

CORPORATE blogging

start-up guide

Logoworks by 

welcome

In our continuing efforts to aid small businesses on the road to success, Logoworks has brought some of the leaders in the blogosphere together to present this start-up guide to corporate blogging.

Social media can be intimidating for most small business owners, but this guide can take away some of that fear. We'll explore what a corporate blog is, why you should have one and how to start and maintain it so it's the most beneficial to your company.

Think you know what a corporate blog is but you're not sure? Has the thought of having one crossed your mind but you don't know if it's the best option for your company? Need help understanding how to set up a blog and who should write it?

Logoworks is here for you. Join us as we go to the bloggers who have the experience and understanding that small business owners don't have time to gain. Together we'll explore the what, why and how of Corporate Blogging. ●

recent posts

what is a blog?

- What is a corporate blog?
- Everything I know about blogging

why should I blog?

- Why every business needs a blog
- The biggest reason small business owners's should be blogging

how can I do it?

- How to create the perfect company blog
- 10 things to consider before you start blogging
- 10 questions to ask before launching your blog

resources

- Need a custom designed blog?
- Need help with corporate blogging?

about our bloggers

what is a corporate blog?

Posted by [Logoworks](#)

No definitions are concrete in the blogosphere. A blog can be anything from a teenager's updates on her newest crushes and fashion choices to HP's Vince Ferraro's [LaserJet blog](#)¹ discussing trends in the printing and imaging market. Anyone can start a blog and talk about whatever they want – which is why they have become so popular in the last few years. David Sifry, founder and chairman of Technorati, [reported](#)² in April 2007 that more than 120,000 blogs are created every day. That means 1.4 blogs are created every second of every day.

So it's not surprising that businesses are starting to get in on the action. Blogging is no longer just a way to get your voice out there. It is a customer relations tool, an image-management resource and a way to make money, plain and simple. Corporate blogs represent companies, not individuals. They bring the personal touch back into business in a way that hasn't been possible before.

Corporate blogging presents various opportunities for reward when set up correctly. The online community will see right through a corporate blog that is merely set up as a poorly disguised advertisement. Businesses need to blog about real, relevant material that influences their target audiences. Whether companies set themselves up as an expert in their field or simply as an informant on the daily industry updates, readers will appreciate real content much more than shameless self-promotion.

Blogs offer an unusual chance for real and direct communication to occur between customer and company. They can create relationships that were previously impossible and foster appreciation and even affection for companies who do it correctly, not to mention the revenue opportunities.

A corporate blog, simply put, is an avenue for open communication and the sharing of information between a business and its client base. It presents a less formal environment for people to get to know those they are doing business with and can be a very positive addition to a company, or very negative, depending on the approach.

The business world is moving into the realm of Web 2.0. Is your company ready? ●

1 <http://h20325.www2.hp.com/blogs/laserjet/>

2 <http://www.sifry.com/alerts/archives/000493.html>

everything I know about blogging

Posted by [Peter Clemens](#)

While I don't claim to be a blogging expert, I have picked up a few tips and tricks over the past 9 months that have helped me break into the Technorati Top 10,000, push past 2,000 RSS subscribers, and find myself a job as editor on PickTheBrain. In this article I will share everything I know about blogging, including how to get started, find the perfect image for your article, and increase your subscriber count. Enjoy.

GETTING STARTED

Why blog?

Well amongst other things, blogging is a great way to meet people, it can potentially be a healthy source of income, and it is much cheaper than therapy. See my article "[Why You Should Blog](#)"¹ for a few more reasons.

Blogger

I created my first blog using [Blogger](#)². While I would never go back to it, I do believe it is a good way for a beginner to start blogging because it is free and incredibly easy. Also check out [Wordpress](#)³.

Wordpress

If you are even a little bit serious about blogging, I suggest taking the plunge and going for a self-hosted Wordpress blog (note: I am referring to the Wordpress software from [Wordpress.org](#)⁴, not the hosted version available at [Wordpress.com](#)³).

Web hosting

For my web hosting I use and recommend [Dreamhost](#)⁵. I also hear good things about [Media Temple](#)⁶. If you are going to go for a self-hosted Wordpress blog, look out for a host that offers a "one-click Wordpress installation" as it makes things incredibly easy.

[continue ▶](#)

1 <http://www.thechangeblog.com/2007/09/11/why-you-should-blog/>

2 <https://www.blogger.com/>

3 <http://wordpress.com/>

4 <http://wordpress.org/>

5 <http://www.dreamhost.com/>

6 <http://www.mediatemple.net/>

everything I know about blogging

continued

Wordpress for Dummies

I won this book thanks to a [ProBlogger](#)⁷ competition, and I must say it is an excellent guide to Wordpress and blogging in general. I only wish I had read it earlier, as it would have saved me a lot of time and hassle. You can [read the Amazon review](#)⁸ of it here.

WRITING

Tell a story

Don't always *tell* people the information/message/idea you want to convey. Instead, try *showing* them by telling a story. Apart from being more interesting to read, stories *stick* (read "[Made to Stick](#)"⁹ for more on this).

Who cares?

