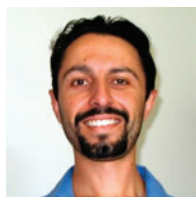


Quote of the Month:
It is your attitude, not
your aptitude, that
determines your altitude.
Zig Ziglar

Aaron Dwyer's

Issue #3
Jan 2007

Internet Business Success Newsletter



(There is a great gift in this newsletter for 19 lucky readers – so read on)

Welcome again to another edition of Aaron Dwyer's Internet Business Success Newsletter. I hope you noticed the different newsletter format that I'm using now.

I've switched to using Adobe Indesign (real publishing software) to create it, and still learning the ropes.

So we are well into the new year now and it's full steam ahead for most people. In fact I never seem to switch off so my steam hasn't waned over the holiday period, just ask my wife.

My own personal TV station is always business, business, business and not much else. My hob-

bies, tennis and golf have fallen by the wayside, which I'll be reconnecting with this year.

Enough about me, you want some great information to build your own internet business.

For this month I want to introduce you to or reiterate to you the importance of blogs (or web logs) to build your site traffic, increase your search engine rankings and overall trust with your visitors.

How To Use Blogs To Increase Traffic To Your Site, Increase Search Engine Rankings, and Build Trust In Your Online Business

So What Exactly Is a BLOG?

Blog is short for web log, and it's basically an online journal. I use one on most of my sites successfully increasing my traffic and search engine rankings in each case. Those sites of mine that I haven't put a blog on is because I haven't had the time yet to do so.

Prime example, look at the Web Smart Central blog where I post these newsletters. Blogs are a simple medium for passing on information and allowing your visitors to respond to you and other visitors with comments of their own. This is the most important aspect of blogs: The visitors' ability to interact and communicate with you and each other. Your site is not just static, and the blog can build rapport with your visitors.

Blogging for business is one of the most remarkable online marketing tools I've come across.

And remember that you have the ability to install a blog on your website with the click of a button using the add-on scripts feature in your control panel.

Rather than re-inventing the wheel I'll reference a fellow Australian internet entrepreneur Yaro Starak for writing the following shown in brown about blogs. Check out his site for a heap of top shelf resources.

www.entrepreneurs-journey.com

[Yaro's Content Begins]

If you run a business and you have a very small budget for online marketing I would completely forgo starting a standard website and start blogging instead. A blog can incorporate all the regular website features such as your business location, contact details and services/product pages. But the real power comes from all the extra advantages that on the surface you can't see and until you experience blogging you won't fully appreciate.

These include:

- **The ease of updating and creating pages.** Most blog content management systems are intuitive, simple and efficient. If you know how to write an email you can create a page for your blog.
- **The search engine optimization advantage.** At one point I thought it was just because blogs were a fad, but now I can safely say that search engines love good blogs and I don't see this changing any time soon.
- **Simple installation.** You can pay a subscription fee and have a blog up and running immediately or install blog software on your own server and be done in a few steps. (remember you have this ability in your hosting account already)
- **Link power.** Blogging, if you do it right, includes a lot of link love, which means you link to other blogs and they link to you. And not only blogs, the potential to convert a blog into a PR machine is real. Blogs, at least for the moment, are garnering attention from everyone and everywhere. Coverage in mainstream media, both on and off line, is almost easy to attain.

• **And of course, the naked conversation.** In a nutshell this means you can have a completely transparent two-way conversation with your customers. Imagine being able to influence your customers without being perceived as a business trying to sell something. Do you think that would be an advantage?

Just by writing (blogging) one small article per day demonstrating your knowledge you can very quickly establish your expertise, boost your credibility and best of all, start converting prospects into customers. Provided you have the time and motivation to produce content the financial investment can be kept very low. If you factor in the basics — hosting and a domain name — your yearly expenditure is under \$100 to maintain a blog. That's a bargain.

Communicating With Your Customers

A blog creates a dialogue with your readers. Simply by blogging and responding to comments you start a natural conversation with anyone interested in what you offer. A natural conversation is so much more powerful at making a sale than any other form of advertising. It's so effective you don't need to include any overt sales pitch whatsoever in your blog. Once your blog gains traction your customers will seek you out and ask to buy from you.

