

RAMPED

BLOGGING

the ultimate  
blogging guide

install | setup | blog | grow | make money

# DISCLAIMER

FANCY WORD FOR DON'T SUE ME IF IT DOESN'T WORK FOR YOU

I hate disclaimers as much as the next guy, but it is one of those fun things we have to do to keep out of trouble. The information contained in this ebook is how I have become a successful blogger over time. By completing the processes outlined in Ramped Blogging, you should see success with your blog - but it is not guaranteed. Only working your ass off to attain the goals you have set for yourself brings true success. Hopefully, this ebook will shorten your learning curve and bring success at a much faster rate.

Nothing worth having comes without sacrifice. There is no “get rich quick” scheme when it comes to blogging.

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yes  
it was *free*  
but don't claim it  
as your own!

# NOTE FROM ROBB SUTTON

Before we jump into Ramped Blogging head first, I want to get a couple little things out of the way that should make navigating and understanding Ramped Blogging a little bit easier with your first run through.

## THE IDEA BEHIND RAMPED BLOGGING

Ramped Blogging is an extension off of the How To Start A Blog series that was published on [robbsutton.com](http://robbsutton.com). After numerous people asking me how to setup a blog like I did with [robbsutton.com](http://robbsutton.com) and [Bike198.com](http://Bike198.com), I decided it was better to make all of the information public and in depth to try to help other beginning bloggers avoid the mistakes I made in the very beginning.

Ramped Blogging takes you from Step 1 (having nothing) all the way to having a successful blog that is bringing in traffic and making money.

Now...I realize that much of the beginning information contained in this ebook is not going to be needed by all readers. For that reason - I setup a clickable table of contents that will hyper link you straight to the content you want to read in Ramped Blogging. Hopefully, that will keep you from breaking your mouse scroll wheel or page down button on your keyboard. After all...we really just want to digest relevant information in our quest to successful blogging.

## THE ABSOLUTE TRUTH

I want others to experience the same success I have through blogging and that is the motivating factor behind creating this ebook. Are there a couple of affiliate links scattered throughout the book? Yes...but they are only products that I 100% believe in. Did you have to sign up for my email newsletter to get this ebook? Sure did...but the newsletter and the eBook is free of charge and I promise not to spam you with worthless crap you don't want. So now that we got all of the formalities out of the way...why don't we jump straight into it and start being successful bloggers.

Robb Sutton  
[info@robbsutton.com](mailto:info@robbsutton.com)

# RAMPED BLOGGING TABLE OF CONTENTS

I...for one...am sick of long ebooks that I have to stumble through to find information. So, for that reason, I have incorporated a couple of features to Ramped Blogging that should help you navigate the content and get around more efficiently.

The following table of contents is clickable. You can simply click any of these items and jet set your way to that content without the need to scroll like crazy. Also, at the bottom of every page, you will see a green link titled "Return to TOC". By clicking that link, you will come right back here. Simple enough?

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GETTING

STARTED

brainstorming  
install  
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# CHOOSING THE RIGHT NICHE TOPIC FOR YOUR BLOG

Choosing the right niche topic to blog about is the first decision any beginning blogger needs to make. As much as we wish we could just shake up the Magic 8 Ball for the answer on the perfect blogging topic...that just isn't an option. Unfortunately, many first time bloggers go through all of the trouble of setting up a domain name, Wordpress and the design without the first idea of what they



are going to write about. The problem with taking this route is that your url and design should reflect your topic...thus...your niche should be selected before these items...not after. So...as you venture onto your new blogging career, what are you going to write about that is going to shake the world up and change blogging forever?

## CHOOSING THE RIGHT NICHE – BLOGGING ABOUT A SPECIFIC TOPIC

Many failed blogs on the net failed because they had no purpose or direction. Many bloggers just wing it in the beginning hoping that something eventually sticks. Now...if you are just looking to have a personal blog that shows what you are doing throughout your life and you are not looking to make any income from your blogging, then having a blog without a direction is ok. You are just blogging for the sake of sharing your life and thoughts...not creating a business or income generation. When you are looking to generate income through your blogging and make money online that will hopefully replace that 9-5 that you love to hate, you need to have a direct purpose in your blogging with a defined subject matter.

### ***Are you passionate about your blog topic?***

This is the first question any beginning blogger should ask them self. Many blogs fail because the blogger chose a topic based on monetary potential with zero passion on the subject. You have to be able to churn out quality, informative blog articles on a daily basis, so to be successful with your blogging, you have to be

passionate about your subject and blogging niche. Without that passion, your blog will eventually fade out due to the lack of true interest in generating more content on a topic that you really have no interest in. Ask yourself several questions during your quest for the perfect blogging topic for you.

- What do you like to do?
- What drives you to be better?
- Is there a niche that you are involved with on a weekly basis...daily basis?
- What do you do now that you would like to be better at with time?

The goal is to become an expert in your field (not necessary at startup), so as you go through the process of setting up your blog and generating content, you need to have a working knowledge of what you are writing about. Even better, you need to have a unique voice that goes along with that content to separate yourself from the other bloggers in your niche.

*Hint: Don't blog about making money online or blogging if you have not been successful in either category. At the same time, don't blog about how to drive a race car if you have never been on a track...see my point?*

*There have also been hugely successful bloggers that have blogged on a topic that they were not passionate about. However, this is a very small percentage and the rate of failure is much higher.*

Blogging...when it boils down to it...should be a fun activity that you enjoy. It should not be work that has to be completed everyday and by being passionate about your blog topic, you will be able to grow your blog during the years to come.

## **ARE SEARCH ENGINE READERS SEARCHING FOR YOUR BLOGGING NICHE?**

Once you have decided on a subject to blog about, you need to do some preliminary research into your “competition” and keyword search volume. If you are going to blog about gardening, here are the steps I would take to make sure you have a viable, potential readership that is worth writing for.

Go to Google and type in different series of keywords (ex. Gardening Blog, How to grow a garden, Successful Gardening, How to grow tomatoes, etc.) and see what the results are.

Visit those blogs/websites and check out their subscriber count (if posted) and comment interaction on their articles. You can also find some background information through Alexa.com (not conclusive...especially for some niche's) on those specific sites to get an idea on how much traffic that blog receives.

Next, I would go to the [Google Keyword Tool](#) and type in those same keywords. This Keyword Tool will give you an idea of the monthly search volume for that specific keyword combination as well as suggested related keywords. This will give you an idea about how many people are searching for your given blog topic.

If you are finding decent search volume with several related blogs, you have probably picked a niche topic that is worth writing about. If there is very low search volume and basically zero competition, you might need to look into expanding your blog topic or look for a completely different niche all together. There have been very successful blogs in small niches, but with a smaller audience to target, it will be much harder to be successful and generate traffic.

## **NARROWING DOWN YOUR BLOGGING NICHE**

Many times, you are going to pick a blog topic that has an extremely wide scope. I have found that it is best (especially in the beginning) to narrow down that niche into something that is more manageable. You will see better results in the beginning as you really focus on a sub-niche of your blogging topic.

With the gardening example, if you are really good at growing vegetables, I would start a blog on how to grow a successful garden full of vegetables. Another option is narrowing down your topic geographically to get a better target audience that you can connect with (ex. Gardening in the southeast US). This does not mean that you can not expand your blog in the future to include a wider assortment of topics, but by narrowing your niche down in the beginning, you are increasing your success rate by focusing on a specific topic that readers will be able to relate to. By being spread too thin, you are increasing your chances for failure by taking on too big of a topic at once.

The key here is to narrow down your blogging niche topic into a manageable size that you can still write about on a daily basis. Do not pull your niche so far down that you are going to run out of content in the first 6 months. You have to be able to bring something unique and new to the table on a regular basis.

**Proof:** Check out this podcast on [Entrepreneurs-Journey.com with Alborz Fallah](#) (The Million Dollar Blogger) on how he narrowed down his car blog to a geographical area and saw rapid success.

## DO YOU HAVE YOUR BLOG'S NICHE TOPIC PICKED OUT?

Great! Now that you have done the research into what you are going to write about on your blog, you have increased the chances for success by doing a little bit of preliminary research. So what is next after figuring out this first key step? Now...we have to get everything setup and that starts with the domain name.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES - CHOOSING A NICHE ARTICLES

- [Prologger.net on Choosing the Right Niche Topic](#)
- [Dosh Dosh on Choosing the Right Niche Topic](#)

Magic 8 Ball Image by CRASH:candy

# CHOOSING THE RIGHT DOMAIN NAME FOR YOUR BLOG

Choosing the right domain name can prove to be a difficult task...especially in crowded niche's where many of the typical names will already be taken. With a little creativity and planning, you can have a catchy, easy to remember domain name that you can start to build your brand around for years to come.



## DO NOT MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE I DID

One of the main reasons for publishing Ramped Blogging is to prevent early mistakes you can make as a blogger. Lucky for you and unfortunately for me...we can learn from my early mistakes as a blogger so that you can use that knowledge and experience as you move forward. Through this...you don't have to make the same mistakes that I did!

Early in my blogging, I picked a domain name that I liked that seemed relevant at the time, but it was difficult to remember in hindsight. MTBTrailReview.com is not the easiest url to pass along to other mountain bikers at the local trailhead. Luckily, you can change urls (going to bike198.com...see how much easier that is to remember?) but the process is a tedious one that requires A LOT of work and planning. By taking the extra brainstorming time in the beginning of the blogging process, you can save yourself a lot of headache in the future.

## BRAINSTORMING DOMAIN NAME IDEAS

The world of domain names is becoming increasingly crowded as more websites and blogs are added to the net on a daily basis. Choosing the right domain name for your blog might be a long road of brainstorming ideas, or a quick guess that hits with the first try. Start with a list of keywords and catchy phrases that are directly related to your niche blog topic. These are going to be the foundation in which you build your blog's domain name.

**Note:** *It is a proven fact that url's help with general SEO, so having specific, related keywords in your domain name will help in the long run.*

Once you have a list of specific keywords, start looking for catchy ways to string several together in an easy to remember domain name. The idea is to have a unique enough domain name that sets you apart from your competition that is also easy to remember. If you are making strictly a personal blog, your name would be a good choice but that is not required.

Remember, your domain name is what you are going to build your branding around as a blogger, so think of your domain name as your brand name as you continue to look for the best name for your blog.

## RESEARCHING DOMAIN NAME AVAILABILITY

Now that you have several ideas ready to go, head over to [GoDaddy.com](https://GoDaddy.com) to research the availability of your domain name choices. [GoDaddy.com](https://GoDaddy.com) makes it extremely easy to research domain names through their home page and they even go as far to recommend alternative choices if your potential domain name is already taken. You might get lucky and hit your favorite right off the bat. In most cases...you won't and this is where you are going to need to start to get a little bit creative.

If you have several names that you really like but are already taken, head over to [thesaurus.com](https://thesaurus.com) and try out different, similar word combinations. In some cases, I have actually come up with domain names through that process that I liked better than my originals.

