

HOW TO BUILD A SUCCESSFUL BLOG

AND START A CAREER ONLINE



A 10,000-WORD GUIDE ON GETTING TRAFFIC,
SUBSCRIBERS, AND STANDING OUT FROM THE CROWD.

• **BLOSTYRANT** •

INTRODUCTION

This is a 10,000-word guide on how to build a successful blog or blogging-based business in any niche.

Blogging still excites me so much and I absolutely love that I can roll out of bed and work from my couch or the local cafe, writing blogs that add value and - hopefully - help people in some small way.



I genuinely believe that blogs and online businesses will be vital in the future as artificial intelligence and automation changes the workforce in more and more ways. Being able to make extra income online is going to be essential for many families.

It's my sincere hope that this eBook gives you a good start point for your new blog, or helps breathe new life into your old blog.

Remember, it's not just the blog itself that matters - it's the skills you build along that way that will, one day, translate into a business or idea that works.

Let's get started.

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MY BLOGGING STORY

BEFORE BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE ONLINE BUSINESS THAT ALLOWED ME TO WORK FROM HOME FULL-TIME I HAD LOTS OF FAILED AND “TEMPORARILY SUCCESSFUL” WEBSITES AND BLOGS. THEY WERE SOME OF MY MOST VALUABLE LESSONS.



When I was about 16 and bored in high school I started my first blog - a fitness website filled with flaming logos and scrolling marquees - and sold one single fitness manual to a lovely man from Holland.

It earned me \$65.

Well, sort of. I remember catching the bus into the city to get the cash from Western Union because I had no idea about payment gateways like Paypal or E-Junkie, so I had to deduct those costs.

Still, it was exhilarating.

I got distracted with graduating exams and getting into college for a while but I never forgot the feeling of making that first \$65 on the web.

After a year of University I noticed something funny – I would catch the bus into campus, wait for the lecture to start and then I'd get up and walk out and go and muck around in the computer rooms. It took me about a month after noticing this trend to realise I was never going to stick it out.

I jumped back online and started writing blogs again.

At this point I had a huge stroke of luck and managed to sell one of my blogs for around \$20,000. This was when I really started to think that I could make it work. I had genuinely just stumbled on a niche that was popular and was fortunate enough that someone wanted to buy it, but it was then that I decided to start researching, analysing and looking into the industry a bit more seriously.

So, I got a job as a cleaner at a gym where I'd work from 6am to 10am and then come home and work on building blogs - some of which I went on to sell for similar price tags.

By 24 I was working full time from home as a blogger earning money through affiliates, product sales, and more.

Needless to say, blogging has given me so much and I still love being able to get out of bed and work on my laptop instead of going into an office.

My blogging knowledge is still *extremely* limited and I have a lot to learn, but I hope that by sharing the strategies and ideas that have worked for me over the years that you too will be able to skip some of the harder parts on the journey and have some success.

I really hope this eBook represents a useful starting point for you in your blogging career, and that if you do end up running a popular blog you use it to help people as much as possible.

MORE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

At the end of each section I'll have these little grey box areas that will give you further study options, reading materials or tools to give you an early advantage. If you want to chat more I'm always available on [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#).

CHOOSING THE RIGHT TOPIC

WHEN YOU START A BLOG YOU NEED TO MAKE SURE THERE ARE GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES. IN THIS SECTION I AM GOING TO SHOW YOU EXACTLY HOW TO NAVIGATE THE ROAD TO CHOOSING THE RIGHT TOPIC, NICHE AND KEYWORDS.



To niche or not to niche? That is the question!

The quest here is to find a topic/niche that has four things: traffic, people who will buy stuff, not too much competition and is enjoyable to work in while still helping people.

This section will hopefully assist you to figure out exactly how to do that.

1. Find a niche and keywords to target

The first step you want to take is to make sure the idea that you have for a topic/niche has enough traffic to be worthwhile. There's no point

spending weeks building a blog if there is no one searching for information about it.

Tools like [Majestic SEO](#) are your best friends at this stage. They allow you to look at all your competition and see what keywords and backlinks they are going after. This is extremely useful when deciding on a niche to blog about as well as being useful every time you write a post.

Let me give you an example. Let's say you want to write a blog about dog collars and have the domain name [www.cooldogcollars.com](#) picked out. But after having a look on Majestic you might find that the phrase "cheap dog collars" gets way more searches and has less competition than "cool dog collars". One quick search might have just saved you months and months of work.

Make a list of all the niches you are thinking about exploring and then use Majestic to see if there is any real juice in there. If this is too complicated for you at this stage don't worry. Just keep reading and make sure you spend a lot of time on step 4.

2. Consider your long tail and short tail keywords

A short tail keyword in this instance is "dog collars" whereas a long tail keyword would be "dog collars for German Shepherds".

You will need to plan out your short tail keyword making sure it is a relatively popular one but you also need to make sure there is enough to write about for all those long tail keywords.

I'm not just talking about traffic here – I'm talking about your ability to write on a topic. If you run out of long tail topics in a year you are going to be in big trouble.

3. Make sure you love it to death

It sounds corny but unless you absolutely love the topic to death you are going to fail and fail quickly. Writing posts gets boring, even on topics you really like. So imagine spending hours of each day working on and thinking about a topic you don't care about?

It would be dreadful.

I have had literally dozens of sites that I don't maintain because I just don't care enough. Any success I have had has been in niches that I love.

When you visit a site like [yTravel Blog](#) you can feel the passion oozing out of the content. They love it and the readers too and I am convinced that it means the content is more useful and positive as a result.

4. Analyse the big sites in your niche

Once you have done a little bit of thinking and researching, the next step is to take a look around at the big guys and gals in your niche. This is one of [the most important steps when starting any blog](#).

You want to look at their blogs and take notice of things like how many subscribers they have got, how many Twitter followers they have, how many comments they get, how they do on social media and bookmarking sites, etc.

The point here is to make sure that there is room to grow in your niche. If there aren't any big guys it either means that you have found the best niche in the world (unlikely) or that there just isn't much going on in that topic.

You then want to take a look at all the posts that these big blogs have written that have done well. Examine why they have worked and what keywords and topics they have targeted.

You can then take a look at writing things that improve on those posts. You can even go one step further and see if there are any tools, books, plugins, etc. that you could develop to further tap into those popular topics.

