

The easiest way to feed your website and make it work!

So... you've got a website? You've probably spent a great deal of thought, time, effort (and budget!) on making sure it looks good and says all the right things to entice your visitors to buy. It should have all the appropriate elements, functionality and 'tricks of the trade' to help it do what you need it to do.

And once your site's live on the web, you can just leave it there and it'll do its stuff, right? Errr... WRONG!

That's a bit like having loads of lovely brochures designed and printed, then hiding them away in a cupboard rather than sending them out to customers. You need people to see your website; so how can you help make sure they do?

It's all about being as relevant as possible to the search engines, so when people search for what you do, they see your site in the results.

Amongst other things, search engines assess your site for relevant, topical and new content. If yours ranks well against others, then it will show well in the search results; if it doesn't, you'll be languishing down the pages!

New content is what search engines like to eat best: if you don't fuel your website with new content, they have nothing to munch on and digest!

You could think of them as being a bit like teenagers: always hungry, bit of a short attention span, and easily bored. But how can you keep adding new content without constant – and costly – website updates?

One of the easiest ways is to add a blog to your website.

Blogs and blogging are a huge subject. Perhaps the most frequent question we're asked is: "Do I really need to blog?" Then it's: "How do I get started?", followed by: "How long should a blog be?"

So... do you really need to blog? It's a reluctance which unites business people across the board, from start-up entrepreneurs to larger corporate clients; and the answer is... "YES!" Well, you do if you want to make the most of your web presence and potential.

If you're avoiding blogging, you're probably missing out on valuable leads and sales, because...

B2B marketers who use blogs receive **67% more leads** than those who don't;
rising to 88% for B2C marketers*

Companies which blog receive **97% more links** to their website
than those which don't*

Blogs appear in specific search results, when your customers and prospects are actively seeking information and thus receptive to your messages. And blogs are rated as the 5th most trusted source for accurate information*: bearing in mind how many sources there are these days, that's a pretty solid vote of confidence!

Just one blog a week, posted on your website, is enough to keep the search engines' hunger pangs at bay!

So what do you do and how do you get started?

Here are just a few of our top hints and tips...

1. **Stand-alone or on your business website?** It's your choice. Having it on your website creates opportunities for readers to explore your offering; stand-alone is more typical if you want a personal presence rather than one linked to your business.
2. **Create personality:** like all social media, blogging is about personality: your own, or the one you wish to create for your business. Set your style, demonstrate your knowledge and expertise, share your thoughts and professional opinions: that's what readers are looking for.
3. **Showcase multiple disciplines:** Why not share expertise from across your functions and departments with, say, a technical blog, a management blog, a customer service blog? It helps demonstrate and 'cement' your expert status.
4. **Create catchy headlines:** use every-day language which resonates with your audience, but punch it up, give it attitude, even dare to be controversial... it's all about getting noticed!
5. **Structure your blog:** give it a beginning, a middle and an end; break it up into manageable chunks; tell a story and walk your readers through to action.
6. **Be generous** with your knowledge and your 'assets'! It's all about providing incredible value. Think free reports, podcasts, webinars, how-to guides: whatever adds value for your audience.
7. **Consider length: for SEO purposes** (which is what we're looking at in this report), stats show the ideal blog post (on Google) is 2,100-2,400 words** long, demonstrating how Google favours in-depth content which provides value. But the right short post can still rank well too.
8. **Write for your readers:** some will skim your copy (43% of readers admit to this!*), others really want the detail, so include copy techniques which appeal to both.
9. **Include great CTAs.** Your blog should have a purpose: would you like readers to take a download, visit your website, share, comment, even call you? Then tell them, in a nice way!
10. **Employ tactics to increase your 'find-ability':** SEO & SEM, categories, tags, links, sharing, even visual appearance and user-friendliness all help boost your post.
11. **Sign it with a photograph:** people relate to people far better than to a brand logo. Including a photo of the post's author builds your audience trust and improves the authority of your content. It's particularly good if you have multiple authors or guest bloggers.
12. **Post when your readers are active.** Use analytic tools to help you understand your audience and their habits. Put your blog live when they're most likely to read it and try to post on the same day/days every week.
13. **Encourage sharing.** Click to Tweet extracts are great for boosting shares, but so are video clips, photographs, infographics and lists. Ask your readers to share; it works!
14. **Encourage comments too.** For instance, what did your readers agree or disagree with and why? What's their take on your subject? Connect with them and keep the discussion going.

15. **Integrate your blog into your marketing programme:** it's great content – and let's face it, you've probably spent quite some time writing it – so why not make the most of it? Plan how to maximise its reach and then re-purpose it for other activities: it's a great resource.

And finally: give it time! Rome wasn't built in a day and your blog won't go global in one either. It needs active promotion, so use every opportunity you can to publicise it and grow your readership.

Be consistent, blog regularly and deliver on your promises.

There's loads more to know about blogging structure and tactics

Check out our other resources to learn more...

Blog structure: for just one example, [download our template](#)

'Find-ability': discover our [6 key tactics here](#)

And if you have any questions about blogging and how you can get the most from your blog posts... please ask!

Give us a call or drop us an email to discover how we can help you make blogging part of your marketing success story.

Bonus tip: another simple way to add fresh content to your website is to upload all your press releases to a news page. Got to keep those search engines well fed!

* Blogspot

** Hubspot