Try to keep your domain name short and to the point as you research into different options for your blog. There is a lot of argument around the web on .com vs. .net vs. .me etc. Typically, I would stick to the .com's and .net's if possible as they are the easiest to remember for potential blog visitors.

In the past, I used to soak up all of the potential endings for brand protection...but sticking to the main ones and saving a little bit of money is proving to be the best tactic at this time.

## YOU FOUND THE RIGHT DOMAIN FOR YOUR BLOG

Great! You have your own domain name that you are ready to purchase to build your brand and your blog. [GoDaddy.com](https://GoDaddy.com) has a great url/domain name back end, so I recommend that you go ahead and purchase it right there. With some of the best pricing on the Internet and easy search-ability for possible domain names, [GoDaddy.com](https://GoDaddy.com) just makes sense for domain name management. As you continue with your blogging career, there are probably going to be other domain names that you want to scoop up in the future, and I would keep them all at GoDaddy (that is where I keep all of mine).

Now that you have purchased the right domain name for your blog...we need to move onto hosting your blog and installing Wordpress.

# CHOOSING A RELIABLE HOSTING COMPANY FOR YOUR BLOG

At this point in the process, you have your niche blogging topic and your domain name. The next step in the process of setting up a profitable blog is picking a hosting company. With all of the different options out there today, it can get confusing, so let's take a look at what you really need out of your hosting provider as you start your profitable blog and your business. In this section, I am going to provide my suggestions and experience as it pertains to web hosting and web hosting providers.



## WHAT IS A WEB HOSTING COMPANY?

First, for those of you that are not already familiar with web hosting, what is a web hosting company?

According to Wikipeida.com:

A web hosting service is a type of Internet hosting service that allows individuals and organizations to make their own website accessible via the World Wide Web. Web hosts are companies that provide space on a server they own or lease for use by their clients as well as providing Internet connectivity, typically in a data center. Web hosts can also provide data center space and connectivity to the Internet for servers they do not own to be located in their data center, called colocation.

Simply put...a web host rents out server space to you and makes that information available on the web. By renting space in these large data centers, you are able to make your content visible to the world in your search to create a successful blog. You have to choose a web host provider if you are going to have your Wordpress blog with your own domain name. When you use free services such as Wordpress.com or Blogger, you are using space on their data centers and you have to use

their domain names. Using your own domain name and servers gives you the freedom to realize true success through blogging.

## KEEPING DOMAIN NAMES SEPARATE FROM HOSTING ACCOUNTS

For the purposes of this series, I am going to recommend that you keep your domain names with a different provider (we used [GoDaddy](#) in the previous step) than your web hosting company. The reason for this is very simple. If you ever want to change your hosting provider in the future due to any number of reasons, it is much easier to do so when your domains are not tied to that company. Switching hosting companies can be a relatively easy process when you do not have to worry about your domain names.

## CHOOSING THE RIGHT HOSTING COMPANY FOR YOUR BLOG

When you start looking at different hosting companies to host your Wordpress blog, there are several aspects you need to look at before dropping your hard earned money on server real estate.

- 1. Price** – Everyone has a limit on what they want to spend. Luckily for you, there are a lot of really affordable options when it comes to web hosting. Typical web hosting plans are going to start around 5 bucks a month and go up to around \$12. For beginning bloggers, plans in this price range should suit you perfectly as you continue to grow your readership and traffic. You are making an investment in your future by using your own domain name and host company, but luckily...at this point in time...the investment is pretty small.
- 2. Updated Technologies** – Your web hosting company needs to keep up to date on all of the latest web server technologies. I know what you are thinking...I have no freaking clue what those technologies are...much less what version they should be running! That's ok...almost 99% of all of the reliable web hosting companies out there are completely up to date.
- 3. Up Time** – While most companies are going to claim 99% up-time on their website (who would advertise 75%?), I would do some preliminary web research to see what other website owners experiences are with the host in

question. Any down time (periods of time where your website is not available to your readers due to server issues) can really hurt your progress and bottom line. If you see A LOT of downtime in reviews of that host, I would avoid them and move to the next. Nothing is more annoying than down time issues while you are trying to grow your site.

- 4. Domains, Traffic and Space** – With most affordable web hosting options out there, you are going to get unlimited amounts of all of these (or more than you could possibly use). When you are choosing a web host for your Wordpress blog, make sure you have plenty of room to grow for the future.

## MY EXPERIENCE WITH WEB HOSTING COMPANIES

I have had a checkered experience with web hosting from the beginning, so hopefully my experience can help you avoid the same headaches that I have had in the past. Like most beginning bloggers, I originally setup a Blogger account and got to writing. After about a weeks worth of content production, I realized that Blogger was not going to fit my needs, so I went in search of a web host.

I started off with Hostmonster.com to handle my domain and hosting needs and it ended up being a nightmare. At one point in time, I actually had a 2.5 day down period. During that time, they did not even move to a backup! They were...by far... my most frustrating problem when it came to blogging and it was completely out of my control.

After multiple down-time occasions just like that one, I decided it was time to get away from Hostmonster and find another host that would be able to deliver reliable service. The move was a complicated one as I had my domain name tied to my Hostmonster.com account. I was able to move all of the information safely to another hosting provider, but getting that domain moved was a different monster all together. This is why I recommend hosting your domain names separate of your blog's web hosting company. By taking that step, you are preventing this situation and saving yourself money in the future (you still have to pay for the hosting during that period you are moving your domain name).

After Hostmonster, I moved all of my information over to [Hostgator](#). [Hostgator](#) provided reliable hosting for my blogs for a long time. With very minimal downtime

(and great reaction time/support if something did come up), I would consider [Hostgator](#) a great hosting company for beginning bloggers.

During my time with [Hostgator](#), my traffic on multiple blogs continued to grow to the point where I needed some faster servers and a more “enterprise” solution for my hosting needs. I now had a viable company that I was running, so a little bit more personal attention was needed to bring my blogging to the next level.

When it came to decision time, I chose [Sliqua](#) (you can even see a screenshot of my MTB homepage on theirs!). Sliqua provides incredible support, speed and reliability that is needed for top level blogging, but you pay for it.

## WHAT IS MY RECOMMENDATION FOR NEW BLOGGERS?

Here the route that I would take if I had it to do all over again. First, I would register my domain names through [GoDaddy](#) and then pick up a hosting account with [HostGator](#). You are able to keep your domains separate from your hosting account and both companies do an incredible job. By doing this...you should be set for your first couple of years of blogging until your needs change.

Once you hit the big time and start looking for more expensive hosting options, I would hook up with a company like [Sliqua](#) or invest in your own dedicated servers. Luckily, you will not have to worry about this until some time down the road, and you can get to posting that juicy content on your blog right away with a reliable set of resources.

Now that you have your domain name and web hosting provider, we are going to need to setup your DNS name servers and your Wordpress installation.

# SETTING UP YOUR DNS NAMESERVERS FOR YOUR BLOG

Now that you have setup your domain name through GoDaddy and your hosting account through HostGator, we need to get your domain name and your hosting files to talk to each other. This is done through the admin panel of [GoDaddy](#) so you can get your domain pointed in the right direction to your Wordpress blog files and see your blog on your url through the use of DNS



nameservers. Basically...we need to get your hosting files and the IP address the same so when a visitor goes to your url...they see your blog and not a default "this domain is registered at [GoDaddy](#)" page.

The technical aspects of nameservers, DNS records, etc. really aren't all that important for the purposes of setting up a blog. If you really want to dive into the technical definitions and why everything works the way it does...do a simple search for DNS and you will get more than enough information to geek out on. For the purposes of this tutorial, we are not going to dive into the technical aspects. We are just going to get you setup!

## WHERE DO I FIND MY NAMESERVERS?

First, we need to get the nameservers in your hosting account.

Sign into your [HostGator](#) cPanel. You were given this login information with your account information when you signed up. The cPanel is your blog backend headquarters where you setup email addresses, databases and basically manage the nuts and bolts that are outside of Wordpress...but we will get into more of that later.

In the left column, scroll down until you see two nameserver records that should look something like this (yours should be slightly different)

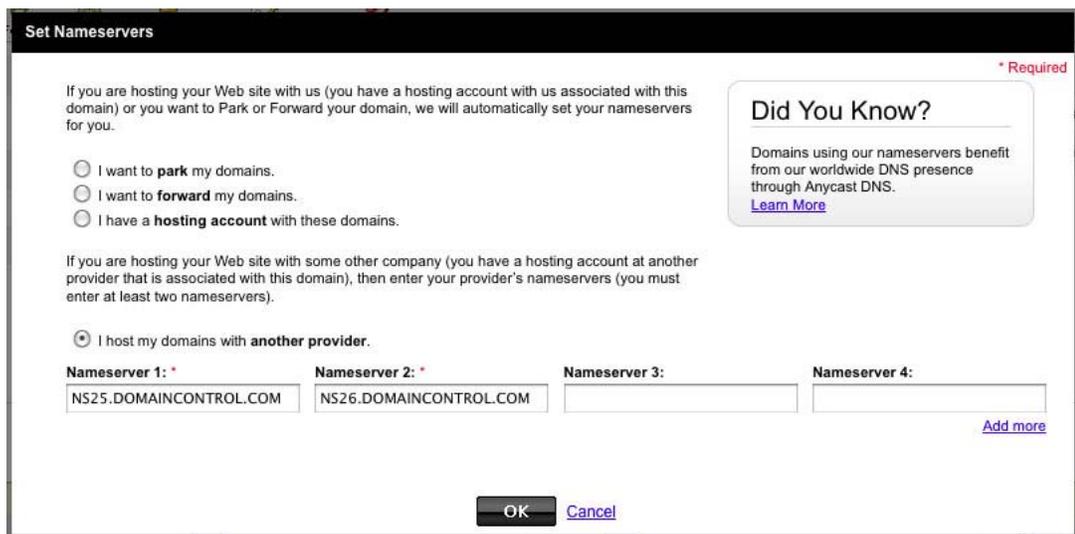
NS1066.HOSTGATOR.COM  
 NS1065.HOSTGATOR.COM

These are the two records that you are going to need to copy and paste into fields in your [GoDaddy](#) account, so leave this window open and open a new window or tab in your web browser.

## INSERTING YOUR NAMESERVERS IN GODADDY

Now...we need to go into your [GoDaddy](#) account where you purchased your domain names and get the domain pointed in the direction of your files (even though we have not technically uploaded anything yet).

Login to your [GoDaddy](#) account and under the navigation tab for domains, click on "My Domains". This will open up a new window that is your Domain Manager. Click on the domain name that we are working with for this blog and in the bottom left hand corner you will see a heading for Nameservers. Click on the "manage" link in that field. You should get a popup that looks like the screen below.



Under this field, click on the bubble that reads "I host my domains with another provider." You will then be shown the Nameserver fields and this is where you

are going to copy and paste the two Nameserver records from your [HostGator](#) account. Once you copy and paste in the two nameservers, click ok. You should get a window that tells you...