5. Start with your product and work backwards

Here is the really important part - you want to make sure you know roughly what you are going to sell or promote on your blog in order to make money before you begin.

Many people start thinking that they should get as much traffic and subscribers first and then think about how to make cash.

BAD MOVE.

Why? Because sometimes there just isn't a really good way to make cash in certain niches. Before you start out you should have a think about how you are going to make money and then only select your niche if the competition is right and the product(s) fit well.

Niche Resources

[Google Traffic Estimator](#) - Get information from Google.

[Majestic SEO](#) - A good tool for researching the competition.

[SEM Rush](#) – Professional competitor analysis.

Niche Further Reading

[How Stay at Home Moms Can Make Good Money Blogging](#) - A post where we talk about how to make a business at home.

[Revealed: 19 Things to Know Before You Start a Blog](#) - A big post from earlier this year with some up to date tips.

[How to Choose a Profitable Niche](#) - A very good guide by Copyblogger that always seems to be relevant

CHOOSING A DOMAIN NAME THAT GETS YOUR BLOG NOTICED

THIS SECTION IS ABOUT HOW TO CHOOSE THE PERFECT DOMAIN NAME THAT WILL HELP YOUR BLOG TO STAND OUT FROM THE CROWD. YOU WANT IT TO BE SEXY, RELEVANT AND MEMORABLE.



Your domain name is extremely important. It's how people first encounter your blog and it's the part of your brand that communicates with them first. It really needs to stand out and it really needs to be a .com that you own.

Why do I need my own domain?

Free domains that you get with free blog hosts (like Blogger or Tumblr) often do not rank as well on Google because the free setup can signal to Google that it's not a serious website.

Similarly, often these free platforms don't give you enough control of the backend which is very important as you grow a business and need to tweak and change things as it gets bigger and more complex.

Purchasing your own domain name is the first step to building a successful blog that you fully control as a professional venture.

What if I already have a Blogger or WordPress one?

You can make a plan to migrate over if you decide that it's something you want to do. In this case, talk to your host and see what steps you need to consider before moving.

Where do I buy domain names?

You can get your first year free when you [sign up for a hosting package with BlueHost](#) which is who I recommend for all new bloggers.

How do I know what to choose?

Choosing a domain name is a really important process that can (and should) take a lot of consideration. There are three main routes to take:

- **Name it after yourself**

A really good idea these days is to name your blog after your own name. This is a fantastic idea if you want to position yourself as an expert in the field and grow your own personal brand. And that is what blogging is really all about – building a good brand name. Just make sure you only use your name if you are going to provide constant quality and helpful information.

- **Use a keyword rich name**

Jump on Market Samurai and start researching domain names in your niche that have your short tail (see above) keywords in them. For example, if you want to write about cupcakes and [www.cupcakes.com](#) is taken then you can do [www.cupcakeshq.com](#) and build up a quality resource site.

- **Go memorable**

Memorable domain names are things that are done more for shock and interest factor. Some examples of this would be [Smashing Magazine](#), [ViperChill](#) and [ZenHabits](#). They don't mean much but people remember the brand.

Make sure you spend a lot of time thinking about your different options because you really don't want to have to change this once you've got started.

Remember, the whole point here is to build a brand that attracts a loyal following. A brand that you love and want to back for the next 10 or 15 years. Make sure it is something you are proud of and something you believe in all the way.

Domain Name Resources

[Namecheap.com](#) (affiliate) - A trusted domain name registrar.

[Impossibility](#): This is a domain name generator to give you ideas.

Domain Name Further Reading

[How to Choose the Perfect Domain](#) - A comprehensive video by Rand Fishkin on how to get it right.

[Domain Name Mistakes](#) - A nice list of things to look out for.

GETTING YOUR OWN HOST AND SETTING YOUR BLOG UP PROPERLY

THIS SECTION IS ABOUT WHY ALL BLOGGERS NEED WORDPRESS AND THEIR OWN CHEAP HOSTING SETUP. I'LL EVEN SHOW YOU HOW TO SET IT UP AND FIND THE BEST BLOG TEMPLATES THAT ARE PERFECT FOR SEO AND READER INTERACTION.



If you look at almost any successful blogger you'll notice that they run a self-hosted WordPress setup.

It's now the most popular open source blogging software in the world due to the tens of thousands of free themes, plugins and different features you have access to for free.

It's difficult to say whether it will always remain the best option, but for now it seems to be the wisest place to start building an online empire if for no other reason than the sheer flexibility that it gives you.

1. Sign up for BlueHost as your blog host provider

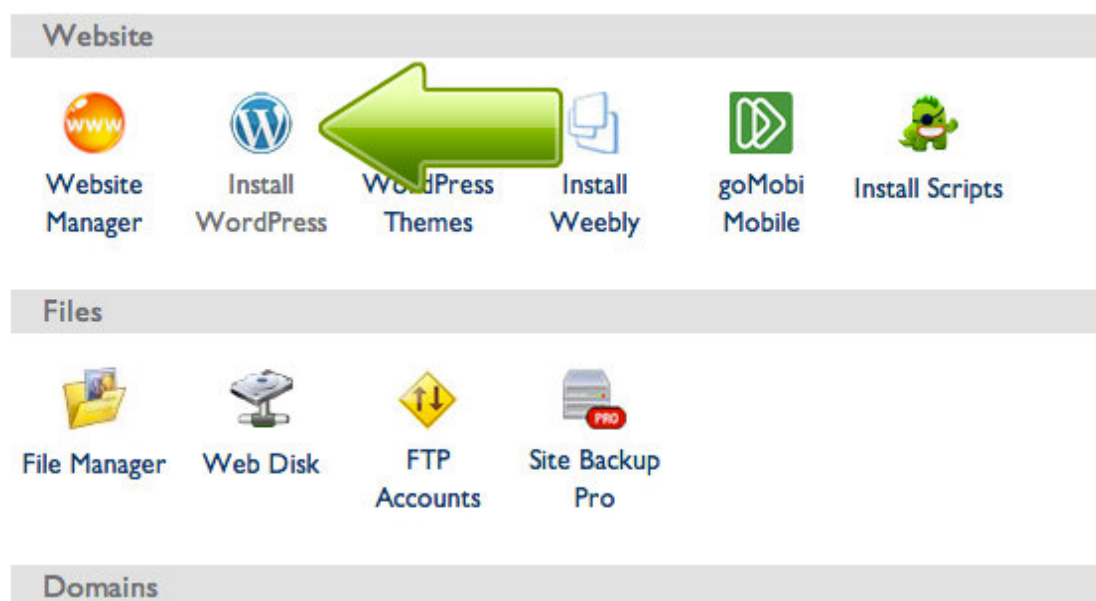
[Click here and sign up for a BlueHost account](#). You pay \$2.75 a month for the first year and can install unlimited blogs and email addresses and you never get any hidden fees. You also get the first year of your domain name fees for free.