Whenever I write an article, I ask myself, "*Who cares?*" Firstly, do *I care*? That is, am I writing about something I am passionate about and that has meaning to me? Secondly, will my readers care about what I have to say? I have found that asking myself this simple question keeps me focused and helps avoid a common blogging sin: being *boring*.

Capture ideas anytime and anywhere

My best ideas for articles normally come when I am anywhere but sitting in front of the computer. So I have made it a habit to carry a notebook and pen with me wherever I go, allowing me to easily capture ideas as they pop into my head.

Write with purpose

As a father and a full-time employee I have limited time to write articles. I have found the key is to ensure I have a clear understanding of what I want to say *before* I sit down at the computer and start writing.

[continue](#) ▶

⁷ <http://www.problogger.net/>

⁸ <http://www.amazon.com/WordPress-Dummies-Computer-Tech/dp/0470149469?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1202653043&sr=8-1>

⁹ <http://www.amazon.com/Made-Stick-Ideas-Survive-Others/dp/1400064287?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1202653509&sr=8-1>

◀ previous post | home | next post ▶

everything I know about blogging

continued

Take time to craft a catchy headline

A headline can make or a break a story, so make sure this important decision is not simply an afterthought.

This is not university

So don't write your blog articles in the style of an essay.

Read sites devoted to writing/copywriting

I highly recommend [CopyBlogger](http://www.copyblogger.com/)¹⁰ to any blogger wishing to write in a more strategic, persuasive, and compelling manner. Also be sure to check out Leo Babauta's recently launched [WriteToDone](http://writetodone.com/)¹¹.

SUBSCRIBERS

Why care about subscribers?

Someone subscribing to your blog is perhaps the best compliment they can give you. Traffic comes and goes, but someone subscribing to your blog says that they want to read more of your articles.

Make it easy to subscribe

Make it easy for readers to subscribe by prominently displaying a subscription icon and giving them the option to subscribe immediately after your article. You may even include a link in your article giving them the opportunity to subscribe (i.e., *click here to subscribe to my feed*).

Offer a full feed

It may decrease traffic to your site, but not offering a full feed is a big reason why people unsubscribe.

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¹⁰ <http://www.copyblogger.com/>

¹¹ <http://writetodone.com/>

everything I know about blogging

continued

Don't forget email subscriptions

Not everyone wants to use a feed reader. I have approximately 150 email subscribers at the moment, so it is certainly worth your while to make it easy for people to subscribe via email.

Subscribe to your own feed

It is not vain to subscribe to your own feed. Rather, it is essential to regularly check your RSS feed to make sure everything is ok.

Flaunt it

If you have over 100 subscribers, I say flaunt it by selecting a feedburner chicklet that shows your number. If you have under 100, don't display your subscriber number just yet.

Ignore daily fluctuations

Ignore day to day fluctuations of your Feedburner Subscriber Count. A drop in the number of subscribers shown does not necessarily mean people have unsubscribed (see this [ProBlogger article](#)¹² for more on this). Instead, aim to increase subscriptions over a week or even a month.

Don't become obsessed

Yes, it is nice to see subscribers increasing, but if you start judging the success of your site based solely on a number you are giving in to your ego.

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¹² <http://www.problogger.net/archives/2007/08/16/why-does-my-feedburner-subscriber-count-fluctuate/>

everything I know about blogging

continued

THEMES

Free themes

There are some amazing free Wordpress themes out there. To get an idea of what is available, check out the following articles from Smashing Magazine:

- [100 Excellent Free Wordpress Themes](#)¹³
- [21 Fresh, Usable and Elegant and Wordpress Themes](#)¹⁴

Custom made themes

If you want to take your blog to the next level, a custom made theme may just be the answer. [John Chow](#)¹⁵ recently said that a custom made theme was the *most important thing he did to improve his blog in 2007*.

IMAGES

Why bother?

An interesting and relevant image can add a lot to an article. It is of particular importance if you hope your article will become popular in the social media. For example, you only have a few seconds to catch the attention of people using [StumbleUpon](#)¹⁶.

Flickr

I find most of my images on [Flickr](#)¹⁷. If you decide to do this, take a moment to read up on the [Creative Commons License](#)¹⁸. Then, go to “Advanced Search” and select the box for photos licensed under the Creative Commons License. To make it easier to find a good pic, I suggest selecting the option for “most interesting” pics and then “thumbnails” so that you can scan them quickly.

[continue ▶](#)

¹³ <http://www.smashingmagazine.com/2008/01/08/100-excellent-free-high-quality-wordpress-themes/>

¹⁴ <http://www.smashingmagazine.com/2007/06/26/21-fresh-usable-and-elegant-wordpress-themes/>

¹⁵ <http://www.johnchow.com/>

¹⁶ <http://www.stumbleupon.com/>

¹⁷ <http://www.flickr.com/>

¹⁸ <http://www.flickr.com/creativecommons/>

◀ previous post | home | next post ▶

everything I know about blogging

continued

Other sources of pics

Sometimes it is worth spending a few pesos to get the perfect image. Check out [iStockphoto](#)¹⁹ for a huge collection of images that can be purchased quickly and easily.

MAINTAINING A BLOG

Often less is more

If you struggle to find the time to blog, just remember that when it comes to posting frequency often less is more.

