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# **Chapter 1**

## **What is Creative Blogging?**



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Blogging is one of the biggest things to ever hit the Internet. While most people are already familiar with the basics of what a blog is, many are still at a loss when it comes to the details of complexities that come with this phenomenon. When they first came into use, blogs were simple personal journals that people published online to keep a record of their personal thoughts and feelings much like how one would use a diary. These blogs consisted of individual dated posts that could contain anything from personal thoughts to records of day-to-day events. These first blogs were maintained by individuals or small groups of people for a wide variety of reasons. However, blogs evolved as time passed by.

### **The Origins Of The Blogging Phenomenon**

When the Internet was first opened to the public, people had to rely on early online services like Internet forums. These forums allowed people to post their thoughts regarding anything under the sun on forums threads. However, people kept searching for better ways to express themselves online and this is where online diaries came in. These online diaries were the forefathers of the modern blog.

While these early “proto-blogs” had most of the elements of a modern blog, they were simply modified web sites that lacked the automated elements of modern day blogs. As more and more web publishing tools became available, the advent of the Blogging Phenomenon began to take

shape and people came to realize the power that these blogs had. These blogs became avenues for expression and sometimes, even tools for communication but more than that; people came to realize that these blogs could be used to earn money.

## **What Motivates People to Start Blogging?**

People blog for a wide variety of reasons. As stated above, some people simply like keeping online journals. On the other hand some people, use their blogs as a means of expressing themselves. However, these are just a few of the more obvious reasons to start blogging and these reasons are simply part of the tip of the proverbial iceberg. Blogs can offer you so much more.

If you are looking for an interesting way of making money, then perhaps you should seriously consider starting a blog. These days, informative and content rich blogs can help you rake in a lot of cash. In addition to this, picking the right topics for your blog can also make the experience fulfilling and enjoyable while being profitable at the same time.

## **Blogging About Topics that You're Passionate About**

Before starting a blog, the first thing that you will need to do is to choose topics that you can blog about. While you can certainly blog about anything under the sun, it would be best if you pick topics that you are both knowledgeable and passionate about. Everybody has things that they are interested in. Some people are passionate about fishing while others love everything about baking. You may have an interesting hobby or you may be very knowledgeable about things related to your career. Everybody is an expert in something. These personal hobbies and interests are key elements that you can use to create a successful and popular blog.

Picking a topic that you are already passionate about can also help you enjoy that process of starting and maintaining your blog. As your blog becomes more popular, the opportunities available to you for making money online increase. Imagine making money while writing about something you love. For some people, this may sound like the ultimate fulfillment of a lifelong dream; making money out of doing something you love.

# **Chapter 2**

## **Researching Demand For Your Passion**



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Once you have already picked a topic that you are passionate about, you will then have to do a little research about the viability of your topic for your blog. While any topic can be used to start a blog, you will still have to take a few things into consideration if you want to make money out of maintaining a blog. Will people want to read your blog? Are there already thousands of blogs out there related to the topic you want to write about? These are just a few of the questions that you need to ask yourself if you want to come up with a blog that can stand the test of time while helping you earn some cash.

### **The Importance of Demand in Blogging**

Demand is a very important factor when it comes to blogging. If you pick a topic that only a few people will want to read, then your prospects for earning money with your blog can be very dim. If you pick a topic that thousands of other blogs are already talking about, then you will face stiff competition from seasoned bloggers. This is the reason why picking a great topic can be very difficult and confusing for some. A topic for your blog can also be referred to as your niche market. While there are many niche markets out there for the taking, finding them can take a bit of work; and this is where your research will come in.

While some niche markets have already been taken over by thousands of bloggers from around the world, some of these markets still have room for new entrants. On the other hand, some niche markets might have only a handful of bloggers but these markets can also have limited demand. This means that even if there are only ten or so bloggers handling a particular niche market, there is no more room for new

entrants since there are also a limited number of people subscribing to these blogs.

When picking a niche market, you will always need to look out for demand. If you are confident that there is still a strong demand for the particular niche market that you have chosen, then you can go ahead with your blog. If not, then it is best to move on to a more profitable niche market.

### **Looking for a Niche Market with Good Demand**

Finding a niche market that is still in demand can be a daunting process. However, you can find the market research you will need to make a choice fairly easily. You can start by reading a newspaper or a few current magazines lying around house. Look for topics that people want to read about. You can also go to the mall to look at things that people are interested in. If you are online regularly, then you should also check popular blogs as well as good RSS feeds. Something might catch your eye. However, you should keep in mind that you need to write about something that you are intimately familiar with. Think about your hobbies and the things that you like doing. You're bound to think of something that is both enjoyable and profitable as well. Once you have come up with a list of potential niche markets, then you will need to start on your keyword research.

### **Getting on with Keyword Research**

Keyword research is very important to the profitability of your blog. This will help you find concrete statistical evidence regarding the demand for the niche market that you have chosen. This entails searching for keywords as well as key phrases that people use to track down information when they use search engines like Google and Yahoo. Keyword research tools can help you find out how many people are using the keywords that you are targeting for your blog.

- **Google Keyword Tool – Total searches per month**

Google's Adwords tool is perhaps one of the most useful tools you can use to help you with keyword research. While it was initially used primarily for PPC (pay-per-click) style campaigns, enterprising individuals have learned to use the tool creatively. Simply stated, the Google Adwords tool can tell you how many people are using certain keywords and phrases and they use Google search. This information can be very valuable for people who want to start blogs with the goal of

earning money. However, you will need to learn how to use the filters within the tool in order to get relevant information that you can actually use practically.

In order to make the most out of the Adwords tool, you need to make sure that you have checked the box labeled “Only show ideas related to my search terms.” This will help you narrow down your search to relevant keywords. If you fail to check this option, you will end up with a ton of keywords that may be unrelated to what you were originally searching for. Depending on your location as well as your niche market, you should also be mindful of the location and language parameters on the Adwords tool.

After you have completed your search, you will be given a list of potential keywords that you can use in planning your blog. In addition to this, you will also be given data on the demand for these keywords in terms of number of searches. While this can give you valuable insight in planning your blog, you will still need to do some research regarding the amount of competition for your chosen keywords. With a little time and patience, you will be able to come up with a viable list of keywords that you can use in your blog.

- **Taking Advantage of Clickbank**

While researching about keywords and keyword statistics are certainly important when conducting market research, you may also find it helpful to do some extra research regarding what people are interested in buying these days. This is especially important for people who have chosen to blog about certain products or services. If you have chosen to write a tech blog, for example, you may want to do some research regarding which gadgets are popular among consumers these days. This will certainly give you an advantage when it comes to positioning your blog. The easiest way you can find information about which products are hot is by using Clickbank.

There are numerous ways of making money from your blog and one of the most popular is to sell products on your blog. You can do this directly or indirectly by affiliate marketing. Regardless, Clickbank can give you a wealth of information that you can use to your advantage. In fact, learning about which products are more popular than others can actually change the way you write your blog.