Here's [a quick video I did](#) on why I think they are a good place to start and how the BlueHost/WordPress relationship all fits together:

Blue Host has 24 hour live support and they are always super helpful. Any time anything has gone wrong I have had the problem solved in minutes. It's nice knowing that you are not alone when you are just starting out on a new blogging adventure.

2. Login to BlueHost and install WordPress

Once you have purchased your hosting package you then want to install WordPress. Luckily this only takes one or two clicks with BlueHost.



Click the WordPress link and follow the prompts. In under five minutes you would have finished installing your first professional blog on a WordPress platform. [Here's a step by step guide on starting a WordPress blog on BlueHost](#) if you need more details on the process.

3. Choose a theme (template) for your blog

Now that your WordPress blog is set up you need to add a theme that has all the functionality that you need. At this stage you can either go with a free theme or a paid one. There are advantages and disadvantages to both but it basically boils down to finding a design with the right look, feel and functionality for your needs.

You can search for themes directly from your WordPress dashboard by going APPEARANCE > THEMES > SEARCH and scrolling through the thousands of options.

Just be careful when doing this as some free themes can be a bit dodgy in terms of security and hidden promotions. For example, sometimes the creator of the theme will put links in the footer back to their own irrelevant sites.

4. Tips for choosing a theme

When choosing your theme you want to make sure it fits with your branding and marketing goals.

For example, if you are writing a finance blog you want your theme to look clean and professional and solid – people will judge you on the way your blog is set out visually.

You should also take in to consideration things like:

- Is it focused on the content?
- Is it photo-based or text-based?
- Can you easily change the logo and brand styling?
- Can you add your Aweber opt-in form easily?
- Is it secure? (this is why StudioPress is so good)
- Does it have support? (again, Studiopress has great support)

The last thing is that every blogger should now be using a mobile responsive WordPress theme. This means that the layout will adapt to different mobile and tablet screen sizes – so important for usability now that a lot of people are using mobile phones.

5. Install your new Theme

Your new theme will come in a .zip format if you have purchased one. You can upload it directly into your WordPress Dashboard by logging into your WordPress site (<http://yourdomain.com/wp-admin>) and then going: APPEARANCE > THEMES > INSTALL THEMES > UPLOAD THEMES and then uploading your themes .zip file just like you would add an attachment to an email.

If you've chosen a free theme through your WordPress dashboard you just click INSTALL on the preview screen. You can always switch back to your old theme if you don't like the look of the new one.

6. Fill out the basics like a pro

You'll now have a pretty blank looking theme set up and waiting for some love. At this stage you want to fill out all the basics like your About page, logos, profile photos, your first article and a place for people to subscribe by email. I'm going to go into more detail for these points down below so sit tight.

The main point at this stage is that you want to be communicating your brand clearly with your future audience. Who are you? What do you do? Why should people listen to you? Why are you different? Try and consider all of that from a design point of view now.

You now have your very own blog with its own domain name and hosting to play with!

Hosting and WordPress theme resources

[Pingdom Tools](#) - Make sure your website is super fast.

[Blue Host](#) – the host with the best support for bloggers.

[Gravity Forms](#) (affiliate) – the sexiest contact forms, order forms, comment forms and much more.

Extra reading for hosting

[15 FAQs about starting a self-hosted blog](#) - Some of the most common questions I get about the self-hosting setup.

[Blog Hosting Review - Which is Best?](#) - Read more about why I recommend BlueHost.

[How to Start a Fashion Blog and Make it Fabulous](#) - A long article I wrote on how to start a blog in a very popular niche.

[21 Critical Tasks to Perform as Soon as You Start a Blog](#) - Some good little tips to follow once you're all set up.

WHY YOU NEED A MAILING LIST AND A FREE GIVEAWAY

I AM YET TO ENCOUNTER A SUCCESSFUL BLOG THAT ISN'T BASED AROUND A MAILING LIST OF HIGHLY ACTIVE EMAIL SUBSCRIBERS AND A FREE GIVEAWAY THAT ATTRACTS NEW EMAIL SUBSCRIBERS. SO THAT'S WHAT WE NEED TO DO NOW!



Every blog needs a mailing list associated with it.

People on this list subscribe so they can get updated when you publish new content, but it also gives you a huge opportunity for quick promotions and much more.

Why are email subscribers so important? Well, that's easy.

- They look at every blog post you write (your newsletter should also send out blog posts)
- They promote your articles to their friends
- They act as a base to launch all your products and new websites to

The goal of your blog should be to capture as many loyal, loving and friendly email subscribers as possible. That is what I am going to teach you now.

1. Sign up to a mailing list provider

The first step is to sign up to a mailing list provider. This is where all of your subscribers' details will be stored, and it's where you go to send out newsletters, design opt-in forms, and more.

There are many options out there like Mail Chimp and Get Response, but I have gone with AWeber due to its mix of affordability, reliability and features.

Have a look around at the different options and see which one suits your budget and needs.

2. Sign up and create your newsletter

Once you have signed up for Aweber (or whichever service you chose) you need to fill out all the details required to make a new list. For example, you'll need to give your list a name, provide the URL of your blog, RSS feed, etc. If you get stuck with this process don't worry because Aweber have some amazing [tutorial videos](#) that show you how to do every step of the process.

3. Create a free eBook that encourages sign ups

This is one of the most important steps in creating a blog that makes you an income – you need to give away something for free in order to capture as many subscribers as possible.

For example, the eBook that you're reading now is only available to people who have kindly subscribed to the mailing list at Blog Tyrant. It's then automatically delivered to your inbox using AWeber.

- **Step 1 – Write your eBook**

The first step is to write an eBook about a topic that is really narrow to your niche. You want to make sure that everyone who visits your blog will be interested in reading it. This step also involved thinking of a really catchy title that is specific and enticing. Write your eBook in Word or Open Office.

