Beginning Blogging & SEO – Part 1

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1

WHAT IS A BLOG?

"What is a blog?" This is a question that many people ask.

First, "blog" is shortened from the word web log. A blog is a website, usually maintained by an individual who makes regular entries or commentaries, describes events, or includes graphics or video.

If you are going to use media, you many consider purchasing a MAC computer (Apple) because they handle graphics and videos very well.

2

WHAT IS A BLOG?

Blog entries are posted in reverse-chronological order. The most recent posting always appears first. You can set-up categories, an archive section, a blogroll (links to other websites), RSS feeds, and so much more.

Blogging is a great way for you to share your thoughts with the world. However, you may want to be careful about what your write on your blog because the entire world will be reading it. If you're a college student, your admissions office may "surf" the internet to see if you are on the internet. What you post on your blog will in cyberspace forever!

3

DESIGNING AND NAMING YOUR BLOG TIPS

- Choose a pleasing color scheme.
- Choose a URL (Domain Name) that is short and catchy.
- Choose a theme for your blog that compliment's your business, i.e., use a travel theme for your travel business.
- Don't go overboard with graphics.
- Forget about Flash.
- Make sure visitors can easily navigate your site.

4

NAMING YOUR BLOG

- Technically, you can name your blog anything you want to, if the domain name is NOT already taken.
- If you're using a hosted blog service such as WordPress.com, Typepad, Blogger, or Vox, you are assigned a web address, which will look like this:

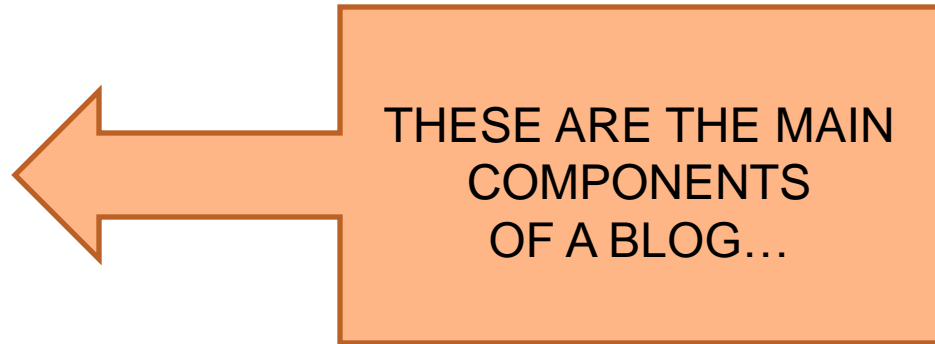 www.yourblogname.wordpress.com

  www.yourblogname.typepad.com

  www.yourblogname.blogspot.com

  www.yourblogname.vox.com

The alternative is to PAY for a domain name and register it. A domain name can cost anywhere from $10 and up. WordPress.org requires a domain.

COMPONENTS OF A BLOG

- Header
- Sidebar(s)
- Blog posts

THESE ARE THE MAIN COMPONENTS OF A BLOG…

Other Components of a Blog

- Pages
- Categories
- Tags
- Tag Clouds
- Blogrolls

6

FREE BLOGGING WEBSITES

- WordPress.com
- WordPress.org (need web hosting company or host it on your computer)
- Blogger.com
- Typepad
- Weebly.com
- StumbleUpon
- Tumblr

WEB HOSTING SERVICES – DOMAIN NAME

These are some web hosting companies that will
"host" your blog. Packages can start at $6.95 per month.

- BlueHost.com
- 1&1.com
- Host Gator
- iPage
- Fat Cow

SEO

- What is SEO? This stands for Search Engine Optimization. It's a way to "drive" traffic to your blog using keywords and keyword phrases.

- SEO includes keywords and keyword phrases that pertain to YOUR blog.

- What is Keyword Density? It's the number of times your keyword appears throughout your blog post. Do not "stuff" a blog post with keywords. Google frowns upon this!

SEO

- When you write a blog choose one to two keywords. Note: If you write a 500 word blog, use your keyword approximately 6 times throughout the post.

