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Guerrilla Sales & Marketing

To Blog or Not to Blog?

LORI TURNER-WILSON Updated 2:47PM
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Lori Turner-Wilson



To blog or not to blog? Though certainly not as life or death as Shakespeare's variation, it's an interesting question faced by countless business owners and marketing professionals every day.

A blog is a Web page made up of short, regular posts listed chronologically – similar to a handwritten journal. Business blogs often feature commentary by management, product updates, upcoming events or recent news.

Few have the capacity to regularly invest in creating original content without eventually seeing a measurable result on the business. And many jump into blogging without first establishing realistic objectives and understanding how to execute an effective blog strategy. That's why 95 percent of blogs fail and are abandoned by their developers.

Before committing to a blog, be clear on what it can and can't do for your business.

If you're a small business and can't cost justify the price of a professionally designed website, a blog is a low-cost alternative.

If you do have a strong web presence but your site wasn't built with a content management tool allowing you to easily make updates, consider adding a blog. It allows a non-tech person to easily post content updates without the time and expense of paying a web developer to do so. Naturally, content on a blog is more difficult for a site visitor to find than if it were designed directly onto your home page. Drive traffic to it by posting teasers on Twitter or Facebook with links to your blog.

Perhaps the greatest benefit of a blog is search engine optimization (SEO). It's the process of improving your website's ranking with the search engines through "organic" means (creating a search-engine friendly site) versus buying guaranteed search engine placement.

Although Google's algorithms are secret, it is widely believed the search giant has shifted its formula toward "quality content" versus "self promotion" – "real" (and current) commentary found on blogs and social media sites carry more weight than the "self-promoting" content (as Google sees it) written for your website.

Small businesses struggle to generate strong Google rankings due to the limited volume of content on their site. Adding a blog can significantly increase content. The more posts, the higher the page count on your site, creating a stronger likelihood relevant keywords being searched every day are included. This can lead to an improved ranking.

Note that unless you have a terribly interesting perspective on a popular topic coupled with the writing skills to engage your audience, flocks of readers aren't likely to regularly visit your blog. The average Internet user

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PROPERTY SALES	45	136	14,794
MORTGAGES	63	208	22,318
FORECLOSURE NOTICES	0	40	9,361
BUILDING PERMITS	0	219	37,868
BANKRUPTCIES	70	203	18,086
BUSINESS LICENSES	27	62	5,644
UTILITY CONNECTIONS	88	331	26,555
MARRIAGE LICENSES	17	78	5,560

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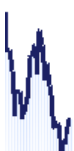
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Morningstar	-25	-0.8	3,087
Nasdaq	-50	-1.9	2,554
NYSE	0	0.0	7,361
Morningstar Small Cap	-42	-0.9	4,647

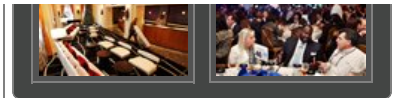
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visits a handful of blogs per month, and you're competing with giants like Mashable.

Focus on the objective of driving search traffic and improving your ranking versus establishing a substantial, regular following, and you're much more likely to find success and stick with your blog strategy.

Lori Turner is an award-winning columnist and managing partner of RedRover Sales & Marketing, www.redrovercompany.com. You can follow RedRover on Twitter (@redrovercompany and @loriturner) and Facebook (facebook.com/redrovercompany).



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