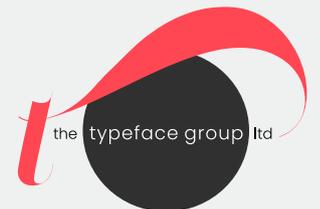


BLOGGING FOR BUSINESS EBOOK



GETTING INFRONT OF THE
RIGHT **DIGITAL AUDIENCE**
FOR YOUR BRAND.



There are so many factors to consider when you decide to set up a blog. In a predominantly technological world, **blogs are now a vital ingredient for a successful business.** So, we've put our expert heads together to give you some top tips to get your own blog off the ground. There's also our advice on how to ensure your blog is GDPR compliant.

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CHAPTER **ONE.**

BLOG PLATFORM. **WHICH,
WHERE & WHY!**

Want to start blogging but not sure where to begin? First things first. You need to decide which platform is right for your business.

WHAT **BLOG PLATFORM SUITS YOU** BEST?

With a long list of blogging platforms to choose from, you need to consider how your blog will represent your brand identity most effectively. What tool will you use? WordPress, Blogger, Tumblr? Do some research into the advantages and disadvantages of each to decide which is best for your business.

TYPES OF **BLOGS**:

Continuous: A continuous blog is usually a chronological stream of blogs, organised by tags or categories.

Series: A series blog is a number of blog posts which are found by clicking on categories, without a chronological stream on the home page.

Combination: A combination blog is a little bit of everything. It will have a continuous stream of blogs, but will also focus on things like monthly topics, which are organised into categories.

STILL UNDECIDED?

HERE ARE SOME MORE **BLOGGING IDEAS:**

A **microblog** is a blog platform that features short, sweet and simple posts. Twitter is a great way to microblog, with the 280-character limit forcing you to keep to the point. So, why not start small and work up?

An **edublog** is used in education as an instructional resource. It's ideal for schools or businesses that provide coaching and educational services.

If your topic or specialist area is more visual, you may want to try out **vlogging** on YouTube, where you can film yourself discussing your subject instead.

If you do not want to be in front of the camera, podcasts could be a good option. You can chat away without the worry of people watching you. **An audio blog** is also great for people who can't read an article or watch a video online - they can simply pop on their headphones and enjoy.

Now you have decided on the best option for you, let's discuss the other little extras to help get you started.

CHAPTER TWO.

GDPR IS A GAMECHANGER

GDPR has completely changed how bloggers and businesses can use the personal information of its subscribers, customers and website visitors. So, if you have Google Analytics running on your website (and you should!), send out email newsletters or sell anything through your website, you need to read this bit.

But, do not panic, it's all pretty straightforward. Here's the basics which you should prioritise getting in place. **These are...**

Opt-in: It is no longer OK to assume you have permission to contact the people on your mailing list. You need explicit permission.

Contact or registration forms need to explain clearly what they are signing up for. Provide tick boxes so people can confirm that you can use and store their data on that basis.

You need to keep track of this list to show what and when every person opted in for, such as a database, or using a third party tools such as Mailchimp. Under GDPR, people can request information on when they signed up and what information you have on them at any time so keep your records up-to-date. Also, keep on top of when people want you to stop contacting them with a 'do not contact' list and stick to it.

Privacy policy: You need to make it clear about what information you are storing and how you intend to use it. This covers any data which could be traced back to an individual, including details like their IP address. Get a privacy policy on your website which puts all that stuff in writing so your website visitors know what's going on.

SSL certificate: If you store any personal data on your website, such as through a 'contact us' form then you need one of these. It will give you that nifty little padlock in your browser bar, which shows your website visitors that you have a secure website which encrypts data. Google now also flashes

up a warning, which labels any website without an SSL certificate as unsecure. This will no doubt put people off clicking through, which is the last thing you want happening.

WANT MORE INFORMATION?



CHAPTER **THREE.**

CONTENT MARKETING PLAN

The hard part of choosing the format for your blog is over. Now for the fun part - coming up with the content on your chosen topic.

Every blog needs a solid structure. So, it's best to draw up a plan of what to write about and when, what you will need to do or produce to make that happen and any additional features that you may require.

Every blog or website needs 'static pages'. They are the 'Home', 'About Me', 'Shop' or 'Contact' pages. They are essential if you want to be taken seriously to increase your Domain Authority with Google and get up those search result rankings.

You also need to establish your tone of voice. A business brand is much more than just a logo. Think about your brand's values, who you are speaking to, and what you want your blog or company to stand for.