Hitting the publish button

If you have any doubts about as to whether or not an article is ready, don't hit the publish button. It is better to not publish (even if you normally do post something that particular day) then to post something that is not up to your usual standard.

Microsoft Livewriter is great

Yes, it's true! "Microsoft" and "great" can exist in the same sentence. Livewriter makes blogging incredibly easy. [Check it out here](#)²⁰ (it's free).

Read blogs devoted to blogging

[ProBlogger](#)²¹, [Skelliewag](#)²², and [Daily Blog Tips](#)²³ are my personal favorites.

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19 <http://www.istockphoto.com/>

20 <http://get.live.com/writer/overview>

21 <http://www.problogger.net/>

22 <http://skelliewag.org/>

23 <http://www.dailyblogtips.com/>

everything I know about blogging

continued

COMMENTS

Plugins

There are a number of Wordpress plugins (e.g. Threaded Comments, Subscribe to Comments, Top Commentators, and Recent Comments) that help encourage people to leave a comment. You can read more about these below.

Reply to comments

This may sound obvious, but if someone leaves a comment on your blog that is directed to you make sure you reply to them.

Take time to comment on other blogs

Often if you take the time to comment on someone else's blog, they will visit your blog and return the favor. Don't comment just for the sake of commenting though - make sure you have something thoughtful and relevant to say or don't say anything at all.

BUILDING YOUR ONLINE PROFILE

Give

In a [recent guest article](#)²⁴ on ProBlogger, Tina from Think Simple Now suggests ending your emails with "let me know if you need anything." Very simple. Very powerful.

Sell yourself

To build a good online profile you need to sell yourself as a person. If the idea of "selling yourself" makes you cringe, read my article [How to Sell Yourself](#)²⁵ for a better idea of what I mean.

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²⁴ <http://www.problogger.net/archives/2008/01/30/from-0-to-2000-subscribers-in-120-days/>

²⁵ <http://www.pickthebrain.com/blog/how-to-sell-yourself/>

everything I know about blogging

continued

Guest post

Guest posts are one of the most powerful ways to build your online profile. Most blogs are open to guest posts, so take the plunge and get in contact with a blogger you admire. It is best to attach your post to your email. Even better, attach a few articles and tell them they can use their favorite. David Bohl from [Slow Down Fast](#)²⁶ often does this when he sends articles to me - he also regularly writes for [Dumb Little Man](#)²⁷ (60,000+ subscribers) so he must be doing something right!

Be Strategic

It is no coincidence that I have posted this article about blogging the same day as *this post* and *this post* are posted elsewhere.

Blog Carnivals

Blog carnivals may not be suitable for every blog, but I have seen a number of bloggers in the self improvement niche build their online profile this way. I have found that my [Personal Stories of Change Blog Carnival](#)²⁸ has helped me break the ice with a number of my fellow bloggers, and we have since gone on to have become good friends.

MAKING MONEY

Dream

Blogging can potentially earn you \$1,000 per day and allow you to quit your day job. There is nothing wrong with having a dream, right?

The path to making money online is not always obvious

As I wrote about in this [guest post for ProBlogger](#)²⁹, when you start blogging it is not always obvious how you will make money online. Focus on adding value to your readers and building traffic and I'm sure good things will come your way.

continue ▶

²⁶ <http://www.slowdownfast.com/>

²⁷ <http://www.dumblittleman.com/>

²⁸ <http://www.thechangeblog.com/category/the-change-blog-carnival/>

²⁹ <http://www.problogger.net/archives/2008/02/11/>

◀ previous post | home | next post ▶

everything I know about blogging

continued

Read sites devoted to making money online

[John Chow](#)³⁰ and [Shoemoney](#)³¹ know a lot more about making money online than me, so if you are interested in learning more these two sites are a good place to start.

SOCIAL MEDIA

StumbleUpon

In my opinion, [StumbleUpon](#)³² is the best of the social media.

Digg, Reddit, Del.icio.us, etc.

If you want to see your articles do well on these social media sites, I strongly suggest becoming an active member of their communities; [Digg](#)³³, [Reddit](#)³⁴, [Del.icio.us](#)³⁵. Oh, and do my next 2 tips....

Ask

It is becoming more and more common to see articles end with a simple request such as: "If you liked this article, please share it on del.icio.us or on Digg. I'd appreciate it. :)" And why not? It is a simple and effective way to help promote your articles with the social media.

Email requests to your friends

If you have written an article you are particularly proud of, I suggest bringing it to the attention of your friends by sending them an email. Of course, just remember my earlier point about giving.

continue ▶

30 <http://www.johnchow.com/>

31 <http://www.shoemoney.com/>

32 <http://www.stumbleupon.com/>

33 <http://digg.com/>

34 <http://reddit.com/>

35 <http://del.icio.us/>

◀ previous post | home | next post ▶

everything I know about blogging

continued

PLUGINS

Akismet

An essential plugin for fighting spam. It normally comes automatically with Wordpress so just make sure you have it activated. [Download Akismet here](#)³⁶.

Adsense Deluxe

This plugin is the easiest way for Wordpress bloggers to incorporate Adsense into their blog. [Download Adsense Deluxe here](#)³⁷.

Automatic Update

If you hate the thought of having to update Wordpress, this plugin makes the process extremely easy. [Down Automatic Update here](#)³⁸.

