

▶ What's Your Story?

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HOW YOU CHOOSE TO MARKET YOUR BUSINESS WILL DETERMINE WHAT YOUR BUSINESS BECOMES.

If you want your business to be ordinary, choose ordinary marketing tactics. However, if you want your business to be extraordinary, do something different—start telling your business story through blogging.

What is blogging?

You've read blogs. You may not subscribe to blogs, but you've definitely read them, perhaps without realizing it. Website blogs are short, written pieces about a single, specific topic. They do not go off topic and cover everything under the sun, and they typically don't run over 500 words in length. If the thought of writing makes you shudder, just think to yourself 'short and sweet,' this is doable.

Why should you start blogging?

In addition to establishing authority, building trust, and driving traffic to your website, here are a few compelling reasons why you should begin blogging.

- 1) **Do Google a favor.** Search engines thrive on fresh content. Posting topic-specific content to your website, followed by maximizing your Web presence on social media, creates new opportunities for Google and other search engines to index your content. This increases your search engine visibility and drives traffic to your website.
- 2) **Connect with your customers.** Your current and potential customers have specific needs and interests. In addition to learning through experience, blogging allows you to share a more personal side of your business with your customers. Corporate standards, vision, and the face and voice of your business are sides that your customers don't experience through outbound (or push marketing) techniques.
- 3) **Become an industry leader.** Sharing relevant, valuable, expert information about your business allows you to build trust and clout with your target audiences. Your customers begin to associate your practice as a trusted resource and brand for helpful, informative content. This increased credibility cultivates an environment of trust around your brand. Consequently, the more your customer trusts you to supply the information they need, the more likely they are to become brand advocates.

What's your business story?

You have a story to tell—who you tell that story to and the way you tell it sends a message about what you value, and will determine what kind of business you want to build—ordinary or extraordinary.

Determine whom your story matters to and why. Think about why your customers choose to do business with you, and what makes them come back. Determine how they feel about your business and how you can improve upon that feeling. Finally, what do they need to know to be able to recommend your business to someone else?

Need a story idea?

It may seem challenging to come up with an editorial calendar of new blog post ideas, but in actuality, there is a lot you can write about. Brainstorm connections between the ins and outs of your services, or how your services relate to your customer's lifestyle choices, such as weekend warrior injuries, community involvement, or tie-ins to national events like Movember, employee/physician features, and new service announcements. Take for example writing a blog post on SPG Blocks for migraine sufferers; this is just one idea in an endless stream of possible content.

There are a plethora of resources online to help spur your blog topics. Try this: *The Ultimate List of Blog Post Ideas* at <http://ow.ly/Lu0ml> to give yourself a jumpstart.

Some final thoughts

Starting a blog will help you to become more intimately involved in the details of your business. You'll develop an ear for potential topics and learn to produce meaningful, inspirational content. Though it is true that while you may be an expert in your business, you may not be an expert blogger, or have the time to take advantage of the numerous benefits blogging creates. There's nothing wrong with seeking outside help to write, post and amplify your content online. However you choose to proceed, utilize blogging as a platform to tell your story as part of your marketing strategy and success. ■



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