You may be asking yourself how Clickbank can give you valuable information regarding hot products. Simply put, it does this using a very

large database containing information about products. This includes a description of a product as well as statistical information related to how many people are purchasing the said product. This is where the term Gravity comes in. In the world of Clickbank, gravity simply refers to the total number of people (affiliates in online marketing terms) who were able to sell a specific product. Generally speaking, the higher the gravity of a product, the more popular it is among consumers. While gravity is by no means a definitive way of judging popularity, it is still a pretty reliable way of judging the profitability of certain products. You should also look out for products that have a super high gravity rating. If you see a product with this rating, you can rest assured that you are looking at a very popular and profitable product.

If you want to get started using Clickbank for market research, simply click the marketplace link on Clickbank's homepage. You will immediately see a list of categories that you can use to narrow down your search. Clickbank has data on almost any product you can think of so take your time to search for information relevant to your blog.

- **Making Sense of the Jungle that is Amazon.com**

In addition to the tools and services mentioned earlier, Amazon.com is also a veritable treasure trove of information that can help you create a profitable blog. Amazon is one of the most successful and popular online shopping sites so it should come as no surprise that they can provide you with valuable market research data that you can use to your advantage. By simply searching for a random product on Amazon, you will notice that you will also be provided with data regarding other products other people are interested in. If you search for laptops, for example, you will be able to see what other products people who searched for laptops are also interested in buying. In addition to this, you can also see the products that people often buy along with their laptops.

While you can buy almost anything from Amazon, the site is also a great place to buy books. This includes both e-books as well as printed books. While you may be thinking of ordering the latest limited edition Tolkien Box Set, you may also be interested in the fact that you can also sell your own e-books on Amazon. If you are confident enough about writing for your blog, then writing an e-book shouldn't sound too far-fetched. In case you want to go down this road, then Amazon.com can certainly help you position your own e-book in the market. Amazon can give you information regarding the profitability of your e-book based on which books are selling and which books remain largely ignored by consumers.

When using Amazon for market research, it also pays to remember that the more reviews there are about a certain product, the more popular it is. You should keep an eye out for products that have a lot of positive reviews since this is a solid indication that people are willing to buy the said product.

You should also pay close attention to Amazon's built in search tool. This tool can also be used to gather market data and it can provide you with valuable information about competition. Search for a particular keyword you are trying to target and see what comes up. From the search results, you can make assumptions about the competition you are facing. Are there low quality products for a very popular keyword? If you think you can do better, then the information that you gather from Amazon can certainly help you make your choice.

If you decide to sell your own ebooks on Amazon, Here are a few things you should look out for.

1. The number of ebooks being sold related to your niche.
2. The currency of the books available. Check if the current title available were published within the last year or so.
3. Check the older books on the list and see if they are still popular among consumers.
4. The average length of the ebooks being sold. This will give you a good indication regarding the length of the ebook that you plan to write. If you see that most of the ebooks being sold related to your chosen topic are to long and you do not have the skills nor the patience to write longer ebooks, then it is best to more on to another niche market.

# **Chapter 3**

## **Setting Up Your Blog**



Image: FreeDigitalPhotos.net

Once you have chosen a niche market and you have already done your research, then you can now get down to business putting up your blog. However, this is not as simple as it sounds. There are a number of steps that you will have to complete before you can release your blog into the wilds of the Internet. While the process can seem like a daunting task, especially for the uninitiated, this chapter will provide you with the information that you need to set-up your blog. After going through all of the steps, you can finally call yourself the proud owner of a blog!

### **Free vs. Paid – Making the Right Choice**

When starting your first blog, one of the most important choices that you have to make involves making a choice between free blogging services and paid ones. While many are quick to dismiss one option for a wide variety of reasons, it pays to have all the information you need to make to right choice when it comes to your blog. While both of these options have their own perks as well as pitfalls, you will need to select the option that suits your needs, technical know-how as well as your budget.

- **Free**

If you choose to go with free blogging services, then its main selling point is pretty obvious. This is by far the cheapest option available for would-be bloggers. After all, nothing is cheaper than a free service. Choosing free blogging services will save you a lot of money that would have otherwise been spent on paying for storage as well as bandwidth for your blog. With free blogging services, you can also get a domain name for free. However, this also comes with a huge disadvantage since you are not free to pick any domain name that you want. Think about it, which one of these domain names is catchier and easier to remember:

yourblog.blogspot.com or yourblog.com? When using a free blog service, you will have to add the services own domain to your own. This makes your domain name harder to remember. In addition to this, it can also make your blog seem less credible and less professional.

Another downside to using a free blogging service is that there are millions of other people using the same service and finding a good sub domain that is still available can be a grueling process. Worse comes to worse, you may get stuck with a domain like yourblog1984.blogspot.com. Popular free blogging services like the free version of Wordpress, blogspot and blogger may seem like a good choice, but things may turn out for the worst if you are not careful.

When it comes to the level of technical know-how required to run a blog, free blogging services are a lot easier to use. These services often come with easy to use interfaces that even a complete novice can easily use. However, this also means that you have a lot less control over the look and feel of your blog and chances are, you will have a hard time building a unique looking site using a free service. Since your blog will look similar to thousands of other blogs and sites out there, your blog may lack the necessary oomph it takes to make it memorable for first time visitors.

- **Paid**

First of all, it is best to get the main disadvantage out of the way. Using a paid services means that you will need to pay for the services that you are using. You will need to pay for the hosting as well as the bandwidth and online storage space that you are using. In addition to this, you will also need to pay for registering your domain. These days, there are flexible payment terms when it comes to your hosting fees. This means that you can choose to pay monthly, twice per year, once per year or even once every two years. You will also need to pay yearly to renew your domain registration. While this means that you may incur extra costs in putting up and maintaining your blog, it does come with its own advantages.

The first advantage that you get from using paid hosting services is that you are given a lot of extra space compared to free blogging services. This means that you can post more content online like photos, audio clips or even videos. Having the ability to do this opens up a whole new world for your blog and you can easily keep your visitors coming back for more. In addition to this, you are also given access to more sophisticated and powerful tools that you can use to make a truly unique blog. This means that you can tweak every single aspect of your blog to your liking.

Aside from tools to change the look and feel of your site, you can also access other tools that can provide you with information about the statistics of your site. These tools can tell you which sections of your blog people visit most often as well as the total number of visitors that you get each month.

Since you are now paying for your own domain name, this means that you can choose any name you want as long as it is still available. Now, you won't have to deal with having an annoying blogpost.com at the end of your domain.

- **Recommendations**

For bloggers that are seriously going into this venture with the intent of earning revenues in the future, using paid services is still the best option. The benefits of using a paid service far outweigh the costs incurred.