Comment Relish

If you received a “thank you” email after leaving your first comment on this site, that message came courtesy of this nifty little plugin. [Download Comment Relish here](#)³⁹.

Feedburner Feedsmith

An essential plugin for anyone offering a feed on their blog. Basically it detects all ways to access your original WordPress feeds and redirects them to your FeedBurner feed so you can track every possible subscriber. [No prizes for guessing where this link takes you](#)⁴⁰.

Full Text Feed

If, like me, you only have an excerpt of your article on your main page, you should have this plugin which prevents WordPress 2.1+ from adding any more links to your website’s feed. [Download Full Text Feed here](#)⁴¹.

[continue ▶](#)

36 <http://akismet.com/download/>

37 <http://www.acmetech.com/blog/adsense-deluxe/>

38 <http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/wordpress-automatic-upgrade/>

39 <http://www.justinshattuck.com/comment-relish/>

40 <http://www.google.com/support/feedburner/bin/topic.py?topic=13252>

41 <http://cavemonkey50.com/code/full-feed/>

◀ previous post | home | next post ▶

everything I know about blogging

continued

Google XML Sitemaps

[Download Google XML Sitemaps here](#)⁴².

Subscribe to Comments

This is a simple little plugin that has the potential to stimulate discussion in your comments. Basically it allows readers to receive notifications of new comments that are posted to an entry. [Download Subscribe to Comments here](#)⁴³.

There's more! There are many, many more plugins available for Wordpress. [50 Best Wordpress Plugins for Power Blogging](#)⁴⁴ is a good list of them I came across recently. ●

⁴² <http://www.arnebrachhold.de/projects/wordpress-plugins/google-xml-sitemaps-generator/>

⁴³ <http://txfx.net/code/wordpress/subscribe-to-comments/>

⁴⁴ <http://www.quickonlinetips.com/archives/2007/12/best-wordpress-plugins-for-power-blogging/>

why every business needs a blog

Posted by [Rob Lloyd](#)

Regardless of your business, whether it be a strictly online or a strictly offline venture, having a blog is paramount to your success online. When I say *success online* I'm referring to bringing in quality, targeted traffic from search engines on a consistent basis for free. Static websites that never update don't often get visits by search engines or browsers. Would you bookmark somewhere that you knew would have only the same promotional information on it the next time you visited?

There are numerous reasons why you should have a blog and how it can help you and I'm going to delve into a few of them now as well as a few things you can do to get your blog going once you do decide to create one.

1. Blogs are rich in content

Search engines and visitors like frequently updated specific unique content. If I'm searching for something, I am not satisfied with a generic paragraph written 3 years ago that simply contains a few words I'm searching for. I'm looking for an in-depth timely personalized piece on the subject from an expert. This type of content is exactly what blogs deliver. Your e-commerce site has listings of products but does it have content to accompany it? If I'm searching for ideas on building a fish pond in my backyard I am interested in building/buying the necessary materials; but what I am actually looking for is practical advice on the matter from a trusted source. Who is better to give this advice than someone who makes a living in this field? Furthermore, if I find the advice/plans I need on a blog that also sells these plans/materials I'm much more likely to purchase from them if they've already proved to me that they are experts on the topic. How often does your current listing of a product pull in search engine traffic? I'm guessing not all that often; a well written blog post on how to do it can bring people from all over the world searching.

[continue ▶](#)

why every business needs a blog

continued

2. Blogs are dynamic in nature

Websites in general are plain and dated; they're built for a purpose and then often left static. A blog is dynamic and if you update regularly whether it's daily, weekly or monthly it will call for search engines to come back and give readers a reason as well. Furthermore you can integrate RSS (Really Simple Syndication) so those interested in what you have to say will be alerted whenever you make a new post generating repeat traffic and hopefully business.

3. Blogs make you more accessible & show your personality

Personality plays a large part in business along with quality and price. Having a blog gives your website a personality and lets potential customers get a feel of who they are doing business with. That being said try to keep the voice of your blog consistent by having someone in upper management either handle the blog or review each post before it goes out. You want to win customers/readers with your blog—not scare them away. Also having a blog puts you in the blogosphere. It's much easier to network and do link exchanges in complimentary niches with a blog in your blogroll than a static website.

These three reasons alone should be enough for you to consider getting a blog for your online ventures. It doesn't need to be very time consuming and ultimately if you love the business you are in it should not be hard writing detailed worthwhile posts about something you are passionate and hopefully already an expert on.

Once you decide to build a blog you have to get the word out. I'd recommend visiting some popular blog forums where you can read up on what others have done and ask questions that will definitely arise as you go through the process. ●

◀ [previous post](#) | [home](#) | [next post](#) ▶

the biggest reason small business owners should be blogging

Posted by [Dawud Miracle](#)

So what's the biggest reason small business owners should be blogging?

It's reach! Blogs can often reach a larger audience faster (and certainly cheaper) than your normal, static website can. So it's gotta be reach, right?

Sure. But I don't feel it's the most important reason to blog.

So if it's not reach it's gotta be the advantages in search engines. Search engines (read: Google) love blogs because their content is oft changing and their posts are often highly keyword focused. So there's benefit in the search engines and that's why businesses should blog.

