



## TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL BLOGGING

Joining the big blog bandwagon? Your investment of energy (and little or no money) can be a super addition to your online marketing strategy. And it's fun. (And very hip.)

Blogs are already designed and built to seduce the search engines and they're the world's simplest way to write on the web. Here are some tips to send you on your way:

- Update your content regularly. 5-7 days a week is ideal. If you don't publish on a regular schedule and there are long breaks between posts, you will lose the loyalty and interest of your primary supporters. Even a tiny post with a link to a good article is a way to stay engaged with your readers and let them know you're not too busy to stay in touch.
- Authenticity, transparency and a conversational tone are the foundation to blog success. Be who you are. If you're the company CEO, then write a blog as the company CEO and demonstrate to your constituents your personal connection to your products, current trends and your customers.
- Start a conversation. Simply presenting information isn't enough - welcome your readers to participate in the dialog. If they feel invited, they'll return. Hear them, their interests and concerns, even when you don't agree. Write about customer feedback and how it influences you. Your readers and customers may even shape the direction of the business, and if you make this transparent your readers will likely feel all the more connected and loyal to your brand.
- Leave comments on other blogs. In the interest of the aforementioned conversation, keep it a two-way street by leaving brief, relevant responses to the blogs of other people. If you take the time to read what they have to say, responding to them and appreciating them, without a sales pitch or critique, you will begin a relationship that all but guarantees more visits to you and your site. You'll often get reciprocal links without even asking for them. Always include a link back to you at the end of your comment posts (but never include more than one link.)
- Stay positive. Whether it's commenting on other posts or writing your own, most people have little tolerance for online arguing. Energize readers with your own enthusiasm, focus on what excites you, and write your appreciations often.
- Write about timely, relevant subjects. *USA Today* just came out with a story about skyrocketing electric service prices? This is a good day to post that story about how these trends have inspired your company to launch the world's first solar-powered toaster.

- Google yourself. Keep tabs on when, where and how you and your brand is talked about on the web and respond to it on your blog. Search on your competitors and your market niches too.
- Remember that everyone you link to on your blog now reflects upon you and your brand. Choose wisely and keep your reasons for associating with other people/sites/brands transparent.