## **Domain and Hosting**

Choosing a good domain as well as a good host can make or break a blog. A good domain name can help in driving more traffic to a blog. In addition to this, domains that are easy to remember have a better track record for encouraging visitors to keep coming back. On the other hand, a host serves as the virtual home of a blog. All of the data contained in a blog are stored in a host's servers. In addition to this, having a good host also means having good tools that can be used to efficiently manage a blog. Having a reliable host can also mean less downtime for a blog. These are just a few of the factors that should be considered when choosing a good domain as well as a good host.

- **Choosing the Perfect Domain**

While choosing the perfect domain seems like a fairly straightforward affair, there are certain conventions that need to be followed when choosing a domain name.

The first thing that you will have to do is to narrow down your list of keywords. Start by narrowing them down to ten. Pick the shortest and catchiest keywords in your list. Keep in mind that your keywords should be very easy to remember. Once you have completed your list, you may also add a few catchy words here and there to make your keywords more unique. If you have chosen to work with a keyword like powerdrill for

example, you can choose to add extra words to make it more unique. You may end up with potential domain names like powerdrillHQ. Keep on trying until you come up with a domain that you like.

Once you have a list of potential domain names, you can check online to see if they are still available. While it is generally true that a lot of the really good domain names are taken, you can still find a great domain name that is still up for grabs. You can also tweak your domain name until you find one that is available. You can try using both the plural or singular forms of your keywords and see if they are still available.

Statistics have consistently shown that people favor blogs with shorter and catchier domain compared to blogs with long and hard to remember names. After all, remembering a site named yourblog.com is a lot easier than trying to remember a site named yourfirsteverblog.com. you should also take note that people often prefer domains that end in .com as opposed to sites that end in .mobi, .info etc.

When choosing domain names, you should also keep in mind that you may be accused of copyright infringement if you choose the wrong domain name regardless of whether this was intentional or not. This is one of the main reasons why doing your research is so important.

You should also steer clear of using hyphens and numbers in your domain name since this can make things very confusing for potential visitors. After all, powerdrillHQ.com is a lot easier to remember compared to a domain name like powerdrill101.com or power-drillHQ.com.

Lastly, it may also pay to avoid using words that can be associated with current fads and trends. This is because trends and fads come and go and in time, your domain may seem dated to some visitors.

- **Choosing a Reliable Host**

Choosing a good host for your blog is a process that should be taken very seriously. A good host can make or break the success of a blog. Keeping this in mind, you can choose from a large number of reputable hosts online. As with most things on the Internet these days, the first thing that you have to do is to research.

Whether you are starting your blog from scratch or upgrading from a free blogging service, using a great paid hosting service can definitely get your blog started on the road to success. But before you go off looking for

a new host for your blog, you will need to learn the language. For the uninitiated, the terms and concepts associated with choosing a host can seem like an alien language from another planet. Most of these terms may seem vaguely familiar but you will have to look up most of them so that you know what you are looking for. Familiarize yourself with the definitions of terms like bandwidth, VPN, SSL certificates and Total DNS control. While you may not need some of these things for setting up your blog, it pays to know the language when choosing a host or a hosting plan. Who knows? You may need some of these extra services in the future.

While there are many types of hosting services available these days, the most common ones that you will come across include dedicated hosting, VPS hosting, grid hosting and shared hosting. Each of these hosting services are designed for people with different needs so you should choose wisely. If you make the wrong choice, you may end up wasting a lot of money. In a worse case scenario, you may end up with a blog that people cannot access. Here is a brief description of each type of service.

#### i. Dedicated Hosting

With a dedicated hosting service, you are renting your own server. This means that you can access all of the functions of the server you are renting. However, this is also one of the most expensive options out there. However, this type of service is recommended for experienced web masters who work with large projects and can make full use of the server's capabilities.

#### ii. VPS Hosting

A VPS hosting service, also known as a Virtual Private Server hosting service, is a type of hosting arrangement where a small number of people share space on a single server. While you are sharing a server with other people, you have your own administrator access privileges and you can install whatever extra features you want. This is because each person is given a dedicated share of the server independent of the others. This gives you the flexibility of a Dedicated hosting service with a smaller price tag. You should also keep in mind that a VPS hosting service shares a lot of similarities with dedicated hosting. While you get a significantly less powerful set up compared to dedicated hosting, this is the less expensive option of the two. Like using a dedicated hosting service, this type of hosting is also recommended for experience webmasters.

### iii. Grid Hosting

Grid hosting is cheaper than both dedicated and VPS services but slightly more expensive than shared hosting. In this case you are sharing the space and resources of a server with a large number of people. However, the resources available to you are flexible. This means that if you experience incidents when the number of visitors to your site suddenly rises depending on the time of day or month, then your blog will be able to handle the increased traffic.

### iv. Shared Hosting

Out of all the options discussed in this section, shared hosting is the most affordable option. However, expect that there are more than a hundred people sharing the server with you. In addition to that, you are also sharing the server's resources with everybody else on the same server. If you don't need the amount of resources available to people using dedicated hosting or VPS hosting, then this may be the perfect choice for you. This is also a significantly cheaper option compared to the first three hosting services described above. However, this type of service is also a lot less reliable. This is the perfect set-up for blogs that do not require a lot of power and storage space.

Once you have chosen the type of hosting service you need for your blog, then you will need to decide on your budget. While some hosting companies offer cheaper services than others, cheaper does not always mean better. You will need to factor in the company's reputation as well as their reliability. Downtime is never good for a blog and choosing a company that can ensure that your site is always up and running is definitely a must.

When choosing a host, you can easily check reviews online. This will help you get a feel for the reputation of different hosting companies. The more positive reviews about a service you can find, the better. You should also pay attention to negative reviews since this will help give you an idea regarding the common problems that people face when dealing with certain hosting services. Even the most reliable and reputable hosting services will have a negative review here and there. In this industry, information is very important. The more you know about potential hosting services, the better your decisions will be.

You can also find a number of free services online that will allow you to test the capabilities of hosting services. Simply enter a domain name into these tools and they will be able to provide with a comprehensive report about the hosting service used by the website in question. You should also pay close attention to the hosting companies website. A hosting company's website is a veritable treasure trove of information. Keep a close eye on the packages and services that they are offering. You can also opt to take with a customer service representative from a hosting company if you want to dig deeper.

Once you have settled on a hosting company, it is preferable that you choose a shorter contract. This way, you will be able to move your blog to a new host in case you are not satisfied with the services being provided by your host. If you are satisfied with your current host, then you can simply sign up for a longer contract once your current contract ends. You should also keep a backup list of reputable alternatives to your current host so you will know where to move your site in short order in case you want to switch web hosts for some reason.