That sounds nice doesn't it, customers asking to buy from you. I'm not joking either. I blog a lot about building web businesses but I do not sell any web design or online marketing services. My experience shines through my writing and podcasting and my readers perceive me as an expert at online business. I have never once said I provide web marketing services yet on many occasions I have been approached for assistance in building a website or consulting on a web project. I have no plans to launch a web marketing business but I suspect if I did I'd have an eager client base ready to buy thanks to my blogs.

The First Mover Advantage

Here's the real clincher — why you need to start blogging about your business today — No one else is.

Chances are no one else in your industry is blogging either. Sure, if your industry is online most likely there are some blogs out there, but if your business is offline than there is a good chance if you started blogging today you will be the first.

In my series — Internet Marketing For Small Business — I made use of a plumber as an example of a typical small business that could use blogging to bring in search traffic and customers. At the time of writing this article I could not find one plumber who was blogging.

If I was a plumber in need of business I'd start blogging. I would write "how-to" guides to help people fix things around their house. I'd spill all my knowledge from my brain into words on my blog. I'd be extra careful to make sure the title of my blog included the phrase "Brisbane Plumber" so when anyone searched online for a plumber in my city my blog would be the first search result.

This same case could be applied to plumbers in every major city in the world. I have no doubt the same could be said for all the trades including electricians, painters, repairman, garden maintenance - and that's just the trades. Any person who blogs locally about their small business can very likely expect fantastic results, which over time are only going to increase as more and more people go online and use search to find solutions to problems.

The opportunity to take advantage of this trend is now. There is only one blog that will dominate each local niche. I can only expect to be the "Brisbane plumber" if I'm the first one to start blogging about it. If another Brisbane plumber sets up a blog first it will be very hard to supplant their leadership position. The first mover advantage is real.
[Yaro's Content Ends]

Aaron's Conclusion

Thanks again to Yaro for that article. I'll just add another 2 cents worth of my own.

Business blogs need to be another part of your marketing arsenal, you must not just use one marketing element in your campaign. However the business case for time outlayed against return on investment must be kept in mind. Blogging does take time and energy, but what doesn't.

You may be able to assign an employee to take care of it, or just set aside 1 hour a week to increase your web exposure. Considering the amount of money I see wasted on a daily basis by businesses and their waste of space advertising with no idea of the return on that

investment, spending the effort on a blog with tangible results that you can measure just makes plain sense.

However I want you to make sure that you don't wasting your time blogging when you could be doing something more effective? That is be generating decent revenue instead?

Ask yourself if you are blogging constructively with a purpose in mind, or are you just chicken scratching - energetically kicking up dust and straw but hardly ever finding a worm?

Before I wrote each post, I ask myself: "What reaction am I aiming for? What do I want the reader to do after reading my post?"

For example, you can...

- Review a product, giving specific details which explain just how useful the product is, leading the reader towards making a decision to buy through your affiliate link. The result: Sales and commissions.

- Publish a helpful how-to article. Result: You give your business a face and a voice. You build credibility. If you're doing this, I hope you have simple, easy to understand instructions telling people how to sign up for your newsletter. Once you've impressed people, you should be adding those new fans to your database. Otherwise, what's the point?

They'll probably just quickly forget you and chase the latest buzz.

- Make an insightful comment on news in your industry. I mean a really insightful comment, not just a reblog or someone else's opinion. Result: You build credibility.

- Publish linkbait (something to catch peoples attention), aimed mainly at attracting many links to your site. This makes pages throughout your site rank higher in Google.

Remember, ask yourself, "What's the point? What do I want to achieve?"

You should ask the same question before you write every article for a website.

To round up, having my Web Smart Central business blog has boosted my position in both Google and Yahoo, and I still don't give it the attention it deserves,

mostly due to time constraints. As far as time outlayed versus reward, my efforts are fully justified since firstly I'm concentrating on communicating with my members and secondly search engine penetration.