All true. Yet, that's not it.

Okay, how about this...the opportunity to grow a community around your business through the comment box. Comments lead to conversation which lead to relationships. The relationships, in turn, lead to all sorts of business opportunities.

Absolutely, without a doubt that's true. Yet my opinion is we're still putting the cart before the horse.

I've worked with dozens of small and service-oriented business clients over the past couple of years. Few have had the key ingredient to having a successful, flourishing business. That doesn't mean they're not successful. It means they're not fulfilled with their success. It means they want/need more.

That key ingredient to growing a successful business is positioning.

Some think of positioning as just branding, image or identity. But it's more than that. Positioning is how you're perceived by your target audience. In other words, can you clearly illustrate that you have the solution to your target audience's problem. It's how you communicate what you do.

[continue](#) ▶

the biggest reason small business owners should be blogging

continued

But to clearly and successfully communicate what you do, you must have that clarity yourself. And that's what blogging affords.

When you blog, you write often about your business, your knowledge, your capabilities, etc. And you do so in ways that encourage people to respond. So by blogging, and meeting people in the comment box, you have immediate feedback about how clearly people are understanding what you know.

With a blog, you can take this a step further. You can also display your expertise in solving problems your audience faces - whether personal or professional. You can offer advice on dealing with circumstances and write specifically to their needs. Then you can watch the response. If it's positive, you know that you're communicating well about what you do. And if not, you know that you need a bit of work.

And needing work is fine. It's what having a business is all about. You need to *allow your business to never be finished* - to always be changing.

So small businesses, especially, can use blogging to experiment with how they talk to their audience. With a blog, they can explore different avenues for communicating. But moreover, they can find clarity in their business.

So how are you using your blog to find clarity in yours? ●

how-to create the perfect company blog

Posted by [Ben Yoskovitz](#)

A company blog is extremely challenging to do well. The biggest challenge (which is not unique to a company blog) is finding the time to do it. Everyone's swamped and blogging was just never part of the plan. But it should be.

Blogging is the single best way of generating sustained, [quality buzz](#)¹ for your company. Done well, your company blog will create more awareness, customers, press, publicity and goodwill than anything else you can do.

So how do you create the perfect company blog?

SETTING UP YOUR COMPANY BLOG

For starters, here are 4 tips for setting up your company blog:

1. Make sure the blog's design is very similar or identical to your website

This maintains continuity of your brand, and makes the blog easily recognizable. It also ensures the blog becomes a key part of your website (which it should be.) If your startup doesn't have a site yet, or just has a placeholder site, then make sure your blog has a great design. Try and avoid generic, dull themes.

2. Use a simple domain name like [blog.company.com](#) or [company.com/blog](#)

It needs to be under the company's domain or its own, but not under a "generic" domain like [company.wordpress.com](#) or [company.blogspot.com](#). Again, the blog needs to be an integral part of your website and brand. I would recommend using [WordPress](#)².

3. Keep it simple - don't overuse plugins, widgets or anything else

Don't use Google AdSense or any other advertising (except your own), it just cheapens the whole thing.

4. Offer email and RSS subscriptions

You can do both through [FeedBurner](#)³.

[continue](#) ▶

1 <http://www.instigatorblog.com/5-marketing-tools-every-startup-should-use/2008/01/02/>

2 <http://wordpress.org/>

3 <http://www.feedburner.com/fb/a/home>

how-to create the perfect company blog

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WRITING CONTENT FOR YOUR COMPANY BLOG

Really, it's the *content* that's critical for a successful company blog. And in this case, a company blog is a bit different from other blogs because of the types of content you'll be publishing. Some are the same (as with any blog), but not all of them. I've broken the content types down below:

1. Thought Leadership

The best way to stand out from the crowd of company blogs is through thought leadership. Provide valuable, thought provoking content — your own ideas and those of the company — because this is the content that people will talk about, comment on and link to. This is the type of content that will build up your company's brand more than anything else. It's also the most challenging to write because it requires the most time.

2. Industry News Summaries

You don't need to be breaking industry news (unless it's your own) but you do want to show people that you're on top of what goes on around you. Summarizing industry news is easy; you're probably tracking it all anyway, so it's just a matter of reiterating it, linking to the original source, and when appropriate, adding your own two cents. The more you provide your own input, the better, because these industry news summaries can become thought leadership style posts (albeit more abbreviated.) The folks at Praized do a good job of this.

3. Diggbait

Hitting the front page of [digg](http://digg.com/)⁴ is no easy feat, but there's no reason you shouldn't try. To do it well you need to understand what folks on digg (and other social media/bookmarking sites) want, and how to promote content successfully on digg. Company news or anything too related to your company won't work, it will come across as "too corporate." Think about a resource post or a controversial post related to a hot topic in your industry.

[continue ▶](#)

⁴ <http://digg.com/>

how-to create the perfect company blog

continued

4. Company News

These posts are important because they give you an opportunity to toot your own horn. Just don't overdo it. But you can replace the "Press" section on your website with blog posts. You should also make feature announcements, or wet people's appetites with upcoming feature news. Promote success stories. Use the blog as a way of communicating with customers about what's important to them. If you get into trouble or screw up, use your blog to fess up and maintain goodwill. The key is to avoid a blog that's about nothing but you. Yes, you and your company are interesting, but if your blog offers nothing but company news, the audience is not likely to stay engaged.