## **Understanding Wordpress**

For many bloggers, Wordpress is probably the best thing ever invented since sliced bread. This is because it allows bloggers to tweak almost every little detail in their blogs. This gives bloggers tremendous power and flexibility in managing their blogs and websites. Simply put, Wordpress is a CMS or content management system and blogging tool that makes it easy to manage, modify and maintain blogs. It is powered using MySQL as well as PHP giving it unprecedented flexibility over other options available in the market. In addition to this, Wordpress is also open source which means many of its features are available free of charge. Among its notable features include a highly regarded plug-in system that allows users to install plug-ins at will; but more on plug-ins later. While there are other content management systems out there, Wordpress is undeniable the most popular and for a lot of good reasons.

Aside from its obvious popularity, why are millions of people using Wordpress and why should you use it for your own blog? Here are a few of the best reasons:

- **It's Open Source and it's free**

For the most powerful and flexible CMS available to be free may seem like a dream come true for some but this is one of the best things about Wordpress. If you are asking why such a wonderful system is free, this is because Wordpress is open source. It is developed by a wonderful community of talented individuals who are simply doing it to help the entire online community as a whole.

- **Wordpress' Plug-in Offers Unprecedented Flexibility**

While there are a lot of other blog management systems out there that also allow the use of plug-ins, no other system out there can match Wordpress when it comes to the sheer number of plug-ins available. In addition to this, the plug-in architecture used in Wordpress is the most stable and functional system of its kind. You can add almost any feature to your blog using Wordpress plug-ins. You can add interactive photo galleries or you can add and manage a forum for your blog. In addition to this, you can also add shopping cart functionalities to your blog using Wordpress plug-ins if you happen to be selling stuff online. Due to the way Wordpress was designed, plug-in developers can add numerous functions to the system without the need to modify the core functionalities of Wordpress itself. In addition to this, there are literally hundreds of thousands of developers out there who make new Wordpress plug-ins each day. If you are thinking of adding a new feature to your blog, then chances are, there is a plug-in out there somewhere that can help you do just that.

- **The Best Blogging Tool on the Planet**

Simply, put Wordpress is by far the best blogging tool available for any blogger. If you are planning on pursuing blogging seriously, then you simply cannot ignore the things that Wordpress has to offer. If you already have a website and you are thinking of adding a blog to your homepage, then using Wordpress is the easiest way to do this.

- **All the Themes You Could Ever Want**

In this day and age, the average Netizen has the attention span of a goldfish. This is the main reason why it is important for your blog to be eye catching. And one way to do this is to use themes. There are a myriad of themes available in the market today. While many are free, you will have to pay for some of the better themes out there. However, you can easily make a theme yourself if you want. If you want a professionally

done theme, then you can hire a graphic artist to make a custom made theme for you. Using Wordpress, applying themes is a very easy and straightforward process. You can also change the theme of your blog as often as you want.

- **Ease of Installation**

Wordpress is also known for how easy it is to install. In fact, it can be done in as little as five minutes. Aside from that, Wordpress is also very secure and easy to upgrade. Once a new version comes up, you can update Wordpress with the click of a button.

### **How to Set Up Wordpress**

Wordpress is very easy to set up and install. However, some planning will go a long way in getting your blog up and running. You will need to decide whether you are going to install Wordpress in a sub-directory or the root directory. If you are not sure yet, you can work with a trial site while you learn the ropes. You also need to list down the categories you will use in your site so that organizing things will be a lot easier for you. After deciding on the categories, you will also need to plan the specific pages that you are going to put up. These are fairly standard stuff but setting up Wordpress will be a lot easier if you already have these details planned out in advance.

Once you have completed the short process of installing Wordpress, you will now have to set it up to make sure that it works exactly the way you want it to work. You will first have to familiarize yourself with the Administration Panels of the system. One of the first things that you need to do is to set up your User Information. Simply fill out the required fields and save your progress. Depending on your preferences, the information on your User Profile will be displayed on your Wordpress Theme. You will then need to go to the Administration Settings to set your site's name as well as fill out other information fields.

Once you have your site up and running, you can try posting a few test pages. After you have posted a few entries, you can manage your posts by going into Administration and entering the Posts section. You can also add new pages by going into the Pages section of the Administration panel. If you want to change the look and feel of your site, you can add your change themes by going into the Themes section under Appearance in the Administration panel. It's that easy.

If you want to learn more advanced techniques when using Wordpress, you can expand your knowledge by learning about CSS, XHTML, HTML and PHP.

# **Chapter 4**

## **Your Blog Content**



Image: FreeDigitalPhotos.net

While a successful blog has many elements, content is arguably the most important component of any reputable blog. Great graphics and interesting flash elements might be pleasing to the eyes but content will be the ace up your sleeve. High quality content can help drive people to your site and keep them coming back. This is why stocking up on great content is one of the most important tasks of a blogger. While content include audio and video clips, high quality article are the bread and butter of most bloggers. If you are wondering how to come up with great content for your blog, this chapter deals with the fundamentals are gathering and publishing content for your blog.

### **Where to Get Content?**

There are many ways that you can use to gather good content. If you have the prerequisite skills, you can easily write your own content. If not, there are other avenues that you can pursue like using PLR content, inviting guest bloggers, uploading video clips or using a good autoblogger.

- **Writing your own content**

If you are confident enough with your writing skills, the more affordable way of getting good content for your blog is by writing your own articles. However, you need to make sure that you know what you are doing. Aside from that, you will need to write a lot of content. This is because keeping your blog updated constantly with high quality content is one of the best ways of getting traffic to your blog. With good articles, people will keep on coming back to learn more about your chosen niche market. While it may be tempting to simply write a truckload of articles without

considering the quality of these articles, publishing low quality content is a surefire way of driving away your readers. You should also take care not to plagiarize content. Using plagiarized content will certainly earn you a bad reputation and your blog may never recover from something like this.

Once you have decided to write your own content, you will need to pay close attention to the titles you are going to give your article. A good title can draw attention to your articles. Since people on the net have very short attention spans, you will need to catch their attention as soon as possible. Having great titles is a great way of doing this. Using ordinary and boring sounding titles may cause people to shy away from your blog. While selecting a title sounds like a very straightforward affair, there is more to this process that meets the eye. Some writers tend to write the title first before writing the rest of the article. On the other hand, some people seem more comfortable with finishing the entire article first before pausing to think of a good title. In the end, the decision is up to you. Choose which method is more comfortable and natural to you.

Another thing that you have to pay close attention to is how you will develop your own writing style. You will have to pay close attention to your target audience. Make sure to write in a manner that suits your target audience. You should also do your best to keep your articles short and concise while making sure that you are still offering your readers with as much information as possible. You should also consider using bullet points and lists since these elements can help make the information you are writing about easier to digest for your readers. You can also highlight important parts of your article using a variety of methods like using bold letters or highlighting the actual text.

You should also put some serious thought into how long your articles are going to be. Readers tend to lose interest in articles that are too long. On the other hand, making your articles too short may also put you at a huge disadvantage. Try to find a sweet spot between length and conciseness. Since the ideal article length will differ from niche market to niche market, you will have to decide about the length of your articles yourself.