- **Step 2 – Design some graphics**

You want your eBook to look professional so make sure you design some nice graphics to use as a title page. If you need graphics done you can always pay me to do them for you. Add your graphics by going INSERT > PICTURE > FROM FILE

- **Step 3 – Add some professional photos**

Photos are a really good way to illustrate your points and take your eBook to the next level of professionalism. Here is a big guide on where to find the right images and photos to use on your blog.

- **Step 4 – Export as a PDF**

All eBooks are just PDF files and Open Office and new versions of Word allow you to make your file into a PDF by going FILE > EXPORT > EXPORT AS PDF. You then select the settings you want like zoom and quality. I recommend setting it to 110% zoom and 100% quality.

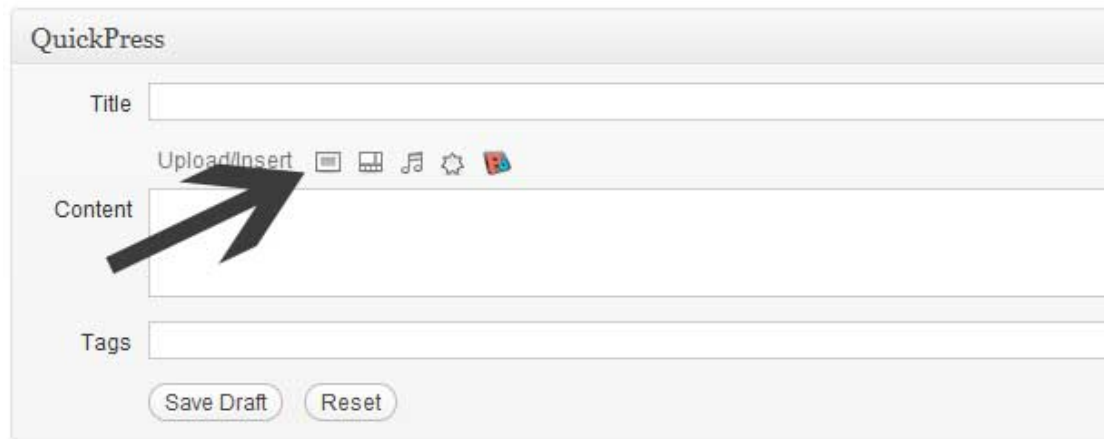
- **Step 5 – Create an eBook cover**

Here you are essentially making something insubstantial seem more solid and that gets people interested. I highly recommend jumping on Fiverr and getting a designer to make you one for a few dollars instead of spending the time doing it yourself.

By this stage you should have the content, PDF file, and the graphic representing the eBook all finished and ready to go!

5. Upload it to your blog

The next step is to upload the eBook and your cover to your servers. The easiest way to do this is by logging into WordPress and using the image upload functionality.



Make sure you copy the URLs of your image locations as we are going to use them next.

6. Add a subscribe box to your blog and set up your automatic give away

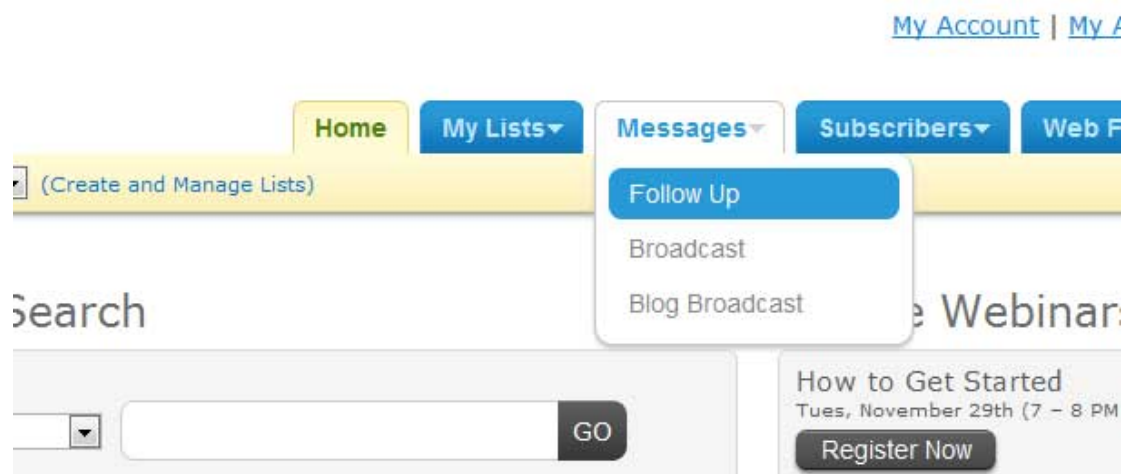
The final step here is to add a subscription area to your blog where people can enter their email address and name and get your free eBook. This is a little bit more involved so I've made a video for you to follow with [an external guide](#) that goes over all the steps in a very detailed way.

7. Create your pre-set Newsletter (called Follow Ups)

The next step that you need to take to create a blog worth some money is to set up an automatic newsletter or series of follow up messages.

This is one of the real advantages of AWeber in that it allows you to pre-write all your newsletters and send them out to every new subscriber over a set period of time.

For example, I have a newsletter set to go to every subscriber after two days has passed.



Just sign in to your AWeber account and click MESSAGES > FOLLOW UP and you will be given a screen where you can write your newsletters and choose from options like what time of day you want it delivered.

You want to write at least five quality newsletters that provide real value to your readers.

They don't have to be long but they should ideally be something that people on the blog don't get – something exclusive for your newsletter readers.

This is also the part where your blog could earn most of its money. But I'll talk about that in the money section later.