The best company blogs will always publish a combination of these posts, blending them in naturally. A great example is [Signal vs. Noise](#)⁵ from 37Signals. A more recent example of a killer company blog is from startup [Path101](#)⁶. The rules of good [copywriting](#)⁷ and [blogging](#)⁸ still apply no matter what (i.e., [link to others often](#)⁹, [write strong headlines](#)¹⁰, etc.) but the diversity of content will help.

PROMOTING YOUR COMPANY BLOG

Make sure you do it. How's that for simple?

[Promoting a company blog](#)¹¹ is no different than promoting any other kind of blog — it takes time and effort, but it's well worth it.

A few quick reminders:

- Link to your blog prominently from your home page
- Link to your blog from your email signature file
- Mention your blog in emails & newsletters that go to customers & prospects

[continue](#) ▶

5 <http://www.37signals.com/svn/>

6 <http://blog.path101.com/>

7 <http://www.copyblogger.com/>

8 <http://www.successful-blog.com/>

9 <http://www.instigatorblog.com/blog-hack-link-to-new-blogs-and-get-more-readers/2007/08/08/>

10 <http://www.instigatorblog.com/how-to-write-eye-popping-headlines-while-exhausted/2007/06/12/>

11 <http://www.prologger.net/archives/2007/01/11/how-to-market-your-blog-in-2007/>

how-to create the perfect company blog

continued

SOME FINAL THOUGHTS FOR YOUR COMPANY BLOG

1. Having multiple authors is a good idea

It helps spread the workload and let's your audience see different sides of the company. All the writers are still actively developing the company's brand, and it can actually make the company and blog feel more personal than if there's a single author. (It also protects against a situation where that single author leaves the company...)

2. Don't feel obligated to write that often on the blog

Even once per week is enough to remind people that you're there, alive and doing something interesting. Certainly, the more you write the more opportunities you have to build key relationships and keep people's attention, but frequency isn't absolutely crucial. Just don't let the blog die off. (From a design perspective, you might consider hiding/excluding dates from the blog, so if you don't post for awhile it won't look completely dead.)

3. Don't oversell or market your company

Yes, it's a company blog and you should use it as a sales tool, but don't overdo it. If the blog becomes nothing more than a sales letter your audience will disappear. People read company blogs because of their interest in the company but you don't need to sell them constantly.

There's no reason a company shouldn't have a blog. And for startups it's the easiest way to build brand, recognition and buzz. It's also the simplest way to maintain buzz long-term, which is so hard to do in a world where new startups are being announced every five seconds, and there's so much noise. ●

10 things to consider before you start blogging

Posted by [Mack Collier](#)

These days it seems that businesses of all sizes are very curious about blogging and what a blog could do to improve their business. But before you start, there are several questions you should ask yourself to determine if a blog is really in your business' best interest:

1. Why do you want to blog?

Often, a business wants to consider blogging as a way to increase its awareness online. Instead, I believe your blogging efforts will be far more productive if you view your business blog as a place where you can provide information and value for current and potential customers.

2. Should you be blogging?

If you are running a small business with 3 family employees, you simply might not have enough manpower to run a successful blog. But even if you decide that you cannot start a blog, you can still make a point to monitor what existing bloggers are saying about your business online, and you can use other tools, such as Twitter, to provide information and customer service.

3. Do you have the time to blog?

Let's set the record straight upfront: Having a successful blog takes a LOT of time. Great blogs often require several hours every single day. For a well-run business blog, count on investing a minimum of an hour a day during the week, and an hour or so on the weekend. If you can devote more time to your blogging efforts, even better. But a blog requires a huge time commitment.

4. Are you willing to keep blogging?

Many businesses and individual bloggers will start a blog, and after a few weeks abandon it because it's not producing the results they were looking for. In reality, it

[continue ▶](#)

10 things to consider before you start blogging

continued

takes months to even build up an average readership for a blog. And that's a well-written blog. So before you start blogging, understand that you are going to be making a long-term commitment.

5. Do you know who will be writing your blog?

Will it be your marketing manager? Will it be the owner/CEO? Will it be a group blog? All of these questions need to be answered before you start blogging. Now there's no hard and fast rule for who should blog for a company. In general, you want the people that are the most passionate about your business to write your blog. Obviously, good writing skills are a strong consideration as well. And you might decide after the blog is launched that you want to change the lineup or writers, which is perfectly acceptable.

6. How often will you post to your blog?

This question becomes much easier to answer once you know how many writers your blog will have. In general, most blogs have their best days for traffic on Tues.-Thurs.. So if you can only post twice a week, do it on Tuesday and Thursday. If you can post 3 times a week, do it on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Ideally, it would be best if you can post at least 5 times a week, once a day during the week. If you have 2 writers for your blog, you could have each commit to 1-2 posts a week. If you have 3 writers, then either 1 post a week, or 2 posts from each writer.

Don't worry about leaving too many posts over 5 a week. If you can that's fine, but that extra time would probably be better served making sure you respond to comments from readers, and even spend some time commenting on THEIR blogs. These are great ways to build your blog's readership.