When writing articles for your blog, you should also be very cautious with how you use keywords. Making good use of keywords can make it easier for search engines to find and index your content. With the right use of keywords, you can help improve your rankings in the SERPs of most search engines. Generally speaking, the higher your ranking on Google, the higher the traffic your site will get.

You should also take the pains to understand your target audience. The more you know about them, the easier it will be to write great articles for them. Understanding your readers will help you reach out to them and grab their attention.

- **Using PLR Content**

If you think that you do not have what it takes to write your own articles, then you can easily use PLR content for your site. This is a good option to consider if you think that you do not have the necessary skills or the time and the patience to create your own content. Since constantly updating your blog will require a lot of content, PLR content offers an attractive alternative for many bloggers.

PLR stands for private label rights. There are many types of PLR content. Once you obtain PLR content, you can easily modify it in any way you want and use the content as your own. This means that you can easily generate a lot of high quality content for your blog without the need to make everything from scratch. In the long run, this can save you a lot of time and elbow grease. While most PLR articles are good to go, you will still need to mix things up a bit. Edit them a bit and truly make them your own. This is because other people also have access to these articles and simply posting them online means that your articles will not be unique. This is one of the worst mistakes you can commit when posting content online. As a consequence, your ranking on search engine SERPs can suffer. If you are using article directories to generate backlinks to your site, then you can also be banned from a directory if you submit raw PLR content. After all, most article directories pride themselves for posting unique content and unmodified PLR articles can be headache for these directories.

Once you have obtained PLR articles, you can easily rewrite the content to make the article your own. While this seems like a lot of work, it is still a whole lot easier compared to creating content from scratch. In addition to this, rewriting an article can give it a distinct flavor that you can call your own. Your readers will recognize this.

- **Guest Blogging**

Guest blogging is another great way to come up with content for your site. With guest blogging, you will have to invite other people to write content for your blog. While you can simply ask anyone to write for your

blog, it is best to get people who are authorities when it comes to the topics you are posting in your blog. It would also be best if you can get guest bloggers who are already respected bloggers in their own right. Aside from getting quality content for your blog, you may also get the benefit of getting extra traffic from your guest blogger's regular readers. However, you will need to give something in return. This could mean anything from providing content for your guest blogger's blog or giving him/her certain perks.

If you are wondering what you can offer guest bloggers in return for posting content on your site, there are many benefits that a guest blogger can reap in the process. For one, your guest blogger will benefit from backlinks posted on your site. In other words, you might be able to drive some traffic to your guest blogger's site. As your blog gains traction, guest bloggers will also benefit from your success.

When looking for guest bloggers, make sure that they know what they will be writing about. You could simply look through other reputable blogs that deal with topics related to your own and invite the owners to be guest bloggers on your blog.

- **Video Blogging**

These days, more and more people are starting to prefer watching videos to reading articles. This is because videos can relay a ton of information in a short amount of time. Back in the day, using videos for blogs wasn't really recommended since it used to take some time before videos could be loaded and streamed. However, Internet speeds these days can easily handle video content and netizens have been quick to get with the program. Videos offer an attractive alternative to text articles. However, they work best when used in tandem with regular articles. The occasional video post will help you mix things up and keep your readers interested in revisiting your site. After all, dynamic and exciting blogs are certainly more attractive when compared to blogs with nothing but text for content.

Essentially, video blogging is the process of posting video content on your blog in lieu or in tandem with standard articles. Most successful blogs post video content either once a week or once a month depending on the blog in question. However, you can post as often as you like depending on your preferences and your marketing plan.

Video blogging is also referred to as vlogging. If you are wondering what it will take to make your own vlogs, then read on for more information.

To make high quality video posts, you will need an HD camcorder or webcam. Back in the day, equipment like these would have set you back thousands of dollars. These days, however, you can get the right equipment for a few hundred dollars. Alternatively, you could just borrow equipment from friends if you happen to know someone who has a good camera. You will also need a computer with video editing software and a little bit of skill. There are now numerous video-editing programs that cater to people with little technical knowledge on video editing.

Choosing topics for your video posts is easy. Simply pick topics that are relevant to your niche market. You can do video commentaries, product reviews or product demos depending on your niche market.

- **Autoblogging**

If you are worried that you do not have the time to maintain a blog, then you will be glad to hear about autoblogging. This is the perfect solution for people live very busy lives but still want to pursue blogging. In addition to saving a lot of time, little effort is also required so you will be able to deal other pressing issues in your life.

An autoblogger is essentially a tool that will allow you to automate your blog. An autoblogger is very easy to set up. On the average, it will take you less than two hours and the benefits you will reap are well worth the initial effort. Once your autoblogger is up and running, you can pretty much leave it be and your site will still get updated regularly. This way, you can truly turn your blog into a passive income earner.

The easiest way to take advantage of autoblogging is by setting up a blog with Wordpress and taking advantage of the numerous autoblogging plug-ins available online. The autoblogger will be in charge of posting content like articles of Youtube clips on your blog. Your autoblogger will handle the messy affair of making tags and linking related posts together. However, it is important to note that you will still need to provide content for your autoblogger to post. Your autoblogger simply automates the process thereby saving you both time and effort.

## Types of Content

When it comes to content, there are many varieties to choose from. Your chosen niche market will also affect your choices. If you have chosen a DIY focused niche market, then you will probably need to post a large number of “how to” type content. However, you will also need to mix things up a bit in order to keep your blog interesting for your visitors. Some of the more common content types include “how to” content, tips, anecdotes stories and a whole lot more. Read on to learn more about the different types of content out there.

- **How to Articles or Videos**

How to articles and videos are essentially content that deal with teaching your visitors how to do something. These types of content often give out step-by-step instructions on how to accomplish certain things or how to deal with certain problems. This type of content is very popular since they are often packed with useful information that your visitors can use to deal with specific tasks or problems. If you are trying to teach people how to reinstall Windows 7 on their computers for example, you will have to walk them through each step. Make sure that you have a list of everything that they will need and try to keep the steps in your article as clear and easy to follow as possible. Do not be afraid to delve into specifics and avoid posting vague and unclear instructions.

- **Tips**

Content that give out tips are a bit similar to How to articles. However, tips are more general and people can choose when and where to use them. Like “How to” type content, Articles that give tips are also packed with information that your visitors can easily use. In addition to this, you can give tips for almost anything under the sun so regardless of your niche market, you can use Tips to your advantage. When giving tips to your readers, however, you will need to be specific. Do not post tips that are glaringly obvious since this may do more harm than good. Make sure that your tips are meaty and helpful. Some blogs have built solid reputations by relying on giving people tips about their chosen topics.

- **Content that deals with personal experiences**

Content that deal with personal experiences is also very useful in keeping people interested in your blog. This is especially true if you are an expert in your chosen niche. People can learn a lot of the experiences of others. If you are a lawyer who specializes in insurance claims for example, your

past experiences can provide a lot of valuable information for people who are going through a claiming process. Articles that deal with past experiences often provide very practical information that can help people who are currently going through the same experience.