Your changes have been submitted. Please allow a few minutes for the changes to take effect.

Click ok and you are done! Pretty easy right? This process is also the same no matter what hosting company you have decided to go with. If you have your domains and hosting separate, you have to get the two pointing in the same direction for everything to work properly.

**Note:** *In most cases, you are not going to see the page you land on for your url change right away. It normally takes an hour or two for the domain to completely resolve, so just be patient and we will start to work on installing Wordpress on your server (hosting account) in the meantime.*

Direction Post Image by treehouse1977

# HOW TO INSTALL A SELF HOSTED WORDPRESS BLOG ON YOUR DOMAIN

Installing your own copy of Wordpress onto your hosting servers can be a daunting task for anyone not used to using FTP and MySQL databases (have I lost you already? Hold on tight...it will all make sense in a minute). Luckily, I am here to give you some great information that will put your mind at ease.



1. It is incredibly easy to do on your own if you follow the simple steps spelled out below.
2. Most hosting companies ([Hostgator](#) included) will do this step for you free if you ask! It is actually a feature in the cPanel, but you have to wait for them to do the install.

For impatient bloggers like me who just can't wait a minute longer to get started, waiting is not an option, so I install my own copy to get started right away.

## HOW TO INSTALL YOUR OWN COPY OF WORDPRESS

Let's go ahead and jump right into it head first...are you ready?

1. **Download Wordpress** – Go to [Wordpress.org](#) and download the latest copy of Wordpress. Once you have finished the download, open the file and it will expand into a folder.
2. **Getting To FTP Account Access** – Go into your admin panel for your hosting company and look for the button for “FTP Accounts” and click it. You should see a line in the chart that has your username and a little head and shoulders icon (and a house icon in the next column). Click on the icon for “Configure FTP Client” and this will bring you to a new screen.
3. **Get FTP Application and Configuration File** – In the “Configure FTP Client” screen, you are given three options. If you are a Mac user, download the Cyberduck file by clicking the link under the Duck titled “FTP

Configuration” (You also need to [go here](#) to download the Cyberduck app that is free). If you are a Windows user, I recommend uses the Firezilla app ([found here for free](#)) and you need to download the file that is obtained by clicking the “FTP Configuration” under the Firezilla icon. The application that you are downloading will make moving files as easy as moving them in regular OS windows and makes setup a breeze!

4. **MySQL Database** – Once you have downloaded the apps and configuration files, you need to go back to the cPanel home screen and click on the icon titled “MySQL Databases”. Your MySQL database is where all of your posts/pages/etc are stored automatically on your server via tables. You need to set this up for your install before you upload your copy of Wordpress.
5. **Create A MySQL Database For Your Blog** – In this new screen, you should see a blank right next to a button titled “Create Database”. Type a short name for your database in this field (maybe a short version of your domain name for example) and hit “Create Database”. You will then be brought to a confirmation screen. Click “go back”.
6. **Create A Database User** – By creating yourself as a database user, you are allowing privileges to that database so that you can read, write and execute files. Below the “Current Databases” table (where you should see your newly created database name), you should see blanks for “Username” and “Password”. Fill these in with your desired username and password...when you are done...click “Create User”. Again, you are brought to a confirmation screen and need to click “go back”.
7. **Adding User To The Database** – Now that you have created the user and the database, you need to add that user to the database. Below where you created your new user account, there are two drop down menus under the title “Add User To Database”. Select your user account and database and then click “Add”. You are then brought to a new screen where you need to check the box for “All Privileges” and then click “Make Changes”. Once you have done that, you are brought to a new confirmation screen.
8. **Setting Up The WP-Config.php File** – Minimize your browser window and open up the Wordpress folder. Using a text editor (TextEdit for Mac and Notepad for Windows), open the “wp-config-sample.php” file found in the Wordpress folder. Scroll down until you see the line that says “//

\*\* MySQL settings – You can get this info from your web host \*\* //” This is where you are going to fill in the exact information that you just made in your MySQL Database section of your hosting provider. Where you see “putyourdbnamehere”, replace that text with your database name (usually looks something like username\_databasename). Where you see “usernamehere”, replace that text with your database username (normally looks something like username\_username). Where you see “yourpasswordhere”, replace that text with the password that you created for your database user. Once you have filled in this information, to go “File” and then “Save As” and save the file as “wp-config.php” in your Wordpress folder (make sure the file does not end with .txt...it has to be exactly wp-config.php)

9. **Upload Wordpress To Your Hosting Account** – Open the file that you downloaded for your FTP Configuration and that should open your FTP program and automatically bring you to a window with several folders. These are the folders that are found on your server and they each perform a different function. Open the folder titled “public\_html”. It should be pretty much empty with maybe one or two files. Open your wordpress folder on your desktop and drag all of the contents into this window (do not drag the folder...drag the contents). When it is done uploading, you should see all of the files that were in the wordpress folder now in your new screen in the “public\_html” folder.
10. **Install Wordpress** – After everything is uploaded, open your browser and go to the following url/address – <http://yourdomain.com/wp-admin/install.php>. You should be prompted to install Wordpress. If you get a window that says server can not be found, do not panic. If you just changed your Nameservers, it might take an hour or two for that to resolve, so check about every 10 minutes or so and it will eventually pop up. Fill out the fields shown and click the install button for Wordpress. After it has done its thing...you will get to a screen that has your username “admin” and a messed up password that you need to copy. Once you login to you new Wordpress install, go straight to the Users tab and change that password to something unique that you can remember.

You did it! You installed your very own copy of Wordpress without crashing the servers at Nasa. Congratulations!

# SETTING UP YOUR DEFAULT SETTINGS IN WORDPRESS FOR YOUR BLOG

When you first install Wordpress, the first impulse is to start drafting up your content, start looking for a theme or searching the Wordpress.org database for cool plugins to enhance your blog.

Before we get into those aspects of setting up a Wordpress based blog, we want to jump in and get the default settings in Wordpress set up correctly. By getting these settings right the first time, we are able to save ourselves a lot of administration headaches in the future. Let's run through each and what you need to do.

Look for the switches icon directly below the tools.

## GENERAL SETTINGS

**Blog Title** – Enter your blog title (this will be overridden by a SEO plugin later, but it is good to go ahead and fill in your blog's name). Should be close to your domain name.

**Blog Tagline** – While it is not vastly important that you have nailed down a tagline for your blog at this point in time, it is time to start thinking about a line that will describe your blog in a few short words in a catchy, original manner. In many cases, your tagline can be as important as your title.

**Wordpress Address (url)** – If you followed the steps in this tutorial, the Wordpress url should be the same as your blog url. (I like to leave off the www like you see on this blog. Just looks cleaner in my opinion)

**Blog Address (url)** – The url that you want your blog to show up on. This is where you choose to include the www or not. Make sure the Wordpress and Blog Address match for the purposes of the How To Start A Blog Series

**Membership** – If you are just creating a blog, do not check this box at this point in time. Readers will be able to contact and interact without the need to actually register with your Wordpress install.

**New User Default Role** – Leave as subscriber. You basically negated this setting by not checking the box above.

The rest of the settings you can set up to your preference.

## WRITING SETTINGS

**Size Of The Post Box** – This controls how big you want your post box to be by default when you go to draft an article or page. I like to keep it at 20 lines.

**Formatting** – Personal preference. I have the emoticons automatically converted.

**Default Post Category** – This setting controls which category is chosen for your posts by default. You change this within your Add New Post screen and you can leave it alone at this time as you have not setup all of your categories yet.

**Default Link Category** – Leave this alone at this time as you have not setup any links.

**Remote Publishing** – You can enable remote publishing, but...at this time...this is not a feature you will be using.

**Post Via Email** – Leave alone at this time.

**Update Services** – This feature updates certain services (that you specify) when you have published a new article. It is basically a “hey! look over here! I have something new!” Copy and paste the following list of services into that box and save.

<http://rpc.pingomatic.com/>  
<http://audiopc.weblogs.com/>  
<http://www.imblogs.net/ping/>  
<http://pingoat.com/goat/RPC2/>  
<http://pingqueue.com/rpc/>  
<http://ping.feedburner.com>  
<http://www.bloglines.com/ping>  
[api.moreover.com/RPC2](http://api.moreover.com/RPC2)  
[api.my.yahoo.co.jp/RPC2](http://api.my.yahoo.co.jp/RPC2)  
[api.my.yahoo.com/RPC2](http://api.my.yahoo.com/RPC2)  
[audiopc.weblogs.com/RPC2](http://audiopc.weblogs.com/RPC2)  
[blog.goo.ne.jp/XMLRPC](http://blog.goo.ne.jp/XMLRPC)  
[blogpeople.net/ping](http://blogpeople.net/ping)  
[blogsearch.google.ae/ping/RPC2](http://blogsearch.google.ae/ping/RPC2)  
[blogsearch.google.at/ping/RPC2](http://blogsearch.google.at/ping/RPC2)  
[blogsearch.google.be/ping/RPC2](http://blogsearch.google.be/ping/RPC2)  
[blogsearch.google.bg/ping/RPC2](http://blogsearch.google.bg/ping/RPC2)  
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[blogsearch.google.co.cr/ping/RPC2](http://blogsearch.google.co.cr/ping/RPC2)  
[blogsearch.google.co.hu/ping/RPC2](http://blogsearch.google.co.hu/ping/RPC2)  
[blogsearch.google.co.id/ping/RPC2](http://blogsearch.google.co.id/ping/RPC2)  
[blogsearch.google.co.il/ping/RPC2](http://blogsearch.google.co.il/ping/RPC2)  
[blogsearch.google.co.in/ping/RPC2](http://blogsearch.google.co.in/ping/RPC2)

blogsearch.google.co.it/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.co.jp/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.co.ma/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.co.nz/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.co.th/ping/RPC2  
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blogsearch.google.co.ve/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.co.za/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.com.ar/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.com.au/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.com.br/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.com.co/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.com.do/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.com.mx/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.com.my/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.com.pe/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.com.sa/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.com.sg/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.com.tr/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.com.tw/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.com.ua/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.com.uy/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.com.vn/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.com/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.de/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.es/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.fi/ping/RPC2  
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blogsearch.google.it/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.jp/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.lt/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.nl/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.pl/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.pt/ping/RPC2

blogsearch.google.ro/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.ru/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.se/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.sk/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.tw/ping/RPC2  
blogsearch.google.us/ping/RPC2  
feedsky.com/api/RPC2  
hamo-search.com/ping.php  
holycowdude.com/rpc/ping/  
ping.blogoon.net/  
ping.blogs.yandex.ru/RPC2  
ping.fc2.com/  
ping.feedburner.com/  
ping.kutsulog.net/  
ping.myblog.jp/  
ping.namaan.net/rpc  
ping.snap.com/ping/RPC2  
ping.syndic8.com/xmlrpc.php  
ping.weblogalot.com/rpc.php  
ping.wordblog.de/  
r.hatena.ne.jp/rpc  
rpc.bloggerei.de/ping/  
rpc.blogrolling.com/pinger/  
rpc.icerocket.com:10080/  
rpc.pingomatic.com  
rpc.reader.livedoor.com/ping  
rpc.technorati.com/rpc/ping  
rpc.technorati.jp/rpc/ping  
rpc.twingly.com/  
rpc.weblogs.com/RPC2  
wasalive.com/ping/  
www.blogpeople.net/servlet/weblogUpdates  
xmlrpc.blogg.de  
xping.pubsub.com/ping/  
zhuaxia.com/rpc/server.php

## READING SETTINGS

**Front Page Displays** – At this time, select latest posts. This is the most common way you will find most Wordpress blogs, but...in the future...you might want to setup a landing page as your home page for your blog. This is where you will change the setting to show your newly created landing page.