Think about what the aim of your blog is. Is it to entertain or inform your audience? What will make readers want to come back for more? It needs to reflect you and/or your business in a positive way - critical or negative text in a blog is not professional and it will not attract readers.

Make sure your employees are also on the same page. A social media policy should help to prevent any digital mishaps from occurring, such as a member of staff negatively representing the business online.



TIP: What five words represent your tone of voice? Write them down and refer to them when you are unsure about a subject or content matter.

CONTENT IS KING.

Before digitally putting pen to paper, decide what you want to write about and when would be a topical or appropriate time to publish each post. Find out if there's any relevant national days or seasonal topics you could link to. How-to guides and top tips are usually well-received. For example, infographics get the most social shares of any type of blog post.

Use your blog to publicise your business successes too, if they are worth writing about!

Research relevant topics, see what conversations are already happening around your subject area and find out what you can add to it to make your business stand out. Take some time to read blogs from others in your industry and discover what you find the

most engaging so that you can develop and improve your own tone and style.

Why not ask your audience what they would like to know and incorporate that into your plan? You could look after your own consumer research or ask an SEO expert to do it for you. They will be able to analyse online data and give you suggestions of blog topics based on search behaviour. This means you can give your audience what they want which will hopefully get you a decent amount of traffic to your blog. Also, dig out relevant keywords to include in your copy to help boost SEO. There's lots of online tools which will help you to do this.

Also, dig out relevant keywords to include in your copy to help boost SEO. There's lots of online tools which will help you to do this too.

We recommend having two to three months' worth of content planned out to get started, which is approximately 12 topics to write about. A robust content marketing plan will prevent the dreaded writer's block from happening. If you have properly planned ahead, there's no chance of getting stuck for content.

If you would like to discuss how to plan your content get in touch with one of our team.

**WONDERING
WHEN YOU
SHOULD
BLOG?**

Daily: It's great if you can realistically do this. But, you may find yourself running out of content quickly, with or without a strategy.

Twice a week: This is a good schedule in order to be favourably ranked by the search engines.

Once a week: You may receive slower growth, but you will still be reasonably ranked by Google.

Once/twice a month: If this is all you can commit to, then it is better than nothing. But, you will need outstanding content to be ranked competitively.

After reading this chapter, you should know when to post, what to write about and why. As soon as you click off, get started on that content plan. Now, you just need to post it, right?

CHAPTER **FOUR.**

GO GO GO.

The planning process is over; now to put it to good use. You may think you've made it to the easier part of the process – think again! A lot of thought should go in to posting content onto your blog so we've broken it down to make it a little simpler to follow.

DESIGN & LAYOUT

It goes without saying that content is the most important part of your blog. Having said that, no one will want to read your blog if it is poorly presented. The appearance of a blog should be considered before posting anything. Colour is a powerful tool and it can be added to blogs in the form of images and backgrounds. Elements like this will help to both to break up text and to highlight specific content by using high contrast colours.

Navigation is crucial. Clear and easy to use navigation will ensure that readers browse other posts, topics or elements of the site, as

will the search engines. This can be a bit trial and error. So once you have decided on a 'map' leave it for a while and let the data be collected to work out where you need to make improvements.

IMAGE IS EVERYTHING

Images are vital but you must choose the right ones. Aim to source that perfect image which tells the story for you. It's great to utilise your own images and we highly recommend having some of your own corporate photography. This means that you will have a bank of high-quality and unique images that not only look better but will also stand out over the vast amount of stock images that are (in our humble opinion) massively over-used.

If you must use stock images, we suggest visiting a reputable website such as Shutterstock or Unsplash for free stock images as a last resort.

Copyrighted images should not be used. If you are unsure if an image is copyrighted, request permission to use it before posting. Email in giving details of how you plan to use the image, if you want to adapt or redesign it in any way and how the image will fit into the context of what you are publishing. Also, include the number of duplicates of the image you want to create and if you plan to attribute or credit the image.

Images should be accompanied by 'alternative text', referred to as an alt tag or text. This is so your blog can still be read as intended by those using screen reading software. This helps blind and visually impaired visitors to hear what the post is about. It will also support your page ranking, although this isn't about SEO.

Websites, such as Hubspot, check how blogs appear on a mobile and people are more likely to stay on your site if it is mobile friendly.

ON TO PUBLISHING...

All posts need a compelling headline to entice readers in. It should grab attention and explain what the post is about. However, ensure it does not promise something that won't be delivered in the content or your readers won't visit again!

Optimise your blog by including your keyword in the blog title. Once you've written your content, split it up into short paragraphs, bullet points, subheadings and headings so it is easier for readers to digest in small chunks. Choose a font which is easy to read whilst still looking smart and professional. Include a call to action to encourage readers to comment and/or act on the information that they have absorbed.