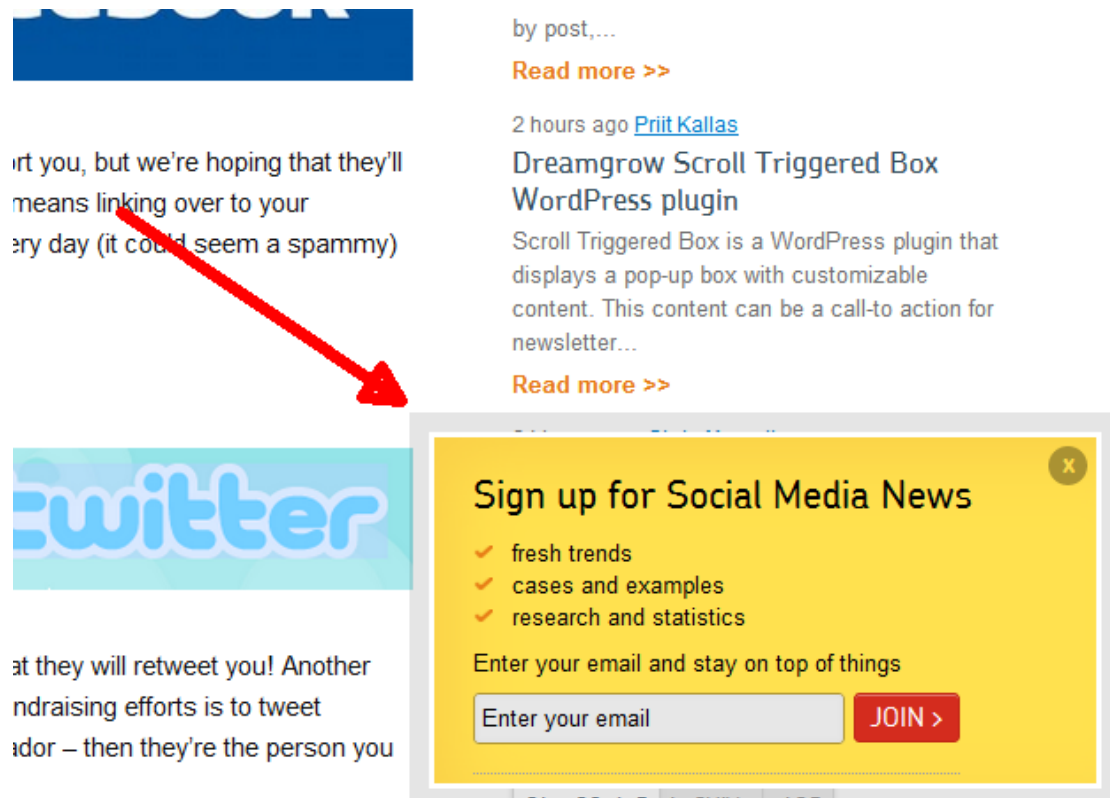
Now you are all ready to go!

You have a free give away that automatically gets sent to new subscribers and you have a newsletter that goes out only to your mailing list.

This is the basis of any successful blog.

8. Massively boost your email subscription rate (hugely!)

A pop up opt-in form is one of the best ways to get more subscribers. I know you think you hate them but, actually, they get almost no complaints from readers and convert nicely.



If you don't like pop ups you can try another plugin that I now use called Scroll Triggered Box. This one slides out from the side of your blog after people have scrolled a certain distance down the screen. It converts well and it's less invasive.

Mailing list resources

Aweber (affiliate) – the best email marketing service for bloggers and web marketers.

Scroll Triggered Box – a lovely way to get more subscribers.

HelloBar – an awesome tool that sits at the top of your page and can drive sign ups.

Further reading on building a mailing list

[41 Tips to Put Over 10,000 People on Your Mailing List](#) - a list of tips that have helped us to build a wonderful mailing list.

[How to Add a Mailing List to Your Blog](#) - the steps you need to add the form to your blog

[How to Send a Free eBook to Your Email Subscribers](#) - a little video on how the process works automatically.

[How to Make an eBook](#) - how to make a PDF eBook that you can giveaway on your blog.

GETTING STARTED WITH VIRAL CONTENT

THIS SECTION SHOULD HAVE YOU ON YOUR WAY TO A LOT MORE TRAFFIC FOR YOUR BLOG! FOR THAT YOU NEED WONDERFUL CONTENT THAT HELPS PEOPLE AND PLEASES SEARCH ENGINES.



Traffic is vital to a blog, but that traffic needs to be targeted and interested in the content that you are producing.

Here we are going to take a deeper look at what you need to do in order to ensure that your blog gets the right numbers from Google, social media, and elsewhere.

1. Spend ages writing brilliant titles

Your title is what advertises your article to the world. It is what gets people's attention. And, believe it or not, a good blog post title is more

important than good content. If your title is perfectly written it will encourage people to read on even if your opening content is a bit iffy.

So what makes a brilliant title?

- **It can ask a question**

Titles that pose questions often get more user engagement especially if you don't fully answer the question in the post.

- **It can create an internal conflict**

Some of the most successful titles are ones that pose a problem. For example, "America is Doomed: Why the USA is Not Going to Survive". It creates emotion and hooks people in and causes deeper thinking about tough issues.

- **It can use classic title techniques**

I call these classic techniques because they have been working for years. Things like "How to..." and "The Top 10..." which always seem to do quite well.

- **It can be super specific**

What sounds more enticing to you: "How I Sold my Blog" or "How I Sold a Blog for \$20,000 in 8 Months"? The second one of course! People love the specifics. It also gives you authority.

Make sure your titles are amazing before getting into that post content because it gives you a structure to work towards so that your writing stays on track.

2. Add lots of spaces, headings and dot points to your posts

People are too easily distracted these days and as such you need to create a blogging style that uses lots of lists, headings and paragraphs.

The idea is to make it as scannable as possible. WordPress lets you add bold text and list points really easily so make use of them.

This is especially powerful if you can carry that same content style over all of your posts. People become used to the way you write and share it more with their friends.

3. Exhaust your topic, but not fully

One of the biggest trends in blogging right now is to write detailed posts that expand on lots of points with the article topic. This usually leads to massively long articles with lots of resources attached but people love it.

The key here is to not fully exhaust the topic. You should still leave some questions in peoples' minds. This generates a lot of buzz because readers will want to share the content to find more answers from their friends.

A really great formula for this is explained by Demian Farnworth in this article. I highly recommend you give it a read.

4. Always add resources

Viral content on Reddit or Delicious always has resources on it. The best posts on any blog are ones that people bookmark and come back to in order to get information on the topic.

Don't be afraid to link out to other blog posts or tools in order to give your readers as much knowledge and power as possible. It makes you look more powerful.

TIP: Links are like currency to bloggers. If you write a huge, detailed article make sure you link to lots of other blogs in your niche. When you publish your article make sure they know it's gone live. If the content is good, you'll make a new contact and maybe even get a free share.

5. Base your posts on other successful posts

Want to go viral? Take a look at how other people have done it.

Before you write a post spend some time looking at the most successful posts in that niche on the biggest blogs in your category. Look at what they did and how they did it. Find out why people liked it so much. Have a look at who Tweeted it out and then ask them to do the same for you. Don't re-invent the wheel – just make it better.