**Blog Pages Show At Most** – This setting in Wordpress controls how many blog posts will show on any pages. This includes your homepage and category pages. You will need to adjust this to your theme and content as you start to get new articles written on your blog. Most themes use this setting in Wordpress to control the homepage features, so remember this is here for future adjustment.

**Syndication Feeds Show The Most Recent** – This setting in Wordpress controls how many of your new post show up in your RSS feeds as unread when a new subscriber subscribes to your blog. Just keep this one at 10.

**For Each Article In A Feed Show** – This is the setting that controls how your articles show up in your rss feed. There is a lot of debate on the pros and cons of

showing excerpts or full articles, but I believe that showing full articles is essential to growing a strong subscriber base. I leave “Full Text” checked at all times.

**Encoding For Pages And Feeds** – Leave on UTF-8

## DISCUSSION SETTINGS

**Default Article Settings** – I check all 3. I want people to comment and I want others to know when I link them up. It is just good blog practice.

**Other Comment Settings** – You can set this up to your preference, but I check the following items and leave the others alone.

**Comment author must fill out name and e-mail** (basically...no anonymous comments)

**Enable threaded (nested)** comments 5 levels deep (Any deeper and the content space gets too narrow) – This setting allows for more conversation on your blog enabling readers to easily reply to each other in the comments section.

**Email Me Whenever** – I check both of these boxes to get updates on what is going on with my blogs. I pick up my email via my iPhone so I can moderate any spam that might accidentally make it through the filters right away. It also allows me to respond to great comments quickly. You might now want your email inbox filled up with the updates...so you can leave these blank if you want. It is also good to setup an alternate email just for updates like these to keep your other inboxes free of clutter.

**Before A Comment Appears** – Personal preference here as well, but if you are having issues with spam and trolls trying to derail your conversations...it might be a good idea to leave them checked for awhile so that you have to approve a comment before it will appear on your blog.

**Comment Moderation** – I hold comments that have links (set to 1) until I have approved that comment. Cuts down on spam getting through.

**Avatars** – I enable avatars so you will see the icon next to the commentors name.

## MEDIA SETTINGS

**Images Sizes** – Leave these on their default settings for now.

## PRIVACY SETTINGS

You actually set this up during your Wordpress installation when you decided to let other sites and search engines see your blog. The first box should be checked already.

## PERMALINK SETTINGS

Permalinks control your blogs posts url.

By default WordPress uses web URLs which have question marks and lots of numbers in them, however WordPress offers you the ability to create a custom URL structure for your permalinks and archives. This can improve the aesthetics, usability, and forward-compatibility of your links.

There is some debate among bloggers about which permalink setup is best for blogging. Out of everything I have read and through personal experience, I have found that <http://blogurl.com/post-name> has worked the best for me in search engines and through blog maintenance as you change categories and other settings over time that can affect your link structure. You can also refer to this post on [Yoast.com](http://Yoast.com) about SEO and why he chose the same setting for his blogs.

Check “Custom Structure” and copy and paste this into the blank provided –  
`/%postname%/`

**Note:** *If you have already been blogging under a different structure, hold off on changing to this structure until we go over the plugins part of How To Start A Blog. There is a plugin that we will install that will automatically redirect to the new url for you, and you do not want to change this setting until you have this in place as Google and other links will not be able to find your articles through the existing links without it.*

## MISCELLANEOUS SETTINGS

I leave everything as default and make sure the “Organize my uploads into month- and year-based folders” box is checked so I can find my media uploads easily if needed.

Now you are all set up with Wordpress. 99% of these settings are now set for good and you can forget about them and focus on other aspects of your blogging. Next, we will look into Wordpress plugins and get those setup on your blog.

# CHOOSING THE RIGHT PLUGINS FOR YOUR WORDPRESS BLOG

Now is the time you have all been waiting for...we get to search the Wordpress.org database for cool plugins that will enhance the usability of your blog and catapult you to the top of search engine rankings.

Now...do you want to know what 99% of beginning bloggers with Wordpress installed do? They search the Wordpress.org database for every possible plugin that might help them at some time in the future...they install it...and spend all of their time looking for more great plugins to install on their blog.



In all reality, you want to limit the amount of plugins you install on your blog to those that you absolutely need. Plugins can do the following to your blog if you are not careful:

- Add code and features that slows down load times which can decrease pageviews and visitors.
- Clutter your articles and pages with features that most of your users do not need which also leads to decreased pageviews and visitors.

Plugins can add essential functionality to your blog, but they can also lead to your eventual downfall as a blogger. Use them wisely.

## HOW TO INSTALL WORDPRESS PLUGINS

The easiest way to install plugins on your Wordpress blog is through the Wordpress admin you are already used to.

Visit Plugins → Add New → Fill In Blank With Plugin Name → Hit Search → Select the Plugin → Click Install → Click Activate

Once activated, you will find the configuration panel on the left bar of your blog under Tools or Settings. Some plugins will actually have their own section on the sidebar as well.

You also have two other options:

1. Download the .zip file of the Wordpress plugin. Go to the “upload” link under the Plugins admin and select the zip file to install. Wordpress will upload and expand the plugin for you.
2. Upload the expanded plugin folder from your hard drive into the plugins directory via your FTP program (located under wp-content/plugins). After uploading, you can refresh the plugins page and activate your new plugin.

## RECOMMENDED WORDPRESS PLUGINS FOR YOUR BLOG

The following plugins are ones that I have personal experience with on my blogs. They are a recommended list and you need to make the final decision on whether they will work for you blog.

Note: The plugins that are not linked are easily found by using the search method in your Wordpress admin. The linked plugins are premium plugins that can not be found in the Wordpress database, so I have provided links for you.

### SEO FOR WORDPRESS

**Platinum SEO Pack** - The Platinum SEO Pack plugin is a spin off of the popular All-In-One SEO Pack with one key difference. The Platinum SEO Pack will automatically 301 redirect changes in permalink structure. Remember in the last article when I said “don’t change your permalink structure yet”? This is why. If you install and configure the Platinum SEO Pack on your Wordpress blog, all of the redirects are done automatically.

Must read SEO Article for Wordpress - [Yoast.com - Wordpress SEO](#)

**Google XML Sitemaps** – Google XML Sitemaps automatically generates your sitemaps and submits them to the most popular search engines. While registering

a webmaster account with the respective search engines is not a requirement, I do recommend that you follow through with that step of the process. By having your sitemap automatically submitted to search engines, you no longer have to manually submit that can take up valuable time in your blogging.

**Yoast Breadcrumbs** – Yoast Breadcrumbs not only helps search engine robots navigate your blog, but it also helps your readers see where they are in your blog content.

## SPAM PREVENTION

**Akismet** – Akismet does a great job at catching SPAM comments before they hit your blog. For Akismet to work after you activate the plugin, you need to register a Wordpress.com account (links to take you through the process show up as soon as you activate) and paste your API key into the plugin settings. Akismet is also included with your Wordpress install.

## SOCIAL MEDIA AND READER ENGAGEMENT

**Sociable** – Sociable automatically inserts social media icons in your posts and rss feed. This highly configurable plugin allows you to change the icons and choose the social media sites to display (almost every social media site is available). In my opinion, you should limit the amount of options to your top 5... anymore icons may look cluttered on your blog and be counteractive to reader submission.

**Tweetmeme** – The Tweetmeme plugin inserts a Retweet button on your blog that shows your readers how many time your article has been tweeted on Twitter and allows them to Tweet your article straight from the button. If you are looking to get your articles on Twitter via your readers, the Tweetmeme button is a fantastic way to increase reader participation and that equals more visitors and subscribers for your blog.

**WP Greet Box** – This social media plugin for Wordpress shows a box in your blog that welcomes your readers. This box can be configured based on the source your new visitor came from. If your reader came from Facebook, you can configure the box to welcome your new Facebook friend and welcomes them to update their Facebook status with a link to your article.

**Twitter for Wordpress** - This Twitter plugin for your Wordpress blog displays your latest Tweets and makes following easy by providing your readers a link to your Twitter profile. If you are an active Twitter user, you will want to display your Tweets in an efficient manner on your blog to attract more followers. The Twitter for Wordpress plugin is a great tool to accomplish that.

**FlickrRSS** – FlickrRSS will show your latest uploads to Flickr. I use this plugin in two ways. 1 – To show where I am on [robbsutton.com](#). 2 – To increase reader participation on [Mountain Biking by 198](#) by creating a pool that other Flickr users can submit photos to that show on the blog. If you are in a niche where your readers take a lot of related shots, creating a Flickr group and installing this plugin can make your blog more sticky in a big way.

**Similar Posts** – Trying to get your readers to dive deeper into your blog? Similar Posts is a Wordpress plugin that will automatically insert related posts at the end of your articles to increase pageviews and help your readers find related content on your blog.

**WP-Polls** – This cool little plugin allows you to run polls on your blog to get more reader feedback and engagement. Polls are a great way to get new article ideas and get feedback on your readers and their demographic. I would wait to run polls until you have the readership to support results.

**podPress** – If you are going to record audio interviews with people in your niche, podPress is a must have to stream that audio content in your blog article seamlessly.

**FeedFooter** – FeedFooter allows you to insert advertising, newsletter sign-up or any other text/code into the footer of your articles in your rss feed. This plugin will allow you to easily monetize or grow your blog through your feed and let you pick different items for the first 10 articles in your feed.

**jQuery Lightbox For Native Galleries** – On [Mountain Biking by 198](#), I made the switch to Lightbox photo viewing in the galleries. This makes for much easier viewing within a web browser when you are using the default picture gallery feature in Wordpress.

## CONTACT AND EMAIL COMMUNICATION THROUGH PLUGINS

**cForms** – There are other, easier to configure contact form plugins for Wordpress, but I like the customization features of cForms for my blogs.

**Comment Relish** – Coded by the other half of the oneniney8 family, Justin Shattuck, Comment Relish emails new commentors on your blog to increase repeat visits, rss subscribers and newsletter subscribers. You can customize your email to say anything you want.

**Subscribe to Comments** – This plugin allows your readers to subscribe to the comments of one of your blog articles so they are instantly updated of new comments. This plugin will increase the conversations in your comments section of your blog.