There aren't too many hosting providers or businesses in general that blog, perhaps the owners feel that it's unprofessional, but you need to get past that. The core of it is that I'm building an ongoing relationship with you my client and my future clients, right now, with this newsletter and of course my blog. I wouldn't be without one. §

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Web Smart Central News Bulletin

Business as usual this month, with no major changes.

The members area has been upgraded fixing a few bugs that were apparent to some users.

Another server is being sourced in the USA in February, and another in Australia within the next couple of months.

I am rolling out a new marketing initiative to generate more hosting business, which I can't wait to see the results and report on.

I've had to push back the website updates until February to reflect all the changes to Web Smart Central that has been going on over the last couple of months. Needless to say they will be complete prior to the new marketing release. §

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Member Profile of the Month

This is a new section. Each month I'm going to profile a different valued member. This month goes to **Brewers Choice**.

www.brewerschoice.com.au

Brewers Choice are in Brisbane and supply homebrew supplies for most beverages you can think of. So if you are into home brew - beer, wine, spirits then check them out. I think they ship around Australia but don't quote me on that.

Brewers Choice was one of my first members that started with me in 2005 and still enjoy (maybe that's a bit strong a word, but I like to

think so) hosting with me.

They are a bricks and clicks business (meaning they have a physical store (in fact 5 stores now around Brisbane) and an online store accessed through the main website.

The website is full of information their users would find useful, and without doubt is an ever growing asset to compliment the business. Don't stop adding content to it guys.

They use a content management system (Mambo), which allows non-technical users to edit the website by themselves very simply without needing the services of a web designer every time a change needs to be made.

Aaron's TIP: Don't let your site visitors get away without capturing their details for further marketing. Introduce a name and email capture form onto the homepage offering access to recipes, tips, tricks, and the newsletter they produce. Send out a small weekly email to touch base with this list as well as continuing on with the routine formal newsletters. This will build much repeat traffic to the site, in the push to carry more sales through your online shop. (This is VERY important and everyone should be doing this) §

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Question Corner

I have just received in the mail a letter from Domain Registry of America (www.droa.com) to transfer my domain to them. Is this for real or can I just ignore it? Are you aware of them?

Phil Wolstencroft www.eternalife.org

DO NOT PAY IT. It's NOT a bill, it's a well disguised letter to make it look like a bill. Their domain rates are terrible \$35/yr for a .com. We charge AUD\$13.95 for a .com You get no better service from DROA for their higher rate.

I get these letters every year as will every one of you that own a domain. They really should be outlawed because they are deceptive in their nature of making it look like a bill. Still from a purely marketing perspective it really is a nice piece of work, and it obviously does work to get some to change their domain provider otherwise they wouldn't keep sending the letters

out.

Looking at the positive side of this, you should take note that here is a purely online company using offline direct mail to get your business. So they are working in a space that no else is doing. Very smart.

Do you have a question you'd like me to answer about anything (absolutely anything) related to the internet.

I'll answer one or more per month here.

If so then drop me an email to aarond@websmartcentral.com

P.S. Don't forget to pass this newsletter onto your friends and family and work colleagues if you got something out of it, then they also probably will.

P.P.S. Next newsletter I'll be discussing basic SEO (Search Engine Optimisation) and how simple it is to get your site listed in the search engines FAST.

P.P.P.S **Now here's your FREE gift.** If you've read all the way down to here I want to reward you with a FREE gift. I have some left-over Australia holiday vouchers from a large marketing effort last year. They entitle you to FREE accommodation for 7 weekends worth of stay at holiday destinations throughout Australia. They expire in June this year. So you can at least get a couple of weekends in before then, I'm sure. But get cracking.

I only have 19 left, so first 19 to respond (send me an email to aarond@websmartcentral.com), gets them. This newsletter goes out to over 150 clients, not to mention whom they pass it on to. So they will go quickly.

I don't mind if they aren't clients either. I just don't want them to go to waste. So I'm opening this up to any readers. Have a holiday on me and make sure to send me a photo of you enjoying yourself on it.

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