One place that a lot of bloggers overlook in their research is YouTube. If you look at the trending section on the homepage you will find a bunch of

really strange videos that have millions of views. Try to figure out what they did to get there - often it is a mix of compelling titles, an eye-catching video cover image, and a regular succession of releases.

6. Ask for help from long term alliances

A good blogger has a whole list of other bloggers he/she can ask for help. You need to build these relationships up carefully over a long period of time but after you know these guys well enough to call them “friend” you can be sure they will be happy to help you promote a new post and help it go viral. We’ll touch more on this strategy later because it really is very valuable.

7. Give your best posts away to other blogs

One of the quickest ways to go viral is to give your best material to other blogs in the form of guest posts.

People really denigrate guest posting these days, which is a real shame because it still works so well. The task is to develop your own strategy for researching the best places for your content and then establishing meaningful relationships with the staff and owners so that you can get regular writing spots.

Really try and think outside the box about where you do your guest posting. It doesn’t have to be inside your niche as long as the website you are on has a relationship to your topic. For example, if you run a yoga blog you might consider guest posting on a bodybuilding blog with an article about how yoga can help muscle health. You’ve just tapped into a whole new audience.

8. Spend money on advertising... often

Advertising is extremely cheap on the Internet as compared with other formats like TV, radio and print. This means we have a unique opportunity to promote our blogs and products to a very targeted audience.

The best thing about advertising on platforms like Facebook, for example, is that sometimes the ads give your post an artificial boost than then leads to more organic traffic seeing and sharing the content.

Here's a little post on how to experiment with Facebook ads that might give you a bit more information about why this is such an important thing to start experimenting with.

9. Don't just write posts – make videos, podcasts and tools

Viral content these days is no longer just about the written word. As iPhones and iPads and hand held devices get more and more popular you will find that the shift heads towards media that can be digested easily on those platforms.

This means that you have to do things like make a podcast and Youtube videos every now and then.

The idea here is to give people new pathways to find you as well as offering your existing readers something more personal and detailed. Its like creating a new product line. Video, especially, is now the number one choice for internet marketers who want to personalise their sales pages and create more trust. I highly recommend you get onto it.

10. Make sure each post fits into your overall strategy

It's vital that each blog post is part of an overall blogging strategy. One of the worst things I see bloggers do is spend ages writing articles and then get no benefit from them.

For example, I have one article on my blog that brings me around 800 unique visitors per day. It's extremely popular. But it adds nothing to my business because it was a “stand alone” post that has nothing to do with my overarching message.

Plan out each post with a strategy in mind. Who are you targeting? What action do you want them to take? What is the end result for them? These are important considerations.

11. Find a point of difference each time

Viral content has to have a point of difference. You need to have something in your article that stands out from the way the rest of the articles in that niche have been written.

A good tip here is to visit sites like [BuzzFeed](#), [Reddit](#) and [Imgur](#) and see what is trending really well. Take a look at how the headlines are crafted and the format of the content. What is making people click on that article and then share it around?

This is also very important for [your blog's SEO](#) because Google likes to index different sorts of content on the front page so that people have a variety of different formats to choose from.

Make sure you have some tracking software like [Clicky Web Analytics](#) installed because it will give you insights into what content is working on your blog, how long people are staying on each post and so on.

12. Get help to research and write your posts

Who says that you have to do all of the work? You don't! In fact, it's a good idea to start outsourcing as many tasks as you can early on.

The great thing about the Internet is that you are now participating in a global economy. That means you can find workers overseas to help you at a fraction of the cost and the same (or better!) quality that you'd find at home.

Here's [an interview with outsourcing expert Chris Ducker](#) about this very thing. I recommend checking out sites like [Freelancer.com](#) and people like [Chris Ducker](#) to learn more about how to get other people helping to build your blog.

Resources for Viral Content

[Freelancer](#) – a great website for getting help online.

[Virtual Staff Finder](#) – founded by Chris Ducker.

[Clicky](#) (affiliate) – the best analytics software around.

[Boost Blog Traffic](#) – Jon’s 52 Headline Hacks report is stunning.

[Smart Podcast Player](#) – an awesome tool for playing your podcasts.

[BlogAds](#) – my favorite place for buying cheap ads to drive traffic.

Further reading for viral content

[How to Get 100,000 Visitors from Google Per Month](#) - A guide we put together on how to create content for Google.

[A Proven Blogging Strategy](#) - Here’s a strategy we’ve used a lot.

[32 Experts Share Their Best Blog Promotion Tips](#) – A great resource but together by Kristi Hines.

[What is the best time to publish blog articles?](#) – Good to know how to test this for yourself.

[Creating Viral Content](#) – A great post by Derek Halpern on how to make it happen.

HOW TO MAKE MONEY FROM YOUR BLOG SUSTAINABLY

NOW WE GET DOWN TO THE NITTY GRITTY – HOW YOU CAN MAKE A FULL-TIME LIVING FROM ONE BLOG ALONE. IT IS MY HOPE THAT THIS INFORMATION KICK STARTS YOUR BLOGGING CAREER.



They say that a mailing list of 10,000 email subscribers is worth about \$100,000 a year.

So if you haven't read the section above on creating a mailing list you should go back and read it now.

So, what ways can you make money from a blog? There are two general categories:

1. Your own product

The first method of making money with your blog is to develop and sell your own product. This is the hardest way to do it but also the most rewarding as you reap most of the profits and get to see something that you created do so well. Types of products are many but could be:

- **An eBook**

If you have something really good to say then an eBook can be a really easy way to make money. All it takes is a few weeks writing and a quick upload and you are cooking with gas. You have to make sure this is something really special, however, as the market has been flooded with eBooks for a long time now.

- **An eCourse**

This is like an eBook but a whole lot more valuable because you can include elements like voice and video into the delivery. People will pay a lot more to be tutored in “person” by their favorite expert. You can stagger the delivery of the course so that one module gets sent out every week until all modules are completed. This gives the user the feeling of constant value. Sites like Teachable allow you to do this extremely easily and even take care of payments.

- **A membership site**

Membership sites are HUGE at the moment. The idea is that you build up a blog following by providing quality free content and when you get to a few thousand subscribers you launch your paid content area that gives people videos, e-courses, forums and, most importantly, access to you via email or Skype. These courses regularly sell for \$500 and upwards which is a lot of money if you can sell a few thousand of them.