## ADVERTISING AND AFFILIATE ADVERTISING

**OiOPublisher** – [OiOPublisher](#) is a great premium plugin that allows you to sell direct advertising on your blog and have it automatically controlled by the plugin itself. Advertisers can submit, pay and see their stats all through the use of [OiOPublisher](#).

**MaxBlogPress Ninja Affiliate** – [Ninja Affiliate](#) is a must have premium plugin for any blogger looking to include affiliate links on their blog. The [Ninja Affiliate](#) plugin will automatically search your blog articles for keywords that you determine and link those keywords using your affiliate link. If that wasn't enough already...it only scratches the surface of what this plugin is capable of for bloggers.

**UBD Block Ad Plugin** – Created by Unique Blog Designs, the UBD Block Ad plugin is a free 125×125 ad spot rotator for you sidebar.

## BLOG ADMINISTRATION PLUGINS

**WP-DBManager** – In the case of a blogging disaster, you are going to be really glad to have recent database backups. The WP-DBManager plugin will automatically backup your database, store a copy of it on your server and send you a copy via email during a schedule you set. You can never be too safe with backups.

**FD Feedburner Plugin** – Automatically converts every one of your feed links in your blog to your Feedburner URL.

**Thesis OpenHook** – Great plugin for Thesis users that gives you easier access to the custom\_functions.php, custom.css and Thesis hooks to customize your Thesis Theme for Wordpress.

## ANOTHER WORD ON PLUGINS

Like I mentioned earlier, only install the plugins that you absolutely need to have on your Wordpress blog. I do not use all of these on every blog I own...only the ones that need that feature. Try not to get plugin happy and end up with a slow blog with too many features that no one uses! If you are looking into getting a custom design created for your blog, try to work in features that you would normally use with plugins directly into the theme itself. You can speed up load times and get a really custom look through integration where you would not be able to get the same results with a plugin.

One of the things that make an open source project like Wordpress so great for its users is the vast amount of customization you can do through items like 3rd party plugins. As you look for plugins to compliment the content on your blog, ask yourself one simple question...is over 1/2 my readership going to use the benefits of these new features? If the answer is no...do not install. If you think that answer is yes, install, configure and test out the results on your blog. If you are not getting the desired result, you do not need that plugin on your blog clogging up the place.

# WORDPRESS THEMES: CHOOSING THE RIGHT THEME FOR YOUR BLOG

Choosing the right Wordpress theme for your blog can be one of the most confusing and fun parts about blogging. Unfortunately, most beginning bloggers spend so much time deciding on a theme that they are wasting valuable time that could be spent on content production and promotion.



Choosing and modifying a Wordpress theme can be a HUGE time suck, so I am going to try to help

you out here and cut down on your theme choosing period so you can get back to building your blog. Let's get several questions covered so you can figure out what the right plan of action is for your blog.

Wordpress Theme Options for Bloggers

Before we decide which option is best for you and your blog, let's take a look at the options available to Wordpress bloggers as everything stands right now. At the end of this article, you will find some great resources to find all of these different categories of themes, but before you dive in head first...we need to address each and figure out which type of Wordpress theme is going to fit your needs as a blogger.

## FREE WORDPRESS THEMES

There are thousands of free Wordpress theme options on the market. Surprisingly there are some really great ones that will get you up and running today if needed, but – unfortunately – those are also mixed in with a lot of sub-par work. With a free Wordpress theme, you are going to get the core files that will get you up and running today. The administration of the theme (if there is one at all...in most

cases...there isn't) on the back-end is not going to be as user friendly and you might need extra plugins and coding to get the theme to work correctly for your needs.

### *Benefits of Free Wordpress Themes*

- Gets you up and running right away
- Its Free!

### *Drawbacks of Free Wordpress Themes*

- Finding a good one can be difficult among all of the free options out there
- Tasks like inserting a logo and changing the look can be difficult if you are not familiar with web coding
- No support
- Your blog looks just like every other blog using that theme

## **PREMIUM WORDPRESS THEMES**

Premium Wordpress themes provide you with all of the core files to install the theme and get up and running right away just like a free Wordpress theme, but with several key differences that make them worth the price of admission. Premium Wordpress themes typically have a fantastic back-end administration that makes customizing the theme (adding a logo, changing colors, SEO, etc) for your needs very easy for the blogger with limited coding ability.

Premium Wordpress themes also – typically – have a cleaner look and cleaner code so your blog will perform better in the long run. Ranging in the \$25 and up range, a premium Wordpress theme is going to provide its blogger with a professional look and some sort of support system (email, forums) that allows the blogger to get help when it comes to issues and customization. For this reason, I almost always recommend going with a premium theme for beginning bloggers. Yes...it costs a little bit of cash to get going...but the long term benefits of the professional look and a support community is crucial for beginning bloggers.

### *Benefits of Premium Wordpress Themes*

- Up and running on your blog today
- Support system for tech support and customization
- Typically a lot better looking theme straight out of the box
- Administration back-end in Wordpress to make customization tasks easy for non-web coders

### *Drawbacks of Premium Wordpress Themes*

- They cost money
- Without adding a logo or changing design features – Your blog can look like every other blog that bought that theme

## **WORDPRESS THEME FRAMEWORKS**

Wordpress theme frameworks are Wordpress themes that are the bare bones coding that you can build off of as a designer. Are you a web designer that wants clean code to work off of to create your custom theme? Then a Wordpress theme framework is probably going to fit the bill perfectly for you. With a Wordpress theme framework, you can get all of the core Wordpress theme files and design your theme around that code. This allows you to forget about setting up pages, posts and other essential files and focus solely on design.

### *Benefits of Wordpress Theme Frameworks*

- Create your own design around a sound and tested Wordpress theme framework
- Can use the theme framework as the blog design until you get your design finished (just looks really plain)
- There are free options

### *Drawbacks of Wordpress Theme Frameworks*

- You have to create your own design
- Typically not ready straight out of the box (plain white theme is the base code)

## **CUSTOM WORDPRESS THEMES**

The holy grail of Wordpress themes and the top of the money list goes to custom Wordpress themes. Are you looking for a completely custom look that no one else has? Do you need options that can not be found in a premium theme? Custom Wordpress themes are done by web design companies and independent contractors to provide the blogger with a completely custom option that fits the needs of their readers completely. Custom themes are typically in the \$1,000 and up range, but you can be assured that your theme will interact with your readers and look like no other blog on the net.

### *Benefits of Custom Wordpress Themes*

- Completely customized to fit your needs and the needs of your readers
- Very professional look
- Support through an independent contractor or web design company

### *Drawbacks of Custom Wordpress Themes*

- \$\$\$ – Get the checkbook ready...this isn't going to be cheap
- Future customization and changes may be based on a hourly rate

## **WHICH WORDPRESS THEME IS RIGHT FOR ME?**

Now that you know all of the options available to you as a blogger, it is time to decide which option will best fit your needs at this time. Now – keep in mind – your needs are going to change over time as your blog adapts and grows, so

continually testing and trying new things are going to be essential in your theme progression. For now...let's focus on where you stand today and then we will get into the resources where you can find the theme that fits your needs.

## **BEGINNING NON-BUSINESS (NO PROFIT) BLOGGER**

Are you just looking to share your stories, pictures and miscellaneous thoughts with friends and family? If you are just looking to blog and are not worried about monetizing or performing well in search engines, then you do not need to be spending a load of cash on a Wordpress theme design. All you really need is a design that reflects who you are as a person and forget about fancy logos and features.

**Recommendation: Free Wordpress Theme**

## **BEGINNING BUSINESS (PROFIT) BLOGGER**

Just starting out with the dream of making it big as a blogger – or at least pull in some extra cash on the side? If you are a beginning blogger that is going to try to make money from your blogging and perform well in search engines and other social media outlets, you are going to need your own logo and a design that looks professional enough to convert sales and attract advertising. Since you are just beginning to build your blog, you need to be focused on content rather than design, so you need something quick that you can easily throw a logo into and get to writing.

**Recommendation: Premium Wordpress Theme**

## **ESTABLISHED BLOGGER WITH A READERSHIP**

Have you been blogging for awhile on a free or stock premium theme and you are starting to see larger subscriber counts and revenue? If you are starting to see results from your blogging, it is time to step it up and set yourself away from the pack. You are going to need some custom options that you can test with your readers to see if you can increase conversions and how deep your readers are going into your blog. You also need to attract new subscribers by having a unique look and voice.

**Recommendation: Hybrid – Premium Wordpress Theme with Customization by a Designer/Coder**

## **ROCKSTAR BLOGGER**

It happened! All of your hard work paid off and you are now a blogging celebrity in your niche blog topic. Your needs are now much different than other bloggers as you need to cement your stake in the blogging community and continue to increase conversions and subscribers. You are also making loads of cash off your now full time blogging job, so it is time to reinvest that money into a full branding push.

**Recommendation: Custom Wordpress Theme or a Hybrid with Serious Mods**

## **BUSINESS BLOGGING**

Have a successful business and want to perform better in search engines to create free leads? Blogging can be a great way to increase your scope on the web and bring in more business. For business blogging, you need to keep all of your branding in tact, so you are going to need everything to match your existing site if you want to be successful.

**Recommendation: Custom Wordpress Theme**

## **WORDPRESS THEME RESOURCES AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Now that you have decided what kind of theme you need for your Wordpress blog, it is time to dive in and find one that fits your needs. The following list is where you can find the different Wordpress theme options that I have described above. If you know of any other great sources for themes...hit me up and I'll get them added to the list.

## **FREE WORDPRESS THEMES FOR BLOGGERS**

- [41 Great Looking Free WordPress Themes](#) – 41 great looking free Wordpress themes

- [16 Free Premium WordPress Themes That Don't Suck](#) – If the title isn't cool enough...the free themes here will grab your attention
- [Wordpress.org](#) – The Wordpress database has more themes than you can even look at in a day.
- [140+ Brilliant Free WordPress Themes Around](#) – A ton of free professional looking options for your Wordpress blog
- [45+ Free Premium WordPress Themes with Magazine or Grid Layouts](#) – Free magazine styled Wordpress themes
- [100 Excellent Free WordPress Themes](#) – Smashing Magazine's list of 100 free Wordpress themes

## PREMIUM WORDPRESS THEMES

- **Thesis Theme** – The [Thesis Theme](#) (active on this blog) has really blurred the line between theme framework and custom theme. Technically, the [Thesis Theme](#) is a theme framework, but through the use of an easy to understand hooks system and an incredible support forum, non-coders are able to transform Thesis into something they can call their own. Thesis also features very fast page load times, great SEO features and a brilliant back-end management system that is easy to use for all Wordpress users.
- **WooThemes** – With a collection of free and premium Wordpress themes, [WooThemes](#) has really carved out niche for themselves in the premium theme market. With an average price of around \$75 dollars, their themes are extremely clean looking and have a great back-end management system. When you purchase one of their premium themes, you also get access to a fantastic support forum that will address any technical issues or customization questions.
- **Headway Theme** - Newcomer to the premium theme/framework side of Wordpress, the [Headway Theme](#) features drag and drop functionality when it comes to customizing the way you layout your design.
- **Theme Wars** – A new outlet for premium themes introduced by Unique Blog Designs, [Theme Wars](#) provides another premium theme option for Wordpress bloggers. Unique Blog Designs has a portfolio that includes a lot

of rockstar bloggers.

