin.

Adding Mailing List/Newsletter Opt-In Form to Your Blog

While WordPress-hosted blogs can't promote affiliate products or sell their own advertising, there is nothing preventing you from adding a mailing list/newsletter opt-in form to your blog and then using the list of email addresses that the form provides you for commercial purposes independent of your blog.



Even if you have a self-hosted blog, compiling a large email list is a great way to build an online business. Once you have the addresses of people who have already proven to be interested in your niche subject matter, it's a simple matter to get an autoresponder and set up an email marketing campaign to promote your own products or services, or affiliate products. This can often result in a steady, reliable revenue stream that requires very little maintenance on your part.

Selling Advertising Space

Obviously, if you are using WordPress to host your blog, you can't sell your own ads. WordPress usually will post video ads at the bottom of your posts and keep all the revenue, but that's the cost of using all their free tools and letting them take care of your blog hosting.

If you want to sell ads, you will have to host your own blog. Once you get used to producing your blog, this isn't very difficult. You can still use all of WordPress' free tools to create your blog and buying a domain and leasing server space isn't very expensive, especially compared to the revenues you can generate by selling ads.

The more subscribers and readers you have and the better your reputation as a blogger, the more you can charge for ads, which can be placed at the top, in the margins or at the bottom of your blog pages. You can charge per impression – that is, a set amount per 1,000 viewers of your blog -- or you can charge a fixed rate for an entire month.

You can search for potential advertisers by including a page on your blog that offers advertising options and gives rates, you can create a "Your Ad Here" box on your blog along with a telephone number, link or email address interested businesses can use to inquire about an ad, or you can even put together an electronic "media kit" which you can send to prospective advertisers that describes the benefits of advertising on your blog. In it, you can discuss the number of readers they can expect to reach;

target audience demographics such as gender, age spread, average household income; and whatever other information you can collect from your readers.

Another option is to use internet networks that buy ad space on popular blogs. The biggest is [Google AdSense](#), which will pay you a share of the revenue of whatever ads they sell on your blog. Although you don't have to worry about handling the sales, when you use these networks you can't control the content of the ads posted on your blog (with the exception of prohibiting pornography, gambling and other unsavory types of ads). Other popular ad networks include [Glam Media](#) and [Burst Media](#).

Converting Blog Collections into eBooks

The publish industry, like so many others impacted by the Internet, is undergoing a huge change. More readers are opting to use Kindles and other eReaders to download and read books, rather than buying or borrowing actual books. One of the side benefits of this is that it is incredibly easy to self-publish your own books using Kindle and other services.

Once you have compiled a substantial amount of published blog content, it's a fairly simple matter to compile them into an eBook, add a cover, a table of contents, an introduction and then upload it onto an online publishing site so people can purchase it.

This is especially true if your blog posts provide how-to information or other helpful content people can use in their everyday lives. Whenever anybody buys your eBook, Amazon will pay you 35% of the sales price. If you want to keep 100% of the sales price, you can market your eBook on your blog, or create a sales page and try to sell it there.

Secrets of Successful Blogging

When most people first start producing a blog, they always check the statistics page daily to see how many readers they have. Although it can take some time to build up a pool of loyal, regular subscribers and occasional readers, if you consistently provide high-quality content, maintain a predictable publishing schedule, and are pro-active about marketing your blog, you can expect to rapidly increase your readership.

When that happens, what began as a hobby can quickly demand much of your time and energy. From developing fresh content to managing your blog to interacting with your readers, you can easily find yourself spending several hours per week on your blog. It's not uncommon for bloggers to become frustrated and eventually reduce the amount of new content they produce or even stop writing altogether.

Still, even if you don't write another single blog posts, unless you actually go in and delete your blog, it will continue to have a life of its own online as people conducting online searches discover your postings and read them for years to come. If you have taken steps to monetize your blog that means that you can have a residual income indefinitely.

Staying Interested In Your Blog

There is a benefit of keeping your blog going for as long as possible. The more regular readers you have, the more respected you are in your niche community, and the more well-known your blog becomes, the more potential revenue there is.

