

Maintaining your blog content

Maintaining the content on your blog is a big commitment and one of the biggest pitfalls bloggers find. You need to be patient, persistent and disciplined. Make a plan and establish how often you think you should be posting (the recommendation is at least two to three times a week.) Work out whether this is feasible, who on your team can manage it and then start to think about what you should be writing about.

Ensure you spend a decent amount of time on research. Remove yourself from noisy and busy environments and focus on finding clear, relevant and interesting content.

Track it. Encouraging feedback via comment boxes can help gauge how many people are reading your blog entries but it only skims the surface. For a small cost you can choose between an array of traffic tracking tools such as Google Analytics, Awstats and Woopra. These tools highlight the number of people actually visiting your site.

Look at getting your team on board to help develop content. It's a great way to help staff feel they're valued by contributing to company content and brainstorming sessions can act as a great team building exercise.

Start writing. Basically, the more you update your blog, the more it will appear in search engine results.

Attracting followers and promoting your blog

Once you start writing your blog, you want to ensure someone is actually reading it. There are a number of ways you can engage followers.

Tell your customers

If you send out client newsletters, use them as a tool to mention your blog. Add the link to your email signature, company website and business card. If your business has a facebook page, LinkedIn or Twitter account, promote your blog entries here as you write them.

Increase Traffic

Use search engine optimisers (SEOs) to direct readers to your site. It's great to let your customers know about your blog, but what about all the other people who aren't aware your blog even exists? With strategic use of keywords, your blog will appear at the top of search engine lists and entries relevant to the reader's search criteria will appear.

Other ways to increase traffic

- § Recruit guest bloggers
- § Comment on similar blogs with relevance to your own
- § Use RSS feed readers to notify blog subscribers of a new post

Look at advertising your blog. Pay per click, AdWords and StumbleUpon are just a few of the web tools you can use to drive traffic to your site

Keep your fan base

Retaining readership is just as important as establishing it. In order to build trust with your readers, take the time to write your blog with their point of view in mind. Ask for their input and allow for comments. Gaining reader feedback encourages interaction and helps you to gauge what customers want and what they're interested in. Most blogs allow you to screen the comment and okay it before it's posted on the site to avoid rude or bullying behavior.

Keep an eye on the number of followers you have. If the number dwindles, rethink what you're writing about and look at going back to the drawing board.