- **Stories**

Stories that are posted in blogs are often entertaining or informative anecdotes that people can learn from. This type of content is quite similar to the type discussed above. Alternatively, you can occasionally post entertaining stories that are not necessarily related to your chosen niche. This can help make your blog more interesting. In addition to this, your readers will be able to relate to you more. Using stories is a good way to build a real and meaningful relationship with your readers.

- **Miscellaneous Content**

Aside from the types listed above, there are still other types of content that you can use in your blog. This can include viral videos or articles about trendy topics that you can use to keep people entertained. Some people also make good use of photo blog posts to make their blogs more interesting. You can post a reaction to current events or a personal appeal to your readers. You can also post surveys or polls to get some valuable feedback from your readers.

In the end, it will be to your advantage if you can use all of the types of content listed above. This will help keep your blog dynamic and up to date. However, some blogs specialize in only one type of content and these blogs rarely feature the other types discussed. All in all, it will depend on your chosen niche, your skills as a writer, as well as your personal preferences. Just keep in mind that your content has to be original, relevant and useful for your readers. Additionally, do not forget to do your research and check your facts. Make sure that what you are posting is truthful and credible. Posting outright lies and half-truths have a tendency of turning off visitors from your blog.

# **Chapter 5**

## **Turn Your Blog Into a Money Making Machine**



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There are some people who blog for the sheer joy of blogging. On the other hand, some people blog with the intent of making money. Regardless of your reasons for blogging, no one can deny the fact that blogging can help make you a lot of money. In this day and age where nothing is certain and the economy can come crashing down without warning, having alternative avenues of making money is always a good thing. This is the reason why blogging is such an attractive venture; especially if you enjoy what you are doing. However, there are certain steps that you need to take to make sure that your blog can earn you a lot of money. Having a lot of traffic and posting great content maybe great for your blog and all, but you will need to master the art of making money online if you want to turn your blog into a lean, mean, money making machine. Listed below are some of the best ways to make a profit out of creative blogging.

### **Affiliate Marketing**

Affiliate marketing has consistently proven itself as one of the easiest ways to make money online. Simply put, affiliate marketing is a system in which an affiliate (in this case, you) can make money by trying to sell another person's products online using your blog. Each time you help make a sale, you will get a commission. This is very attractive for many companies since they do not need to make an effort to market their products since their affiliates do the marketing for them. In addition to this, they only need to pay their affiliate every time they make a sale so this is a very cost effective solution as well.

There are many affiliate marketing programs out there and you can easily sign up free of charge. However, you will need to choose which

products you plan to market wisely. This is where your blog comes in. Pick products that are closely related to your chosen niche market. This way, you can maximize your chances of making a sale since chances are, the people who visit your blog will also be interested in the products that you are trying to market. It also goes without saying that the more traffic your blog gets, the more money you can earn from affiliate marketing.

When choosing an affiliate marketing program, you will also need to take a close look at the commission being offered. Commissions can range from as low as 3% or as high as 90% depending on the program as well as the products you have chosen to use. If you have chosen to market low value, fast selling items, then the commission you will get will be pretty low. However, you can still make a lot of revenues by using volume to your advantage. Conversely, expensive and slow moving items will offer higher commissions but chances are, you will only get to sell a few of these items per day. Choose whichever option you think suits your blog the best.

## **Google AdSense And Other Similar Services**

When Google's AdSense first came out, it changed the way people made money online. When push comes to shove, AdSense was and still is one of the most profitable ways of monetizing websites. When used properly, people can make a considerable amount of money with AdSense and in some cases; it could help people earn more money than they could with a full time job.

If this is the first time that you have heard of AdSense, then a short introduction is in order. AdSense is simply a system that was introduced by Google wherein site owners can make money by using advertisements on their sites. If you choose to enroll in AdSense, then you can allow Google to post different types of ads on your website. These ads include text, images as well as video advertisements. When people who visit your site click on one of the ads, you can earn money. If you have thousands of people visiting your blog every day, then this can quickly add up to a lot of revenue.

The ads that Google will post on your site will depend on what your visitors are searching for. This means that Google is able to intelligently provide netizens with ads related to what they search for often. This significantly improves the chances that people will click on the ads. The system works on a commission basis so people who click on the ads need

to purchase something in order for you to get a commission on their purchases. If you want to maximize your profits from AdSense, you will need traffic, a lot of it. That might seem like a daunting task but it will be discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

While AdSense is certainly the most popular option out there, there are many other alternatives as well. Here are some of the most well-known alternatives.

- **AdBrite**

AdBrite is one of the best options for people running non-English based blogs. One of the best things about AdBrite is that they have a very flexible payment scheme. While the default payout amount is \$100, you can change it to \$5.00 or higher. Once you reach your predetermined payout amount, you can get paid. As with most reliable Ad based programs, only sites with high quality content are eligible to join AdBrite. In addition to that, signing up is a breeze and you can do it for free.

- **Bidvertiser**

Bidvertiser is another reputable pay-per-click network that you can join. Bidvertiser differs from other similar networks in that the ads they post can be more niche specific. People who advertise using Bidvertiser also have more control over which sites they want to use for their ads. This is one of the reasons why having a reputable and popular site is a plus. The more popular your site is, the more attractive it will be for prospective advertisers that use Bidvertiser. Bidvertiser uses Paypal so you will need a Paypal account to get paid. You can also get paid every time your account accumulates a minimum amount of \$50. You can expect payment within 10 to 15 days.

- **Chitika**

Chitika is another top contender poised to take on Google's AdSense program. This is one of the most popular alternatives out there and they have already reached over 2 billion impressions. If you think that is impressive, they have already posted ads in over 100,000 websites. Chitika is also a very attractive option for ad publishers since they have a wide range of products available like Owna, which allows publishers to show off their products in novel ways. They also offer a custom shopping portal like ShopLinc as well as many other high quality services. In addition to this, Chitika regularly releases new features to further enhance their already broad portfolio of services.

- **Infolinks**

Infolinks is another good alternative for AdSense. However, many people are turned off by the low cost per click earnings. In addition to this, this is not a good option if you are relying on international traffic. If most of your traffic comes from the US, however, this can be an attractive option. Infolinks uses a color coded system for their ads. You can easily change the ad colors to make them blend into your blog more naturally. Another advantage is that you can choose when and where the ads will appear on your blog.

- **Pocket Cents**

Pocket Cents is a relatively new service compared to the other options discussed in this chapter. However, they have been making a lot of progress in terms of catching up with their competition. More and more people are considering Pocket Cents due to the ease in which people can access the services as well as the speed at which you can start earning money. For advertisers, this is also an attractive option since they offer more affordable terms. Pocket Cent ads are also geared at targeting specific people using their geographical locations while using industry specific ads. Another advantage is that unlike, AdSense, you do not need to maintain a minimum balance. There are also no hidden charges so advertisers get exactly what they pay for.