- **Theme Forest** – Created by the Envato network, [Theme Forest](#) features a ton of premium themes that average around the 25 dollar range and up. The [Theme Forest](#) themes are submitted by outside designers and approved by the Forest staff. If you are a designer looking to make some cash by selling premium Wordpress themes...this is also a great resource to sell your designs.
- **PremiumThemes.net** – Another [premium themes site](#) with several options you might not find anywhere else. I have actually used their ebook publishing theme for the Ramped Reviews site.

## WORDPRESS THEME FRAMEWORKS

- [WordPress PSD Framework](#) – A free PSD template that includes all the common elements in a Wordpress design – Build your own Wordpress Theme
- [WordPress Theme Generator](#) – A zero coding knowledge online theme generator
- [Thematic](#) – One of the most advanced Wordpress theme frameworks available.
- [Carrington](#) – A free Wordpress CMS theme framework that includes two browser versions and a mobile version.
- [OnePress Community](#) – A Wordpress and bbPress theme framework.
- [WP Framework](#) – A blank theme framework with minimal formatting.
- [WordPress Theme Frameworks—A Comprehensive Overview](#) – A great rundown of what theme frameworks are and why they're useful.

## CUSTOM WORDPRESS THEME DESIGNERS

- [Just The Web](#) – The geniuses behind the Mountain Biking by 198 design and the future designers of Bike198.com when it moves to that new location. Just the Web has been behind a lot of great work over the years...head over to

their portfolio to check it out.

- [Vitamin](#) - The crew over at Vitamin are the minds behind the branding of [bike198.com](#) and [robbsutton.com](#). They also do some incredible print and design work.
- [Unique Blog Designs](#) – You have probably seen the work of Unique Blog Designs before through [JohnChow.com](#), [Shoemoney.com](#) and others. They have been known in the MMO industry for quite sometime now.
- [Sitepoint.com](#) – Check out the forums and request custom work done. You will get a host of responses from independent contractors. Be sure to always ask for examples of their work so you can decide on which designer is right for your needs.

## ONE LAST WORD ON WORDPRESS THEME DESIGNS

Try not to sweat too much over your Wordpress theme design as a beginning blogger. There is a lot of time and energy out there that is wasted on losing sleep over your design when – as a beginning blogger – you should be more concentrated on content and promotion. Hopefully, this information has helped clear the air and pointed you in the right direction for your blog. Once you have made a decision...stick with it and get to writing. Time and readers will tell you where the next step is in your blog design.

# SETTING UP PAGES ON YOUR WORDPRESS BLOG

For the next step in setting up your Wordpress blog, we are going to publish a couple of pages. The pages of your Wordpress blog perform very specific functions that need to be at the forefront at all times. While articles are commented on and published on a regular basis, your pages that you setup for your blog will rarely change over time.



These pages will be featured at the top of your blog in your navigation so that the information contained within these pages can be easily accessible by all readers.

Some examples of pages that you are going to want to have on your blog are the following:

- About
- Contact
- Archives
- Advertising

After I show you how to setup these pages in Wordpress, we will go over what you need to fill the blank space with in your blog. On a new blog, I typically like to get all of the formal tasks taken care of before I start really cranking out content. That way...when new visitors hit the blog, all of this is already taken care of and ready to convert casual readers into subscribers.

## SETTING UP PAGES IN WORDPRESS FOR YOUR BLOG

If you are new to Wordpress, setting up pages is extremely easy. Instead of giving you the step by step in this article, please refer to [this video](#) from Wordpress.tv on

how to write a new page in your blog.

Note: When writing a new page, I uncheck the “allow comments” box under discussion in the new page admin screen. Typically, pages are not a part of your blog that you want to invite conversation or need to for that matter. Pages are informational in nature and should be kept that way.

## ABOUT PAGE

Your About page will be one of the most visited pages on your blog and many new bloggers completely neglect this vitally important resource in their blogs. After a new visitor lands on your blog through a referral link or search engine, they want to find out the nuts and bolts of who you are and what your blog is going to cover to see if they want to drop by your content again in the future or subscribe to your feed. The About page is a crucial converting page for new readers as they want to get certain questions answered about you and your blog, so what do we need to make sure we list on this page to get the best results for our blog?

**What Is In This Blog?** – Who is this blog targeted towards? What are you going to find within the articles and pages in this blog? These are all questions that new visitors want answered right away when visiting your about page, so you need to give this information quickly and efficiently.

**Who Are You?** - After you have explained what is contained in your blog, you need to have a short bio of yourself that gives social proof on why you are able to write the content in your blog. Who are you? Do you have a unique background in the niche? In this section of your about page, you need to list any accomplishments, interviews, top content, etc. that gives new readers social proof on why they should read your blog. If you have nothing to offer, readers will just find someone else that does! (A picture of yourself is normally a great idea here too)

**How Can I Subscribe And Connect?** – You have done it...you have converted the mind of the new reader by showing them what to expect in your blog and why you are qualified to discuss the topic on a regular basis. Instead of making them guess where to sign up for your newsletter or RSS feed (more on RSS feeds soon), list exactly how they can subscribe on your about page. Do you have a

Facebook page? Twitter account? Stumbleupon account? List these accounts (linked of course) in this section as well so readers can find you through other social media outlets on the web.

**Any Additional About Type Info** – Do you have some pictures or unique information that you want to share with your readers that doesn't quite fit in with the other topics on your about page? Share these items at the bottom to give your readers a little bit more insight into who you are and what you do. Blogging is all about making a personal connection with your readers, so the more transparent you are about your life the better.

## ARCHIVES PAGE

Every blog needs an archives page. The archives page of your blog will make diving deeper into your content easier for new and old readers. Archive pages are typically organized by Date, Category and Individual Post Listings. Many themes actually have a built in archives function that you can find in the Template drop down menu in the Attributes column on the right side of your add new page screen. This will automatically setup an archives page for you.

If you are using the Thesis theme for Wordpress, you can modify the original archives page to look like the one I use on this blog by using the code listed in these two attached files in your custom.css and custom\_functions.php files. Just copy and paste the code contained in these files into yours...and you will be all set! custom.css and custom\_functions.php.

Having a properly setup archives page also allows search engine spiders to easily access your content in a more efficient manner, so it is a great SEO tool for your blog.

## CONTACT PAGE

There will be times when your readers will want to shoot you an email with a question or comment. There will also be other bloggers that will need to get in touch with you about collaborating on guest posts and other ventures. You might also run into companies and potential advertisers that want to discuss a future business venture. It is your job to make sure that all of these people can get in

touch with you easily and that is the function of having a defined Contact Page.

For my blogs, I use the cForms plugin that I listed on the previous plugins article to handle the contact form on my contact page. There is also an easier to configure, simpler option that you can try out on your blogs if you do not need the added features of cForms – Contact Form 7. These contact forms allow your readers to fill out a simple form on your blog that will automatically send you an email.

## ADVERTISING PAGE

Your advertising page is going to give potential advertisers the necessary information they need to make a decision on whether to advertise on your blog or not. Advertisers are looking for a specific audience and they want to know how much of this audience they are able to reach through your blog. If you are in the beginning stages of your blog, this is one page that you can leave off until you get a regular following. When you need to display information such as stats and subscribers, it is sometimes best to leave that private until you have enough to publish.

**Who Are Your Readers?** – The first thing that should be listed on any advertising page is who your blog targets and who reads your blog. For my cycling blog, potential advertisers are going to reach mountain bikers who are looking for product reviews, riding tips and ride reports. These readers land on my blog through 1st page placement on search engines for high competing keywords (list a couple of examples), rss feed readers and a strong newsletter subscription base.

**How Many Readers Do You Have?** – After you list who your readers are...you need to spell out exactly how many of them there are to your potential advertiser. In this section, include some simple stats for the last month – visitors, unique visitors, pageviews, subscribers, alexa ranking. If you have ever received an award or other accommodation for your blog, this would be the time to list those achievements as well. Advertisers like to see that you have positioned yourself as a leader in your niche through social proof provided by others.

**How To Buy Your Advertising?** - Your advertiser has decided that you have the right target audience that he needs to promote his product or services. He now needs to know exactly how to buy advertising on your blog. While many bloggers

simply say “contact me for rates and info via email”, this is typically not a route I would recommend. You need to be able to sell advertising directly off your blog for the best results. Many bloggers do this through PayPal buttons directly on their advertising page for the respective advertising slots.

While this is a great way to sell advertising on your blog, I take a little bit different approach with the [OiOPublisher](#) plugin. This cheap plugin for Wordpress handles everything you need for advertising on your blog from displaying the ads, rotating the ads, selling the ads on your blog and handling the payment and subscriptions through multiple payment methods (I use the PayPal subscription method as it is the easiest for advertisers). If you want to see an example of how the [OiOPublisher](#) plugin works, visit my advertising page at Mountain Biking by 198.

**Where Are Your Advertising Slots?** – At the end of my advertising page, I provide a screen shot of my blog that illustrates exactly where the ad spots show up on the page. Even though this is technically part of the decision making process before purchasing advertising on a blog, the size of this image dictates its position at the bottom of the page. It is just too big to place anywhere else, but it does provide potential advertisers with an easy visual reference that helps with decision making.

## OTHER PAGES FOR YOUR WORDPRESS BLOG

As you go through the process of growing your blog, you might find that you need additional pages that feature certain aspects of your blogging. On [robbsutton.com](#), I have pages for “How I Make Money Online” and eBooks that serve as a easy to find resource for all readers. As time goes forward, you will start to get a feeling of what you need to have readily accessible on your blog at all times (featured content, forum, etc.) and you can create individual pages to accomplish that goal. You Are Set Up!

You now have all of the necessary pages setup on your Wordpress blog. After a couple more little tweaks, you are going to be ready to crank out content and start promoting. Stay tuned for more on how to get your blog up and running.

# HOW TO WRITE QUALITY BLOG ARTICLES AND CONTENT

Now we are at the meat and potatoes of blogging...your blog articles and content. At this point in the How To Start A Blog series, you have everything pretty much setup minus your sidebar and miscellaneous design items. Now – we need to get into producing quality content on your blog by writing articles that your readers are going to soak up like cold water on a hot summer



day. Quality content is your blog's foundation. Without these engaging articles and posts, you have nothing but graphics on a screen. There have been extremely well designed sites that failed miserably because all the focus was on plugins, design and other non-important items that – in the end – do not keep readers on your page. Your content is the #1 most important part of your blogging. Without compelling content...you are just wasting your time.

## HOW TO DRAFT AND PUBLISH A BLOG ARTICLE IN WORDPRESS

If you have never drafted an article in Wordpress before, opening that “Hello, World!” post can be a little nerve racking. Before we even get started, you need to go in and delete that post (which will get rid of the comments attached as well), and start a new article using [this video](#) as a guide.