Now, creating each of these products could fill up a blog in itself so what I am going to do is start regularly covering these things on my mailing list. Make sure you are subscribed to Blog Tyrant if you want to learn more about the ins-and-outs of creating a highly profitable course or membership site.

2. By promoting affiliate products

The second way to make money on your blog is by promoting affiliate products to your users. This is actually how most of the money is made on blogs.

How do affiliates work?

Imagine you just made a new eBook (like above) and decided that you needed help selling it. What you can do is upload that eBook to websites where people get paid a certain percentage of the sale amount in order to sell your product. They become your affiliate.

Well, there are tens of thousands of affiliate programs out there. All you need to do is sign up for a website like [Affiliate.com](https://www.affiliate.com) or [CJ.com](https://www.cj.com) and choose affiliate programs that are relevant to your readers.

Alternatively, if you have a product that you really love (like Photoshop, for example) you can visit their website and see if they have their own affiliate program that you can join on the site itself.

How do I know which ones to promote?

It is different for everyone but the test for me is simple:

*HAVE I USED IT MYSELF AND HAD A GOOD EXPERIENCE
WITH IT? DOES IT HAVE GOOD SUPPORT STAFF AND
POSSIBILITIES OF A REFUND?*

If I can't say yes to those questions then I don't recommend it to my readers.

You see, your readers should be important to you. Many of my readers are now close friends. So why would I jeopardise that relationship to make a few measly dollars? Don't do it.

How do you promote affiliates to your readers?

To promote to your readers you need to be careful. It is NOT a hard sale. You are NEVER going to send out an email or a blog post saying “buy this or else”. There are four main ways you can do this:

- **Small, unobtrusive ads on your blog**

This is the “lazy” way. You’ll often see banners in a blog’s sidebar that links to the products that they want to promote. They are just hoping people will click.

- **In-post links**

The second way is to link to affiliate products in your posts. You have to be really careful doing this because some people don’t like the idea of being referred to affiliates even if they are highly relevant and useful.

- **Mail out links**

This is the most effective way of all to make money on your blog. The idea here is that you very occasionally send out emails to your mailing list that include some affiliate links. These links should never be alone and out of context but rather you should show your mailing list why it is useful before mentioning it.

- **A pre-sale page**

Pre-selling is something that a lot of bloggers are afraid of but, in reality, it actually makes for a more honest and enjoyable reader experience. Here’s how it works.

Let’s say you want to promote [Aweber](#) to your mailing list but you don’t want to just drop it on them. What you can do is create a pre-sale page that is a lot more gentle and inferring as opposed to hard selling and direct.

For example, you might send them to [this page](#) which contains the affiliate links but doesn’t really resemble a traditional sales pitch. The idea with pre-selling is to gently introduce your readers to an idea without selling it to them. Mail outs are a great way to wet their appetite. You will actually find that, if done right, these things convert a lot higher.

The whole idea about promoting affiliates is that you will enhance your readers' blogs. You want to give them a resource that you believe in and have tested for yourself. Never ever promote something unless you really know that it is a quality program.

Important - Every country has different laws about affiliate promotion and most require that you have a disclosure that is clear and visible before any affiliate links. It's a good idea to be very transparent with your readers in this sense and never try to trick anyone. It's unethical and also often illegal.

A powerful affiliate strategy

The last thing I want to talk about here is a simple but extremely powerful affiliate strategy that can make you consistent income for years to come.

- **Find an affiliate product that you want to promote**

Take a look at all the affiliate networks and find an affiliate product that you can test and then promote to your readers. Make sure it is highly relevant and useful.

- **Pick a target keyword phrase**

You want to then jump on to Google Keyword Planner and pick a target keyword phrase that is relevant to your product as well as something you can write a detailed post about.

- **Write a post that mentions the affiliate in a general way**

Write a hugely detailed post about a topic related to the product and then mention the product in a general, incidental sort of way. You are NOT writing a review of the product or anything like that. One example is my post on [starting a blog](#) and the things you need to know.

- **Add your affiliate link to that post**

Add your affiliate links into that post such that they are informative and helpful – much like a side resource.

- **Add more resources**

Add more resources and links to your blog post. Make sure they are up to date and will be useful to readers.

Publish the post

Publish the article at a time when most of your readers are at their

computers but not too busy. Data tells us that 10am on a Monday or Wednesday (New York time) are often prime hours.

- **Guest post on related topics**

The next step is to do guest posts on related topics on the big blogs in your niche. In those posts you want to link back to your big article that contains the affiliate links. What this is doing is funnelling relevant traffic back to your blog post which is, in turn, acting as a pre-sale page for the affiliate product.

- **Email owners of other links**

As a final promotional step, go out and email all the people you linked to in the article and just gently let them know that you mentioned them in this massively useful article. Sometimes, if you're lucky, they'll share it or link back to it.

If you picked your target keyword right you will find that over time you start to rank organically on Google and thus drive huge amounts of traffic to your affiliate product page.

If you want to bypass the guest posting stage (which is fine) you can just directly send advertising from Facebook Ads, Google Adwords and BlogAds to your affiliate posts. Then you just have to find the right ad-buys for your niche.

This is a fantastic strategy because it also helps you to build contacts in your niche by linking to websites in your articles.

3. What about Adsense and advertising?

A lot of bloggers make their money with Adsense.

That is fine.

But if you ask me, there are a lot of better ways to make money with your blog. In fact, I believe that Adsense actually loses you money.

Why?

Because every time someone clicks an ad on your site you make between 20 cents and a few dollars and lose that reader forever.

That is a reader that could have subscribed to your mailing list and bought your products down the road, shared your content on social media while becoming a loyal fan. All for a few cents.

Advertising is fine but I just never place my hopes in it unless you are getting millions of page views per month. The revenue just isn't going to cut it.

Diversify your income if you want to survive

One last thing I want to mention is that it is really important to diversify how you make your income online. If you rely on just one income stream then you can wind up in trouble if that trend stops or if Google sends you down to the second page of their results. Make sure you are always exploring new avenues and experimenting with new things on your blog.

What this really means is that you need to have multiple sources of traffic that all convert to sales. For example, I've had two major Google penalties in my career. Both times it was completely by surprise as I hadn't been doing anything against the terms of service.