- **Kontera**

Kontera is another advertising network that has been getting a lot of positive reviews. They are known for using innovative technologies that involve proprietary algorithms and mechanisms that make their ads more effective. As a testament to Kontera's popularity, their ads can be found in a significant number of the top 10,000 websites on the Internet in terms of traffic.

- **Clicksor**

Clicksor is an Ontario based advertising network that was founded back in the year 1999. They have been around for a long time and they have built a reputation for reliability and profitability. It is also one of the highest ranked advertising networks in the world. They offer flexible payment options with a minimum pay-out of \$50. If you are interested

in advertising, the minimum charge for their services is \$20 but it can go up depending on your needs.

- **Exit Junction**

Exit Junction is certainly one of the most versatile advertising networks out there. This is due to the fact that the methods that they use are compatible with many other advertising networks out there. This makes this company a convenient choice for people also using the services of other ad networks. Compared to AdSense where the minimum payout is \$100, Exit Junction offers a minimum payout of \$25

- **Dynamic Oxygen**

Compared to the other advertising networks discussed here, Dynamic Oxygen is relatively new to the game. However, they have quickly proven themselves as a valid contender with their profitable ads and their no-nonsense services. Since this company caters to many types of sites both large and small, newer entrants actually have a shot at earning some money with Dynamic Oxygen. Minimum payout is at \$50 and you have the freedom of getting paid with checks, wiretransfers or Paypal depending on which option is convenient for you.

- **Adbull**

Unlike other advertising networks, signing up with Adbull is a very straightforward process and accounts are approved immediately. This makes it a very attractive option for smaller and newer sites. They offer click through rates ranging from 3% to 5%.

## **Selling PLR Products**

In the earlier chapters, using PLR products to help generate content for your blog was discussed. This is a great way of regularly coming up with high quality content for your blog. However, you can also make money by making and selling PLR products for your blog. This can range from PLR articles, PLR eBooks and PLR videos. If you have a talent for writing or making great videos, then you should seriously consider selling PLR

products as a way to generate higher revenues from your blog. You can easily use your blog as an online store to sell these products.

While there are numerous ways of selling PLR products online, using your own blog to market your products is still the most profitable option. If you choose to use affiliate marketing to sell your products, your profit margins will decrease since you will have to pay other people to market your products for you. If you choose to sell them yourself however, you can earn a lot more money.

When creating PLR content to sell, there are a number of options you can opt for. If you have the skills as well as the time for it, then by all means make the content yourself. If you are short on time, then you can always hire somebody else to do it for you. These days, there are many freelancers on the Internet willing to create PLR content for you for reasonable prices. Even after paying a ghostwriter to make the content for you, you can still turn in a good profit.

When deciding on what PLR products to make, you will need to make sure that the products you make are closely related to your chosen niche market. Since your blog already targets a specific niche, then your PLR products will have to follow suit.

### **Building an Email List**

If you want to make money from your blog using methods like affiliate marketing or selling PLR products, then you will need to build an extensive email list. Most, if not all, email services provide a feature that can allow you to send regular email newsletter to people who subscribe to your newsletter. This is a great way of letting people know that you have something new happening on your blog. In addition to this, you can also use newsletters as constant reminders for people of what you are already offering on your blog. Needless to say, the more people you have on your email list, the higher your chances of turning in a good profit at the end of the day.

To get people to sign up for your newsletter, you will need to place a sign-up form in a conspicuous area on your blog. Make sure that the form is easily visible to encourage people to join. In addition to this, you can also use a pop up window that can prompt visitors to sign up for your newsletter. It also pays to have more than one sign up form on your blog. Place a number of sign up forms in places where people are sure to see

them. Having great content makes it easier to convince people to sign up for your newsletter since they can be updated when you post new content that they can peruse at their own leisure. You can also give them incentives when they join your newsletter such as free PLR products or access to premium videos that you can post in a member's only section of your blog. You should also encourage your subscribers to recommend your blog to their friends and relatives. This way, you can get even more people to join your newsletter.

### **Taking Advantage of CPA**

If you have never heard of CPA before, then it is high time that you did. CPA can change the way you make money from your blog. Simply put, CPA stands for Cost-Per-Action. This means that when a visitor to your blog performs a certain action, you can get paid every time that action is performed. Most of the time, this involves filling up certain forms or answering short surveys. Companies will pay you for this since this is a great way of gathering market research data that they can use to improve their services. These forms or surveys are generally short and easy to accomplish so encouraging your visitors to complete these actions isn't that difficult.

However, signing up for a CPA program can be a bit difficult. First of all, you need to have an established blog that gets a considerable amount of traffic in order to even be considered. If you have just started your blog, then give yourself some time to build up your blog's popularity before signing up. This can save you from a lot of frustration and disappointment. When the time comes that you are confident enough regarding your blog's capabilities and popularity, then you can apply for a CPA program.

Some of the more popular CPA networks include AffiliateBot, PeerFly, Hydra, SHAREASALE and Neverblue.

# **Chapter 6**

## **Getting a Swarm of Traffic to your Blog**



Image: FreeDigitalPhotos.net

Traffic is the lifeblood of every blog and if you plan on using your blog to make money using whatever methods you have chosen, then you will need traffic, a lot of it. There are numerous ways of going about this and it is best to use a combination of different methods to drive traffic to your blog. Some of these methods include utilizing good SEO practices as well as taking advantage of article marketing, social bookmarking, RSS feeds and Ping.

### **Search Engine Optimization**

Search engine optimization or SEO for short is arguably the most important component of your marketing strategy. When people need something these days, the first place they go to for answers is Google. More often than not, they will use Google search to find what they are looking for. This means that if your blog comes up when people search for something using keywords that you have targeted, then you can generate a lot of traffic from searches alone. However, getting to the first page of a Google search is by no means an easy task. People have made lucrative careers out of optimizing websites to make them easier for search engines like Google to find.

When considering optimizing your blog using SEO practices, you have two options. The first is to learn how to do it yourself and the second one is to hire an expert to do it for you. If you are considering the first option, then you have a long and painful struggle ahead of you. SEO is a complex and wide-ranging topic and many people have spent years trying to understand all of its complexities and intricacies. The main problem here

is that search engines are also evolving. This makes it very hard to keep up with the changes that happen every couple of months or so. The good news is that while SEO is a complicated subject. There are certain measures that you can take to make sure that your blog can be easily found and indexed by search engines. Here are a few of them.

1. Choose your keywords carefully. This has been repeated in previous chapters time and time again and it is still very important. Choosing the right keywords with the right balance of demand and competitions and can help catapult your blog into the first page of SERPs.
2. Learn how to optimize your URL and Title Tags. Make sure that your URL contains the keywords you are targeting. In addition to this, your title tags should also contain the same keywords. This will make it easier for search engines to find and index your posts.
3. Check your H1 Tags. When writing your articles, make sure that your H1 tags contain the necessary keywords.
4. Keyword Density. Keep a close eye on the keyword density used in your articles. Makes sure that they are neither too high nor too low.
5. Get as many backlinks as you can. There are many ways to do this and they are discussed in further detail throughout this book.