[continue ▶](#)

10 things to consider before you start blogging

continued

7. What is your comment policy?

Are you going to accept comments? Will you moderate them or can readers immediately post their comments straight to the blog? Will you censor comments that attack your business or disagree with its practices? These are all important decisions to make, and must be addressed before you start your blog.

Remember earlier that I mentioned that a successful blog is one that provides information and value to current and potential customers. Likewise, you want to do everything possible to encourage feedback from your customers, even if it's negative. Once you begin to collect this feedback, then you can respond to it, and use it to improve your marketing efforts. Granted, there's no reason to tolerate purposely hateful and rude comments, but you should be willing to let your readers feel that they can voice their opinions, good or bad.

8. Can you set up your blog yourself, or should you hire a consultant?

Even though I am myself a social media consultant, I prefer to advise businesses to start blogging themselves, rather than outsourcing the startup process to someone else. So much of blogging is trial and error, and I think it's better in the long-run for a business to start blogging themselves, and get comfortable with the blogging process as soon as possible.

9. How Will You Measure the Success of Your Blog?

Don't get too caught up in trying to trace your blogging efforts back to a direct impact on your business' bottom line. Instead, try to measure areas that revolve around reader interaction with you via your blog, such as number of comments, emails pertaining to the blog, and subscriber numbers. If all these are increasing, it's a sign that you are producing blog content that is resonating with your audience.

continue ▶

10 things to consider before you start blogging

continued

10. Why do you want to blog?

We'll end where we began. This is the most important question you can ask yourself before you start blogging. When formulating your answer, think about how your readers would answer this question. What would they want from your blog? Would they be coming to your blog to read you promote yourself and your business? Probably not; they would probably be there looking for answers to questions and problems, and because they want to leave feedback. Position your blog with your reader's interests in mind, and you are well on your way to writing a very successful blog! ●

10 questions to ask before launching your blog

Posted by [Ben Yoskovitz](#)

Setting up a blog is a combination of 20,000 foot vision and nitty gritty details.

You can't have a successful blog without thinking about high level questions — *What's its purpose? Who do I want to connect with? Why am I blogging?*

At the same time you can't be successful without getting into the details. The details - once taken care of - help a blog run smoothly.

Here's a checklist of 10 questions you should ask before launching your blog:

1. Does the blog look OK in different browsers?

It's a common mistake for people to only test in the browser they use. But you need to *test your blog with multiple browsers*. Some services like [browsershots](#)¹ will help with the process.

2. Does the feed work?

Whether you're using [FeedBurner](#)² or not (although I highly recommend it) you should test the feed. Subscribe to it with your own RSS Reader and make sure it's coming in properly. It's also a good idea to make the subscription options highly visible. Don't bury your RSS feed link at the bottom of the blog or in a far-right sidebar. Get it front and center.

3. Did you setup stat tracking and a sitemap?

Everyone wants to track stats on their blog, so make sure you've got stat tracking setup properly. There are lots of options - Awstats, Google Analytics, 103bees, etc. A sitemap is equally important. It helps search engines crawl your pages faster, which is good for search engine optimization and ranking. And don't forget: Submit your blog to [Google Webmasters](#)³.

[continue](#) ▶

1 <http://browsershots.org/>

2 <http://www.feedburner.com/>

3 <http://www.google.com/webmasters/>

10 questions to ask before launching your blog

continued

4. Did you update the About page and test the Contact page?

Too many bloggers forget about the About page and leave it as the default (or don't include it at all!) In WordPress, the default About page tells you it's an About page; which really doesn't help you. Make sure you update it and spend some serious time thinking about what you'll write. The same holds true for the Contact page - Do you have one? If it's a form, does it work?

5. Did you test all the links?

Before launching your blog click on every link and make sure they work. This is particularly important for links to pages (i.e., About, Contact, etc.) as well as links between posts and to outside sites. You want to make sure links to outside sites are working - those other bloggers will see the trackbacks and visit (or they should.)

6. Did you claim the blog in Technorati?

Your blog needs to be live before claiming it, but it doesn't have to be "launched" - where you're actively promoting it, telling people, building links, etc. Before launching the blog, make sure you pop over to [Technorati](#)⁴ and claim it. The process is simple and quick, and it'll help people find your blog. It'll also help you track incoming links.

7. Did you write a few posts?

You can't launch without content. I'd aim for 3-5 posts before you really put yourself out there and launch your blog. The more content you have upfront the easier it is for people to get a feel for what you're doing. Plus you'll get more comfortable in your blogging shoes. It takes awhile to get into the [Blogger Mindset](#)⁵.

continue ▶

4 <http://www.technorati.com/>

5 <http://www.instigatorblog.com/how-much-time-does-it-take-to-blog/2007/03/08/>

10 questions to ask before launching your blog

continued

8. Do you have a few more posts ready to go?

It'll be a huge shame if you launch your blog only to write sporadically or not-at-all for the next little while. You want to be as productive and effective as possible right out of the gate — so have a handful of blog posts ready to go. Even if they're not completely written, it'd be good to have the ideas and basic outlines in place.