While the initial rush you get from publishing your first blog post will eventually fade away, it's important that you keep yourself interested in your blog for as long as possible so that you can really enjoy the benefits of all your hard work. That's why it's so important at the outset not to create an unrealistic publishing schedule that can't be sustained. It's better to start out slow: You can always add more later.

A good way to stay interested in your blog and at the same time not let it take over your life is to schedule only certain periods of time during which you work on your blog. When and how many hours that is per week depends on your schedule, but when you know that during those hours you will be focusing on your blog, it's easier to keep it going longer.

Developing Loyal Followers

One of the greatest pleasures of blogging is interacting with people from all over the world who share your enthusiasm for your subject matter. So keeping involved with those people is another way to keep your blog going. Reading and commenting on other people's blogs can keep you

engaged in the online community and also help provide you with a steady stream of new material that you can use for inspiration.

Another idea is to invite other people to “guest post” on your blog in exchange for your doing the same on theirs. This is a good way to get your blog in front of a whole new group of potential followers who are already interested in your subject matter. Remember: The larger your subscription list and daily hits, the more you can charge for advertising, the more potential customers you have for affiliate products you promote, and the more popular you will be.

When people leave comments on your blog posts, try to always respond so that you can help build interpersonal relationships with your readers. Not only can this lead to rewarding friendships, but it also increases the chances that they will be open to any commercial purposes you may have with your blog.

Running Your Blog Like a Business

Once you realize how easy it is to make money from producing your blog, you probably are going to want to maximize the amount of revenue you can earn for your efforts. A lot of casual bloggers end up running their blogs like a business because it’s fun, easy, and you get to work with topics that you already enjoy.

Even if you devote only a few hours per week to your blog and work on it in your spare time, it's possible to earn hundreds or even thousands of dollars per month from your blog.

As a business owner, your job is to keep your content fresh, interesting, and high-value so that people will keep looking forward to your postings and your popularity will improve. If you are struggling with coming up with new ideas, you should consider outsourcing your content. That means hiring freelance writers to create your content for you. There are plenty of places you can go to find skilled writers who will produce high-quality content for you at reasonable prices.

Among the most popular freelance writing hiring sites are [eLance](#), [Guru](#) and [ODesk](#). On most of these sites, you set a range of what you are willing to pay and freelancers will submit bids on your project, along with data about their experience and expertise in your subject area. You don't have to hire the lowest bidder. You can choose whichever one you want.

Maintaining Consistency and Quality

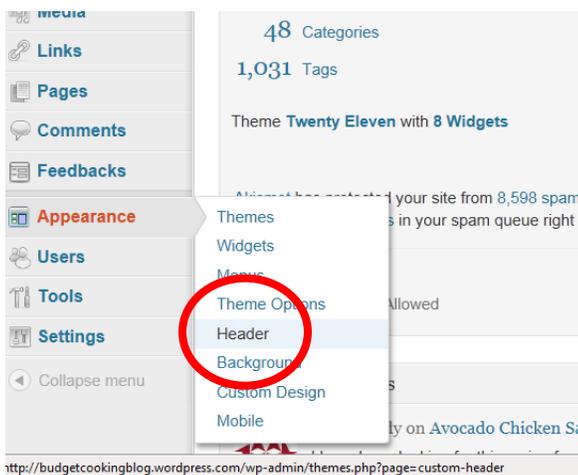
The best way to build your following is to continually provide high-value content that people can use. This will keep people coming back again and again and will also cause them to recommend your blog to other people. If you are struggling to maintain your own quality standards, consider investing in outsourcing so that you can continue to build the size of your blog and your potential earnings.

The look of your blog will impact how many new visitors subscribe to your blog. When you select your theme while setting up your blog, you can change it anytime you want. Keep tabs on the new themes that are being introduced all the time. If you find a theme you like better or if you practice your CSS skills and want to try designing your own theme, by all means go for it.

You probably don't want to change your theme too often otherwise you run the risk of disorienting your regular readers. If they find a new design for your blog every time they visit it, they may be less likely come back. While most readers welcome the occasional upgrade, they also appreciate normalcy and routine.