BLOGGING FOR BUSINESS?

Make sure you have an idea of what a return on investment looks like for you. If you are blogging for yourself, consider your time as an investment. Measure the success of your efforts by monitoring page views and conversions. You can even be really flashy and set up goals on your site with Google Analytics to measure these.

Register your blog with Google and highly reputable blog directories to get the word out. Reply to your readers' comments, and comment on other blogs - they may just return the favour.

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

There is no use in having a business blog if no one reads it. Use the many social media channels to get the word out - pick the right ones for you based

on where your audience can be found. For example, business blogs usually perform well on LinkedIn as its reaching a corporate audience. Using relevant hashtags on Twitter and Instagram will help to attract readers if it is something they enjoy or they can relate to. For example, if you are a company selling beauty products, hashtagging words such as 'beauty' or 'makeup' will help to drive traffic to your blog.

Create a Facebook page where you can specifically post your links. A Twitter feed can also be linked to the content you create. Mention and link to people across your blogs and social media profiles.

Making money is not the reason to start a blog - spreading the word, securing your position as an industry expert and, ultimately, assisting your target audience should all be motivating factors.

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE TALKING TO?

CUSTOMERS

It is much easier to sell to customers who have already bought from you, as they know what to expect. Inspire your existing customers to leave comments and reviews. However, blogging is also a great way to attract new custom.

INFLUENCERS

An influencer is someone with a large network of engaged followers: if they promote you, it could increase your following.

COMPETITORS

These are the people you're up against. You don't need to follow them, but keeping a close eye on what they're up to won't do any harm.

BRAND AMBASSADORS

These people are positive influencers who always mention or promote the brand when possible.

SUPPLIERS

Sharing suppliers' content on your profile creates a better partnership between you, resulting in possible mates' rates...

REGULATORS

Get your copy checked and approved by regulators before publishing. Typos and incorrect punctuation could damage your reputation.

ASSOCIATES

These are usually business partners. Share their content and they may return the favour.

CHAPTER **FIVE.**

OPTIMISING YOUR BLOGPOSTS

Optimising content is no longer an afterthought. It's very much a part of blogging that needs to be at the forefront of your mind from the get-go and throughout if you want to get the most out of your website content.

In this guide, we have put together a handy step-by-step process that will mean your blogs work hard for you.

Keywords. You may have many ideas for blog content, or you may have none. One way to get focus is to find out what topics are trending and what your potential customers are searching for. By doing a keyword analysis, you can quickly focus on those that 'easy' wins with Google or use this research for inspiration. Read more about keywords in our blog [10 Reasons Why Your Website Is Not On Page One.](#)

Make your content reader friendly and key phrase rich. While you are writing away, you need to place your keywords both throughout the copy and in some specific areas to achieve the best results from an SEO perspective.

THESE ARE...

1/ In the page title

2/ In the URL - shorten the URL to only be the keywords.

3/ The SEO title - different to page title - approx. 60-70 characters

4/ Also in the first sentence and in the first paragraph

5/ In the first heading & aim for another as well

6/ Throughout the copy. The more the total word count, the more times you need to mention these keywords/phrases 2.3% keyword density is the aim.

7/ In the image file names - yurp DCS09833 won't cut it

8/ In the image alt tag - this can be your meta description slightly tweaked (point 9)

9/ Meta description - this has to be unique for each post and include a CTA i.e. 'Click to find out more about X,Y & Z.

OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER:

Links. Make sure that there are internal and external links within the copy. Internal links are usually hyperlinked words such as 'contact us' or 'following on from our previous blog in this Blogging For Business series' to encourage Google to crawl further. External links could be when accrediting images or sources to statistics.

Headings. Make sure that you have a header every 150 (or so) words. Images every 300 words also help with readability. It is best to use the 'H2-5' and avoid excessive H1's.

Passive vs Active Voice. Google, and the majority of readers, favour the active voice over the passive.

Finally, to increase the chance of comments or conversions, finish with a call to action. This could be a question to encourage comments or suggesting that the reader browses the rest of your site. Have sharing buttons to other related blog posts on this page to encourage action and so people stay on the site for longer.

For more **blogging** and **SEO ideas**, make sure you follow us on social media '**thetypefacegroup**' on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn & **@typefacegroup** on Twitter.



CONTACT.

THE TYPEFACE GROUP LTD

Suite A
The Innovation Centre
Basing View
Basingstoke
Hampshire
RG21 4HG

01256 614 921

natalie@thetypefacegroup.co.uk