9. Did you make a list of people to contact?

You can't launch your blog into a vacuum. Yes, people will find it, but you should give it a nice kick into gear right away. Put together a list of contacts that might be interested in your blog. When you launch, ping 'em all and let them know that your blog is ready for action. Encourage them to comment, send feedback, link over and spread the word.

10. Do you know how you're going to promote the blog?

There are lots of ways to promote a new blog, including blog directories, various widgets, strategic linking, etc. You may not have all the answers right off the bat, but a big part of blogging is marketing - you need to market your blog. Do some research, make a list of blog promotion steps to take, and get going once you're launched.

These 10 questions are applicable irrespective of the blog software you're using. Lots of things in blogging are platform-agnostic; it doesn't matter whether you're using WordPress, Typepad, Blogger or something else. Good writing is good writing no matter what. Killer headlines are killer headlines no matter what.

Covering all the details and making sure your blog is prepped will help your blog be successful. ●

need a custom designed blog?

[Logoworks](#)'¹ team of graphic designers can design a blog to capture the look and feel of whatever you are blogging about. Your look will be your own, plus we can customize any package to fit your needs.

Design Only Package – \$449

Are you a whiz at programming, but need some design help? [This is the perfect package for you](#)². Our designers will give you two custom designed concepts with two revision rounds. After you finalize the design that fits your style, your vector-based designs will be sent directly to you and will be ready for coding on WordPress.

Starter Package – \$1249

New to the blogging scene? Or looking for a boost to stand out from the crowd? [The starter package](#)³ will help you do just that. Our designers will give you two custom designed concepts with two revision rounds. Once you finalize your design, our team will code your blog and upload it to WordPress. It's as easy as that.

Standard Package – \$1499

Do you want a design that helps your business stand out from the crowd? Do you want help making sure your content displays exactly right? [With this package](#)⁴ our designers will give you two custom concepts, including two revision rounds. We will add the content for five separate pages and include navigation so your blog functions and feels more like a traditional website. Then, we'll program your blog and upload it to WordPress. We'll make it easy for you to look great!

Deluxe Package – \$1999

Do you want your blog to look, feel and act more like a custom website than a traditional blog? [The Deluxe package](#)⁵ offers many of the perks of a custom website with the special benefit of add-on features that will allow you to do things like conduct surveys, handle advertising, run analytics, host lead forms, and much much more! You will receive two custom concepts with two revision rounds. You will get five separate pages to which we will upload the content for you. Plus, you have your choice of up-to 5 add-ons. ●

1 <http://www.logoworks.com/free-blog-design/>

2 http://www.logoworks.com/free-blog-design/design_only.html

3 <http://www.logoworks.com/free-blog-design/starter.html>

4 <http://www.logoworks.com/free-blog-design/standard.html>

5 <http://www.logoworks.com/free-blog-design/deluxe.html>

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need help with corporate blogging?

Compendium Blogware can help you grow your business through corporate blogging. They'll empower you with with blogging tools that are easy to use, safe, and beneficial to your business.

With Compendium Blogware, you get software designed for the business world, not freebie blogging software geared toward do-it-yourselfers. You also get a partner familiar with the challenges of marketing in a Web 2.0 world. That's why we stand by you during implementation, but afterwards too, with blogging best practices, guides and webinars. To learn more, visit compendiumblogware.com¹. ●

¹ <http://compendiumblogware.com/>

contributing bloggers

Peter Clemens

Peter is the founder of [The Change Blog](http://www.thechangeblog.com/)¹, a site devoted to inspiring people to chase their dreams and realize their full potential in life.

Mack Collier

Mack Collier is a social media consultant, and author of [The Viral Garden](http://www.theviralgarden.com/)², a blog focusing on marketing and social media. He has advised companies of all sizes on their social media strategies, from small businesses and startups, to companies as large as Dell and Microsoft. His writings have been referenced in several mainstream publications and websites, including The Washington Post, MSNBC.com, Ad Age, CNET, and The Boston Globe.

Rob Lloyd

Rob is the owner of [Homebizblogger.com](http://homebizblogger.com/)³ and [Bloggeries.com](http://www.bloggeries.com/)⁴. Home Biz Blogger is a popular home business blog and Bloggeries is one of the webs busier blog resources. If you're looking for help with your blog be sure to visit the [blog forum](http://www.bloggeries.com/forum/)⁵.

Dawud Miracle

Dawud is a business growth adviser that has been in the trenches with business owners since 2003 teaching them how to increase revenue while creating more free time. Today he not only builds static websites and blogs, but also helps small business owners understand how to use the full internet to expand their businesses.

Ben Yoskovitz

Ben is the CEO and co-founder of [Standout Jobs](http://standoutjobs.com/)⁶, a venture-backed startup founded in 2007. He's also a blog and social media consultant that can help you take your blogging and Web marketing to the next level. His personal blog, [Instigator Blog](http://www.instigatorblog.com/)⁷, focuses on small business issues and start ups and is widely read and commented on. ●

1 <http://www.thechangeblog.com/>

2 <http://moblogsmoproblems.blogspot.com/>

3 <http://homebizblogger.com/>

4 <http://www.bloggeries.com/>

5 <http://www.bloggeries.com/forum/>

6 <http://standoutjobs.com/>

7 <http://www.instigatorblog.com/>