Note: Depending on the theme you are using, you might have some options when it comes to inserting images into your post. These are done through custom panels inserted by your theme or through the custom fields box in the write screen. Please refer to the instructions provided with your Wordpress theme for details on how to use those features. There are too many options out there to cover them in these tutorials.

You will notice on the right hand of your write screen that there is a box for categories. These categories are going to help your readers navigate your content, so – for this article (and the subsequent articles you will write in the future) – you will need to select/create categories for your articles. For example, this article is

under “How To Start A Blog“. If you want to...you can also list it under multiple categories that your particular article relates to.

## **WRITING QUALITY BLOG ARTICLES AND CONTENT THAT READERS WILL CONNECT WITH**

Unfortunately for most bloggers – myself included when I first started out – we are not fantastic writers. Hell...I’m still not and probably will never be a literary expert. I am more of a math and science kind of guy. But the beautiful thing about blogging is that incredible writing skills are not required. Your goal in your blogging is to find your writing voice that connects with your readers. Your drive is to be unique in a way that draws readers into your content and makes them want to stick around.

Blogging is not about being perfect or scrutinizing over every word on the page. Blogging is about that personal connection between the blogger and reader and that should be your #1 focus as you draft articles. Any plain, old, boring SOB can put up a dissertation on how to do something, but a blogger can bring that content to the web with flair and personality. One of the biggest hurdles I found in blogging was getting out of the writing style that has been beat into our heads from day one of grade school. We are not writing term papers here. We are writing content that is engaging and inspires conversation.

What is the best advice I can give new bloggers looking to make it big on the Internet sharing their passion with the world? Be yourself. Bring as much of yourself into your writing as you possibly can. Do not fret over the little details in the beginning and start getting content out there. As you continually write and publish articles, focus on bringing something different to the table. Do you want to be another copycat or original? You do not have to worry if it is not coming easily right away. As with most things in life, you are going to get better with practice and that will start to come through in your writing.

The only way to get better at blogging is to blog.

## RESOURCES THAT WILL HELP YOU WRITE ENGAGING CONTENT ON YOUR BLOG

The following list is a resource of articles that will help you find your own voice and get your readers to stay on your pages. These are the same articles that helped me in my beginning blogging (and still today), so instead of rewriting what has already been said...I will share them with you now.

### FINDING YOUR BLOGGING VOICE

- [How to Find Your Blogging Mojo – Prologger.net](#) – Great article by Darren at Prologger that gives you way to experiment to find your own blogging voice.
- [How To Write With A Distinctive Voice – Copyblogger.com](#) – The king of content production goes into detail on how to find your own voice with your blog.
- [Seth's Blog: Maybe you don't want traffic so badly?](#) – A short slap in the face about finding your voice in blogging.
- [Finding Your Blogging Voice – JohnChow.com](#) – This guest post on JohnChow.com goes into some detail about finding your blogging voice.

### CONTENT AND ARTICLE PRODUCTION

- [Pillar Article – How To Write Great Blog Content – Entrepreneurs-Journey.com](#) – Yaro Starak writes an incredible article on pillar articles and why you have to write them on your blog.
- [10 Steps To Develop Killer Blog Articles – DailyBlogTips](#) – Great list post of the key ingredients to a great blog post.
- [How To Write Great Blog Content – Prologger.net](#) – Darren's list on how to write great blog content.

## BECOMING A BETTER WRITER AND BLOGGER

- [10 Steps To Becoming A Better Writer – Copyblogger.com](#) – Another great resource from CopyBlogger
- [How To Be Interesting – Copyblogger.com](#) – Everyone wants to be interesting right? You are going to have to be...to be successful in blogging.

## KEEP THE READERS COMING BACK FOR MORE

- [21 Ways to Make Your Blog or Website Sticky – Problogger.net](#) – Tips on making readers want to stick around by Darren.

Writing content on your blog is probably the #2 most talked about topic in the blogging niche (behind making money on your blog), so I am sure there are thousands of other articles on the net that are just as useful...but there are a couple that will get you started. Do you have other blogging resources related to content production that have helped you in your blogging? Hit up the comments section and share those articles that have made your content jump off the page.

***Hint:** I have found a massive amount of success in “how to” articles and product reviews. Not only are these types of articles very search engine friendly, but they make your blog an incredible resource for your readers. The more you can teach and honestly inform your readers...the more success you will see.*

## A WORD ON LINK BAIT CONTENT

Your goal when writing pillar articles is to create content that other bloggers and websites are going to want to link back to in their own articles. Basically...”That article is so great I *HAVE TO* share it with my readers!” Link bait content provides you with a quality link that is great for SEO purposes, but it also provides you with promotion for your blog that is purely generated through writing. It provides credibility and grows your blog.

# LAYING OUT YOUR POSTS TO CONVERT READERS

The challenge for many bloggers (beginning and experienced) is making sure that your article layout converts casual visitors into multi-page readers and subscribers. How you situate features on your pages will directly affect how readers interact with your site. Ideally, you would like them to click to another page and eventually subscribe to your blog.

Article and call to action layouts are how you are going to convert this first time reader and you need to take the psychology of readers into consideration when you layout your page.

## GENERAL RULES OF THUMB ON BLOG LAYOUT

These general guidelines should help you know what not to do when it comes to laying out your sidebar and content area of your blog.

People do not like clutter - I know you are stoked to put up every widget from every plugin you can find and then throw in 6 ads to start making money. Stop...take a deep breath...and think about the blogs you like to read. Are they cluttered up with every feature they can find or are they organized with only the necessary features that pertain to the largest percentage of readers?

I am guessing that...after further inspection...you are finding that there are only the features that are absolutely necessary. So...what do you need to have on your page to see the best results?

When it comes to page layout on the web, there are areas that you need to be focused on.

- **Above the Fold** - Everything your readers can see as soon as they land on the page without scrolling.
- **Below the Fold** - All of the remaining content that can be seen by scrolling down the page.

On a blog, you have complete control on what is displayed in both areas in your header, content area, sidebar and footer. Depending on the theme you chose, these areas can be controlled through widgets (sidebar and footer) or by plugins

and editing the core files. Since this is not a “how to code” ebook, we are going to focus on those features that we can directly control with widgets and plugins. For a really custom look that converts well, you can look into coding the header.php and single.php files to directly tailor them to your needs. BUT...do not change things without original backups and consult a web designer if you have no freaking clue what you are doing!

## ABOVE THE FOLD LAYOUT FEATURES

In the above the fold section of your blog, you want to have the strongest call to action items readily available. These are all the items that are the greatest asset to your blogging, so they should be the first thing seen for new visitors. It is a proven fact that call to action items best convert above the fold. So what needs to be above the fold on your blog?

- **Branding and Primary Navigation** - Luckily, this should all be handled by whatever theme you are using. At most...you should only have to exclude the items you do not want in your primary navigation.
- **RSS Subscription Options** - As a blogger, you should be promoting your RSS subscription options clearly above the fold. You want as many readers as possible taking action on this item. If you have a significant amount of subscribers, post that statistic via the Feedburner widget next to your subscription options (this can also include Twitter counts and follow buttons as well.)
- **Newsletter Subscription Signup** - Your email newsletter (handled through Aweber...more on this later) is probably your biggest asset to your blog. If you are giving something away (ebook, email course, discount on product, etc), this should be heavily featured above the fold on your blog.
- **Top Paying Advertisers and Affiliates** - Advertisements that are above the fold, typically, perform better than anywhere else on your page. This includes your header, sidebar and beginning content of your blog article. You are going to want to have your top paying affiliates and most expensive ad spots visible without scrolling.

## BELOW THE FOLD LAYOUT FEATURES

When your readers start diving down the page and start interacting with your content, you are going to want to have specific call to actions below the fold that increase pageviews, comments and social media spread. These actions are located at the bottom of every article. By using the plugins outlined earlier in this ebook, you are able to do this quickly and easily.

- **Social Media Submit Icons** - By setting up the ShareThis plugin, you can automatically display social media submit icons at the end of every post. So, when your readers reach the end of the article and decide they want to help promote your content because it was so freaking fantastic, they can do so right at the end of your post. Now, I normally recommend picking no more than 5 icons as that converts much better than displaying every icon in the library. Less clutter means higher conversion rates.
- **RSS Feed Subscription** - Displaying your RSS feed subscription link invites your new reader to subscribe AFTER you have proven yourself with your content. Think of it this way, “wow...that was a great article, I should subscribe to this blog. Oh wait...it’s right there!” You can use FeedFooter for this.
- **Twitter and Facebook Following** - Same theory as the RSS subscription option. You have just up’ed your credibility with your content. Capitalize on that.
- **Secondary Advertising** - You lower paying affiliates and advertising goes below the fold on your blog. A great spot for these ads are in your sidebar and between the content and comments section. If you are writing about a product or service, put an affiliate link at the bottom of the article for better conversions.
- **Newsletter Subscription** - See RSS feed subscription above...same deal here too.
- **Related Articles List** - Want to increase click throughs and pageviews on your blog? Feature related articles using the Similar Posts plugin and watch your average pageview per user increase as you point them in the direction of more content on your blog.

- **Comments Section** - The comments section is where all of the conversation is going to take place on your blog. Increase pageviews and return readers by inviting them to comment (ask questions, opinions, etc.) and respond to readers. The more you interact...the more they will.

Now...we can talk about these features and layouts all day long, but why don't we dive in and take a look at a real world example.