An easy way to keep your blog looking fresh and lively without changing your theme is to periodically change out the image you use at the

top of your blog. For example, season images can reflect the passing months without disturbing your readers with an entirely new blog design. Think of your blog as a magazine cover. It should have consistencies every issue but with fresh images as well. Change your images by clicking on the "Headers" button on the "Appearance" box on your WordPress



dashboard.

As you get the hang of blogging, another way to sustain your interest is by creating multiple blogs on a variety of different subjects. This lets you to explore your different interests while still appealing to fans of a particular niche or genre. You also can diversify your commercial base.

If you want to write about many diverse topics, you may be better off creating separate blogs otherwise you run the risk of driving off your regular readers. For example, if you write a regular health and fitness blog but you want to talk about your interest in movies, it's probably not a good idea to blend the two. Instead, just launch a second blog and keep the two topics separate. That way you can continually build your readership while still writing about the topics that you are passionate about.

Improving Your Search Engine Rankings

While it's important to have a regular supply of loyal readers, it's also important to continually be attracting new visitors to your blogs. You can accomplish by using the same techniques you would use to attract visitors to any other type of web pages.

Organic SEO refers to free, natural techniques for making your blogs more attractive to the big search engines, such as Google and Bing. Keywords are an important way to accomplish this. When a user goes online and types in a search, the words they enter are called "keywords". The results generated by the search engine are all the web sites that include those keywords. Find the best keywords for your niche, include

them in strategic places within your blog and you can improve your ranking on the Search Engine Result Page (SERP) for those keywords.

You want to include these keywords within your content the optimal number of times. This is called keyword saturation. Search engines give more value to pages that have keyword saturation of about 2 percent. That means that if your web content is 500 words long, your keywords should be included about 10 times.

$$\mathbf{500 \text{ (Total \# of Words)} \times .02 \text{ (Optimal KW Density Rate)} = 10}$$

Where you place the keywords is also very important. Search engines definitely want to see your keywords and phrases in the headline, in sub-headlines, and in the first paragraph and in the last paragraph. Where you distribute them throughout the rest of the blog is up to you, as long as they have the proper density level.

Search engines are looking for web pages they think their users will find to be the coolest and most useful. As a result, they give more value to blogs that have a lot of rich content. That includes videos, audio file, slideshows, polls, word clouds and other interactive content that make a web page more lively and entertaining.

Search engines also prefer sites that are popular. The more backlinks you have – especially from sites the search engines consider to be expert sites or authoritative – the higher your pages will be ranked. Authoritative

sites are those sites that many people use to get answers to their questions. Examples would include Wikipedia, About.com and eHow.com. Expert sites generally include those with that use the suffix .gov or .edu in their web addresses. These designate governmental and academic sites, respectively.

One way to get backlinks to your pages is simply to leave comments on articles posted on these sites, or to participate in forums, making sure you always include your resource box or signature file including your page's address with every posting. Then, every time somebody follows your link back to your page, your ranking improves.

Make sure your primary keyword is included in your URL, which is the address the internet uses to guide visitors to your site. Also, you can use the easy WordPress All-in-One SEO Pack plug-in to include keywords in your metadata, which are the little descriptions beneath each link on Google. Also, use <h1> and <h2> to create break up your page with headings and to let search engines know which keywords are important on your pages. Input one or more keywords into your image file name, as well as putting it into the ALT text for the image.

Your Blogging Future

Once you begin blogging, you will see how fun and entertaining it can be. You also will learn how potentially profitable blogging can be. The growing popularity of blogging means that there are an ever increasing number of bloggers competing for the same pool of readers, but if you

make the effort to create high-quality content that your readers can use in their everyday lives, you can quickly build your blog's popularity and your potential commercial base.

Using the steps and techniques outlined in this guide, you can easily create, manage and profit from your own blog. Once you get your blog up and running, start interacting with other bloggers and your readers, and hopefully start earning money, you are going to see that blogging can be an enjoyable way to do something you love while making money at the same time.

Enjoy your blogging future and good luck!