The first time it happened I was screwed because I was relying almost 100% on AdSense for my income. So when the traffic stopped coming from Google I lost all my revenue.

The second time had less of an impact. I'd learned not to rely on Google for my traffic and had built up a pretty sizeable mailing list and as such I had protection. I started posting more often and sending out notices to my list. They then shared my content and sales didn't really drop too much.

Understand the importance of testing

This is quite an advanced topic so I don't want to go into too much depth but it's important to know that you need to get good at testing if you want to make it in the online world.

For example, let's say you spend two weeks starting a new blog and writing content and then you run an advertising campaign to get traffic to

your mailing list. Well, what happens if your red button is putting people off? Or perhaps a shorter landing page would convert more people?

Only through split testing (running two versions of the same page and seeing which converts better) can you get actual knowledge about the best direction to go.

Sites like [Visual Website Optimizer](#) will allow you to do this very simply and affordably.

Resources for earning a living online

[CJ.com](#) – one of the leading affiliate networks to find a product to promote.

[Wishlist Member](#) – my favorite software for building membership sites in WordPress.

[Visual Website Optimizer](#) – a very important tool for split testing your landing pages.

[Yaro's reports](#) – a fellow Aussie who has written two reports that new bloggers have really loved.

Further Reading:

[7 Simple Ways to Make More Affiliate Income from Your Blog](#): Here's a few tips that I use myself on this blog.

[Whiteboard Fridays](#) – Rand is one of my heroes and his Friday video is one of the only things I regularly watch. Years of tested and trusted tips.

[\\$72,000 in eBook Sales in a Week](#) – a great series of lessons by someone who sells a lot of eBooks across two popular blogs.

[The Ultimate Guide to Making an Affiliate Income from Your Blog](#) – an article I wrote on ViperChill that goes into more detail about this process.

[Smart Passive Income](#) – everything you read on my friend Pat's website is useful for developing an income in a safe way.

[Get Paid for Free](#) – a great article by Chris G on how it works online.

[Guide to Split Testing](#) – a nice post to get you started with split testing.

MISTAKES TO AVOID WHEN YOU START A BLOG

OKAY SO WE'RE NEARLY DONE! BUT I COULDN'T FINISH IT OFF WITHOUT TALKING ABOUT SOME OF THE BIG MISTAKES THAT YOU'LL WANT TO AVOID ONCE YOU'VE STARTED YOUR BLOG.



Mistake 1: Writing just for yourself

When bloggers first start a blog they often think that you just have to write a lot on your own blog and people will come. Well, they don't. I recommend that for every one article you write for your own blog you write two for another blog as a guest post. That is how you find new audiences.

Mistake 2: Writing a personal blog with no outside relevance

Stories are wonderful. They help bring your blog posts to life. But no one wants to read a personal blog that is just about you unless it has some relevance to their own experience. Don't write a journal. Solve problems.

Mistake 3: Doing everything yourself

I've worked with a lot of clients who want to do it all themselves to save money. The result? Everything they do ends up looking crap or having no lasting effect. The best clients (and the smartest ones) defer to the expert that they've hired. Try to get more people helping you with the areas you struggle at.

Mistake 4: Relying on Google

I haven't covered Google search engine optimization in this guide because I don't want you to become pre-occupied with it. Many bloggers get trapped there and forget to produce content. Relying on Google is a dangerous mistake because if they change your ranking you can lose a lot of income.

Mistake 5: Quick 'update' style blog posts

No one cares. Don't do small little update style blog posts. Instead, focusing on solving problems in a big extensive way that really blows people's socks off. Long form content is the way to go these days and I can't see it changing soon.

Mistake 6: Being afraid to try things

When you first start a blog it can be really scary. And you don't want to break anything. But one of the best sources of knowledge and ideas is just mucking around with your blog and the technologies it uses. That's how you get ideas for content, products and so on. Try new things.

Mistake 7: Giving up too early

Blogging takes time. It is not a quick method of making money. If you want to do that you can go and try PPC marketing (which also takes a

while to learn). You need to give your blog at least 6 months before you start drawing conclusions about whether it's going to work.

Mistake 8: No real point of difference

How are you different from the other 1 billion blogs out there? What do you offer that they don't? It's so important to find some way to be distinctive otherwise you are going to get completely lost in the crowd.

Mistake 9: Spending time on social networking sites

Twitter, Facebook, etc. is all a big waste of time. It sounds crazy but I really believe that bloggers should not spend too much time there until they have a strategy formed. Of course this doesn't include paid advertising. For the most part, focus on developing content and just use social networking to build alliances. [Ana Hoffman](#) is someone that knows exactly how to do the social networking thing perfectly.

Mistake 10: Not spending money

If you want to take blogging seriously you need to treat it like any other business. You wouldn't start a cafe without spending money on stock and equipment. And you wouldn't open your doors without advertising. The same is true for blogging. The great thing is that our costs are a lot lower. Please don't skimp on things like brand design, promotions and getting help with technology that you don't understand.

MY FINAL TIP ON THE TRUE POWER OF BLOGGING NOW AND TOMORROW

HOW TO REALLY MAKE MONEY IN THE LONG TERM
AND PROTECT YOUR SUSTAINABLE ONLINE ASSETS



People have been saying that blogging is “dead” for years now.

And it never dies.

But one thing that is important to recognise is the fact that blogging does change format regularly.

When I was in school everyone thought that MySpace was going to be around forever.

And then for a while people thought Google’s Wave was going to be pretty good.

And then it was Vine.

The list of platforms that were huge one day and gone the next is extensive.

It's important that you don't put all of your eggs in to one basket because things do change often.

It's not always the platforms either; sometimes a government will introduce a new law or regulation that stifles freedoms online and changes the whole playing field.

But, in over 10 years of blogging there is something that I have noticed about all the successful bloggers, entrepreneurs and business people.

They are tinkerers.

They are experimenters.

They take risks.

And they make things that help people to have happier lives.

If you take anything away from this eBook I hope it's the idea that blogging is just a gateway to making money online. It can provide you traffic or exposure, but you need to have something at the end of it that people love.

When you build you blog you should think about the threats that it faces and make sure you take time to mitigate them.

Make sure you jump on trends early, but don't put so much time into them that you lose sight of your main focus. You'll learn things from the trends, but it's unlikely that they will become your business's main focus.

And if you keep producing content in interesting formats that solves people's problems you will probably weather the storm.