- Underline, Bold, and Italicize the keyword. If you're using a keyword 6 times in your blog, you would <u>underline</u>, **bold**, and *italicize* the keyword one time (3 keywords would be "regular text" and the other 3 keywords would be bold, underlined, and italicized.)

SEO TOOLS

Google is very useful when you're looking for keywords to use in your blog. Perform a Google search on your particular keywords and keyword phrases to see how many entries appear.

- Use Google AdWords Keyword Tool to search keywords. https://adwords.google.com/o/KeywordTool
- Use Google Trends to review/analyze what people are searching. http://www.google.com/trends/
- Google Think Insights http://www.google.com/think/

SEO TOOLS

- SEO Book – Offers free tools or you can pay a membership to really OPTIMIZE this site.

  http://tools.seobook.com/general/keyword-density

- Live-Keyword-Analysis.com – This tool will analyze your blog post and show you your Keyword Density.

  http://www.live-keyword-analysis.com

HTML Coding

WordPress.org includes HTML coding within its word processing system. Below are just some examples of what the coding looks like.

- BOLD = BOLD
- UNDERLINE = <u>UNDERLINE</u>
- ITALICS = ITALICS

BLOG POST TIPS

- Blog posts can be 500 words or more. It depends on your target audience.

- Choose a "niche" or whatever interests you and begin to blog about it at least 3 times per week. However, once you build a following, you could blog one to three times per month.

- Blogs are usually written in 2nd person speech, e.g., you, your and yourself. However, you can write in the 1st person speech as well.

- Proofread your work.

- Create UNIQUE content.

- Include graphics and video.

- Create "eye-catching" headlines.

- Provide links in your blog.

- Give readers a REASON to visit your blog, e.g., free stuff, great content, eBooks, and newsletters.

SETTING UP A BLOG WITH WORDPRESS.ORG

- Google WordPress.org – Click on the link for WordPress.org and Click SIGN UP NOW.

- Create a USERNAME, fill in your email address, and agree to the terms.

- Next, choose your blog's domain name, title, and select your privacy settings. Click on the SIGN UP button.

- Next, you can start BLOGGING immediately, choose a TEMPLATE for your blog, or visit the administration page for your blog

- Click on CHANGE YOUR TEMPLATE. Select a new template/theme.

15

SETTING UP A BLOG WITH WORDPRESS.ORG

- Use WordPress' WORD PROCESSOR and begin to type your first post. The alternative is to type your post in Notepad. Do not use Word because there is coding behind it which can make your WordPress blog post look funny. In fact Notepad has coding as well, but it seems to remove coding from Word when you copy and paste from Word to Notepad.

- Enter your post's title in the TITLE field.

- To add an image, click on the IMAGE button and select your image. When finished, click on INSERT in POST.

SETTING UP A BLOG WITH WORDPRESS.ORG

- When you finished writing your post, click on SAVE DRAFT OR PUBLISH. You will be given an option to VIEW your post. If you feel your blog post is ready to be published, click on Publish. Now your blog post can be seen by everyone who uses the internet.

- When you're ready to write your next post, click on ADD POST.

17

EXPLORING WORDPRESS.ORG – THE DASHBOARD

- Dashboard – allows you to change the title of your blog, manage comments, control your settings, and update your Profile Page.

- You can set-up your domain, if you purchased one. Click on the DOMAINS link in the OPTIONS section.

Exploring WordPress.Org – Profile Page

- Change the About page. Click on the About link in the sidebar and/or go to the page. You now able to edit your About page.

- To edit your "behind-the-scenes" profile information, click on the USERS tab and then click on the YOUR PROFILE button. Change your information and click on the UPDATE PROFILE button to save your changes.

What's So Great about Blogging?

- It's fun and easy.
- You can earn a living from blogging, if you're willing to do the work. It's a fast and easy way to promote and grow your business!
- Keep family and friends informed about you're doing and where you're at in the world.
- Share information about topics that you have a passion for.
- You can find your "inner" writer.
- Connect with people all over the world.
- If you'd like to become a writer, your blog makes a great portfolio.

20

SAMPLE BLOGS

Sample Blogs

SAMPLE BLOGS

QUESTIONS

- Question and Answer session.

Thank you for your time!