If you don't have the time and your budget allows it, you can always hire an expert to optimize your site for you. However, be cautious when hiring SEO consultants. Make sure to check their portfolio and to look for reviews online. This will help you find a reliable, reputable and effective SEO consultant for your blog.

## **Article Marketing**

Article marketing has been around for a long time. It has stood the test of time and continues to be a powerful marketing tool even up until today. Since most people look for the information they need online these days, you might even say that article marketing is more effective as a tool of promoting your website than it's ever been.

Before you start with article marketing, you will need articles and you will need a lot of them. Aside from volume, you will also need quality. The higher the quality of your articles, the better it is for your blog. Once you have your articles ready, you will need to post them online. You can do this by using article directories. These directories will be discussed in more detail later on. Once you have successfully placed your articles in key locations online, people will be able to see them. They will also be

able to follow your backlinks back to your blog. This can generate a lot of traffic as long as your articles are good and you have placed them in strategic sites online.

## **Social Bookmarking**

When dealing with social bookmarking, you will have to be familiar with the most popular social bookmarking options available to you. This includes Google Bookmarks, Delicious, Technorati, Reddit, StumbleUpon, Digg and Twitter. There are many others out there and you should familiarize yourself with all of the available options in order to make full use of social bookmarking for your blog. Simply put, social bookmarking provides people with a way of bookmarking your posts or your blog while sharing their bookmarks with all of their friends and followers.

If a person decides to post a link to a post in your blog on a social bookmarking site, then other people will see it as well. This can generate a lot of traffic in a short amount of time.

You should also consider making accounts in all of the top social bookmarking sites. Add as many people as you can and post links to your blog so that all of your friends and followers can see it as well. If they like what they see in your blog, then it is very likely that they will repost your link for other people to see.

## **RSS**

RSS is just one of the powerful tools that you have at your disposal to drive traffic to your blog and to keep people coming back for more. There are a few steps that you need to follow in order to take full advantage of RSS.

First of all, you need to set up your reader. While there are many options out there that you can use, Google Reader is one of the most popular. After you have set up your reader, you can add new sources to it. Once you add a source, new content will be automatically sent to your reader every time the source is updated. Make sure to add reputable and relevant sources. This will give your readers the impression that you are up to date with the latest trends in your chosen market. In addition to

this, the information that you gather will also help you make your blog better in the future.

## **Ping**

Ping can be a difficult concept to grasp for some people. It doesn't help that a little technical knowledge is needed to fully grasp the concept. However, the mechanism by which ping affects your blog is a lot easier to understand. Without going into the technical details, a ping is a push mechanism used in blog to send a message to a server that changes have been made to your blog. There are numerous ping servers out there that automatically generate a list of blogs where new content has been added. This means that your readers will have a method of knowing when you have added new material to your blog. This is a great way of retaining traffic while generating new traffic as well. Users can subscribe to certain ping servers so that they will be notified of your new posts.

## **Directories**

Aside from your own blog, posting articles in article directories is another great way of driving traffic to your site. If you haven't heard of article directories before, then you are missing out on a powerful tool that you can use to drive traffic to your site. Article directories are sites that accept articles from other various writers. These sites serve as article databases where people can find articles about anything under the sun. Popular article directories like eZine get a lot of traffic and you can easily divert some of this traffic to your own blog. However, you will need to have high quality articles on hand that you can submit to popular article directories.

You have to keep in mind that these directories have certain specifications regarding quality so you need to make sure that your articles are good enough to be accepted. Once your article has been accepted, it will be displayed online along with your profile. Over time, you can establish yourself as an expert in your field and you can gain more and more readers. These readers can then be driven to your own blog using backlinks.

## **Blog Commenting**

Blog commenting is another easy way to get more people to visit your site. Have you ever commented in a blog and noticed that you are often asked for a URL to your own site? Every time you fill out that little form, you are actually leaving behind a little door that people can use to enter your site. This means that the more comments you have online, the more backlinks there are to your own site.

While you can certainly leave comments at random websites if you want, this does not guarantee that you will get more traffic in your site. You will have to choose the sites where you leave comments wisely. Ask yourself if the people visiting a particular site will be interested in visiting your own blog. If the answer is yes, then that site is probably a good place to leave a few comments. When leaving comments however, you can't just say whatever random thing comes to mind. You will have to post insightful, relevant comments that will intrigue and engage people. Feel free to participate the comment discussions. Leave intelligent and useful comments that can help move the discussion a long. This is why it helps to be knowledgeable about your chosen niche. This will make it a lot easier to convince people to visit your own blog through your blog comments.

Once you have mastered the art of blog commenting, you have to make sure that you do it regularly to keep the traffic coming in. If you have chosen a niche that you are passionately and knowledgeable about, then leaving behind intelligent and relevant comments on other similar sites should be a piece of cake for you.

## Web 2.0

Web 2.0 is the future of the Internet so to speak. No, it is not a new version of the entire Internet. It is simply a term to reflect certain important changes that are happening on the Internet. You can even call it a paradigm shift. Gone are the days when websites had static content that hardly ever changes. These days, you need to stay dynamic if you want to stay relevant.

So how does Web 2.0 affect your blog? For starters, Web 2.0 has put a lot of power in the hands of individuals. These days, you don't have to be a large company or a powerful government to have a voice in the Internet. All of the little changes that have been brought about by Web 2.0 can be used to your advantages. Social networks, dynamic content, viral videos, you name it. All of these little things can serve as additional

tools in your shed that you can use to make your blog more popular and more profitable.

## **Social Media**

If your blog is already up and running but you still haven't tapped into the tremendous power of social media, then you are missing out on a lot. In recent years, social media has taken the world by storm and sites like Facebook and Twitter have become veritable powerhouses on the Internet. Aside from being places to socialize with friends, relatives and acquaintances, social media websites have also become powerful tools for marketing your blog.

So what do you need to do to take advantage of the social media storm? The first thing that you have to do is to sign up for an account at various social media websites. Among the sites that you simply cannot overlook include Facebook, Twitter and Google +. After you have made your account, then you have to create your profile. Make sure that your profile is as informative as possible so people will know you who are and what you are about. After that, you will need to start adding friends and followers. Add as many people as you can but make sure that you are adding people who belong to your target audience.

Once you have a decent number of people on your social network, you will then need to post regular updates. Post about any changes in your blog. If you have posted a new article or video, then post a link on your social networks. If you have a new product you are trying to market, then make another post on your networks. If you have something funny or interesting to say, then post away. Make sure to post regularly so people will be able to keep track of all the changes on your blog.