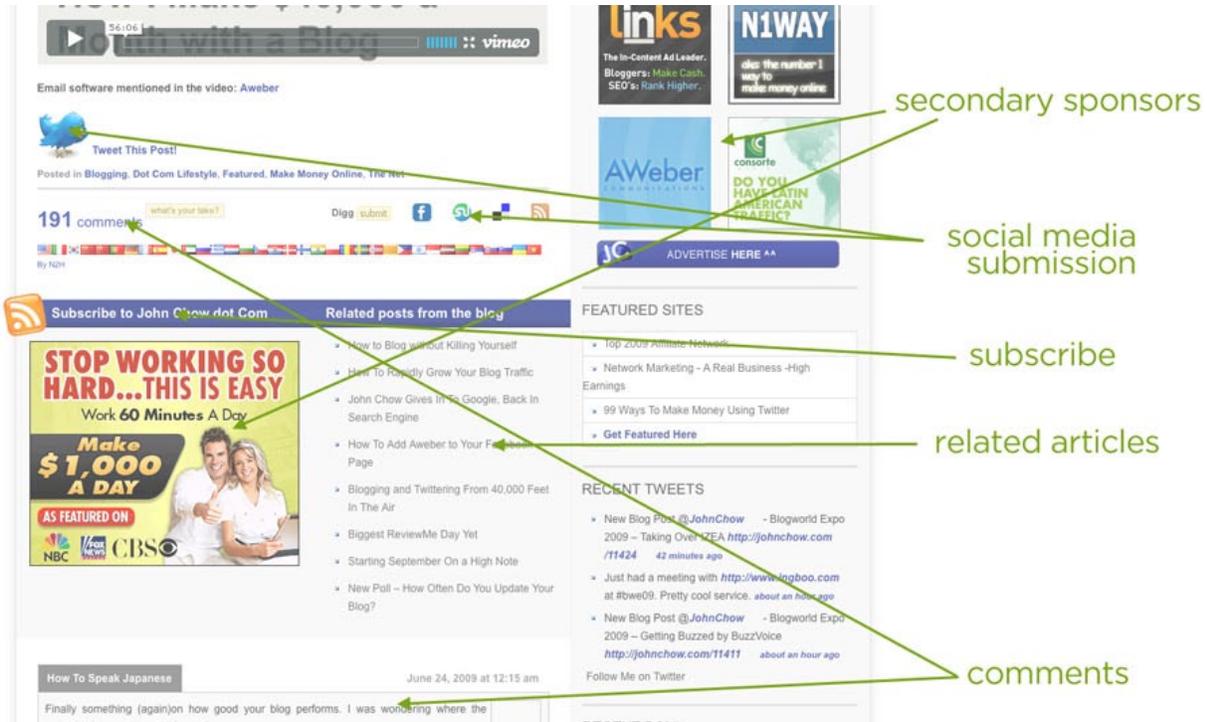
John Chow has been known throughout the blogging industry for high conversion rates and successful blogging. So here is how is article pages are laid out on his blog.

What you see above the fold will vary depending on screen size and resolution. This is what I see on a 20" Dell Widescreen...but you will get the idea.

The screenshot shows the top portion of John Chow's blog article page. At the top, there is a blue banner with the text "Watch John Chow on the latest episode of MarketLeverageTV!". Below this is the site's branding, including the "JC John Chow dot Com" logo and the tagline "The Miscellaneous Ramblings of a Dot Com Mogul". A navigation bar contains links for "Advertise", "Make Money", "Photos", and a search bar. The main content area features the article title "How I Make \$40,000 a Month From a Blog" and a large yellow advertisement for "STOP WORKING SO HARD...THIS IS EASY" with the promise of "Make \$1,000 A DAY" in "60 Minutes A Day". To the right of the article, there are several call-to-action boxes: "MAKE MONEY ONLINE" with a form for a free eBook, "BLOG SPONSORS" including RevenueAds and MediaBuysCoach.com, and "join today" buttons. Annotations with green arrows point to various elements: "premium sponsors" points to Pepperjam and Bidvertiser; "branding and primary nav" points to the site logo and navigation bar; "rss/twitter subscriptions" points to the RSS icon; "newsletter subscription" points to the "I Want To Start Making Money Online with John Chow!" checkbox; and "blog sponsors" points to the RevenueAds and MediaBuysCoach.com boxes.

RAMPED BLOGGING

And this is a diagram of what you will see further down the page after the article.



# RAMPED BLOGGING

Now...John's site was custom designed, but you can achieve a similar placement structure with the free plugins provided. When it comes time for a custom design for your blog, you can tailor these features to directly fit your needs much like John Chow has with his blog.

# COMPLIMENTING GREAT BLOG CONTENT WITH FANTASTIC PICTURES

I am a very visual person. I will take watching a movie over reading a book just about any day of the week, so the use of images in blog posts has a dramatic affect on how I interact with a bloggers content. On [robbsutton.com](http://robbsutton.com), I try to find images on the web (legally) that compliment the blog articles content to further expand on the thought I am trying to portray



with words. For me, it adds to the content and brings in another mental stimulus that you can really rap your brain around. As the blogging industry continues to pour more resources into multimedia, I believe that using key elements like images and video are going to become increasingly important as more “microwave generation” readers fall onto our blog content.

What we need to ask ourselves as bloggers is what can we do to continually expand the way that we interact with our readers? Images and other multimedia outlets are a fantastic way to further engage your readers with your content.

## WHAT DO PICTURES AND VIDEO DO TO YOUR BLOG READER?

When I draft up articles on any of my blogs, I am trying to pull the reader into my world. Blog readers enjoy blogs because they get to interact with the blogger. If they just wanted to absorb some content, there are other print and online publications that have huge financial backing that provide a mass amount of content...but no interaction. They choose to read your blog because they get to step into the world you are creating online through your thoughts and words. By complimenting your words with visual media, you are going further into the interaction and this creates more stimulating content for your readers.

You will hear time and time again that content is king and that is all you have to worry about! While a blog is nothing without great content, I do believe that by stimulating more senses with your readers, you will create a stronger connection and see more success in the long run. As I watch print newspapers over time, they

are going away from the massive amount of text on a page and complimenting that text with large, engaging pictures. The newspaper industry has stumbled upon the same idea as they continually strive for larger circulations.

As you walk by a newsstand, what grabs your eye? Is it a bunch of text on a page that must be good because of how long it is or is it a dramatic picture with a catchy headline? The dramatic picture with a catchy headline grabs you in every time! Keep this in mind as you draft you next blog article and ask yourself what you can do to stimulate not only your readers thinking but their senses. The more interaction and feeling your bring into your blogging, the more you will gravitate readers that want to soak up all of the buttery greatness that is your blog.

Now...if they could just figure out how to get scratch and sniff on a computer screen...I would never leave the interior pictures on Ferrari's homepage...

Newspaper image by Matt Callow

# HOW TO FIND KILLER IMAGES FOR YOUR BLOG POSTS

The biggest question is...where do I find these images and how can I use them without breaking the bank? Over the years, I have found several techniques to finding fantastic images for articles that I am now going to share. Content is king...but visuals can be just as appealing...



## 5 SURE FIRE WAYS TO FIND FANTASTIC IMAGES FOR YOUR BLOG

**Flickr CC Images** – This is one of the methods that I use most often. Flickr contains some incredible photographers and they share their images with each other in an easy to find manner. If you are looking for something specific...Flickr probably has it. There is one major catch that you need to take into consideration. Flickr images have protection laws attached to them. You can't just go grab any image you want and post it on your blog.

So how do you get around this without breaking the law? You do an advanced search for your keywords and check the Creative Commons box at the bottom of the page. This will return a list of images that are available for public use under certain conditions. You can't edit the image and you need to give credit to the photographer.

If you look at the top of this post, you will notice an amazing shot that a friend of mine took in rural Georgia, there is an italicized line at the end of this section (and the others where I used CC images) that says "Image by...". This makes it very clear that I am not claiming that image as my own. Sounds easy enough right? It is! Both parties win in this situation. You get a great image to use on your blog and the photographer gets increased exposure for their shot! It might be a good idea to email the photographer just to give them a heads up that you really like the shot and you used it on your blog. Artists like to get feedback on their work.

**Buy Them** – There are a ton of sites on the net that allow you to purchase royalty free, copyrighted images for use as you please. These sites are a great source for some incredible shots that will really attract some attention. The downside... it can get really expensive. If you are not making much money from your site, this investment is coming straight out of your pocket and you can not really measure the return on your investment. Getting a handful of these images in a batch is normally the best route to go. It cuts down on cost and you have a set to use over time. I normally use this route when the other sources on this list completely fall through.

Check out sites like [istockphoto.com](http://istockphoto.com), [fotosearch.com](http://fotosearch.com) and [stock.schnng](http://stock.schnng) for some fantastic shots and great prices.

**Email Owners of Copyrighted Images** – Just browsing around Flickr.com or somewhere else on the web and saw an image that you knew would be perfect... email the owner of the image and ask if you can use the shot. Many times, the photographer copyrights their photography to insure that it is not spread around the web being used in a manner that they do not approve. You never know...they might let you use the image on your site for increased exposure, or sell it to you for a small fee. There are a couple of things to keep in mind when emailing the owners of images.

You may not get a response at all and in that case...DO NOT USE THE IMAGE! When you write your email, be very personal and explain exactly (every last detail) how and where you want to use the image. Also explain exactly how you are going to give credit to the photographer.

If they say no, thank them for taking the time to respond and express how much you love the image. Just because they might not want you to use it...doesn't mean that they don't like their work appreciated.

If they say yes, show credit where it is due and use the image exactly how you explained it in the email. Be sure to shoot them the link after the article is posted. After that...do not use that image again without further consent.

**“Borrow” Images from Friends** – This is also one of my favorites! As many of my friends already know...I use their images in my blogs. This...of course...is not

done without permission and giving credit (starting to see a theme here...). If you are blogging about something that you are passionate about, chances are that you are hanging out with a group of people that are passionate about the same thing! We take images to share on local forums and other blogs, so...naturally...these images are perfect for my blog. Be sure to link where you need to and spread the love.

**Take Your Own!** – This is a method that I have really tried to adopt over the past year, and it has turned into another hobby/obsession. Photography can be very rewarding, and if you take your own stock photos...you can do anything you want with them. Whenever I need a specific shot that I really want to end up like it is in my head, I grab my [Nikon D80](#) and go find that picture. Once I get home, I have full editing freedom and I can use that image whenever I want to...because it's mine! I challenge you, as a website/blog owner, to take more of your stock photography. You never know...you could carve out another set of readers that stop by just to see your images.

- Set up a Flickr account and post some of your best shots.
- Set up a Flickr group to share those shots with others.
- Set up a Flickr plugin on your blog to share the group pictures on your blog.
- Congratulations...you just found another traffic source!

In the image that you see at the top of this article, I used two of the methods above. I emailed the owner of the image and...the owner (regularjoe)...who happens to be a great friend of mine...approved the use of the image for this article. I also shoot with him from time to time.

The important thing to take away from this article is to follow the rules and give credit where it is due. As long as you take that to heart, you should have some incredible images attached to your blog that increase the overall user experience.

Image by regularjoe

# ADDITIONAL TASKS FOR NEW BLOGS

Before you jump straight into everything else that goes into blogging, we need to get a few more items setup. These are services that you need to track the going's on with your blogging and will prove to be a valuable resource in the future.

**FeedBurner** - Recently acquired by Google, FeedBurner is going to track your rss feed subscribers and click through rates. You need to go to <http://feedburner.google.com/> and setup an account. You then need to grab your feed from your blog (should look something like <http://yourdomainname.com/feed>) and have FeedBurner manage that for you. Your potential rss feed subscriber will now be pointed to FeedBurner instead of the original link that is untrackable.

Use the FD Feedburner plugin to automatically redirect within your blog.

**Twitter** - There is more on Twitter in the rest of this ebook, but you need to go ahead and setup a Twitter account as it relates to your blog. You are going to use this for traffic, branding and social media interaction in the future, so it is a great idea to go ahead and get that out of the way now. Play around with Twitter a little bit and start shooting out 140 characters or less messages!

**SEO** - SEO (Search Engine Optimization) is crucial for blogs but is also something that should be a set and forget part of your blogging. You need to have a basic knowledge of SEO practices, but it is easy to get in an obsession with tweaking every single line of your articles and code for SEO purposes. By default, Wordpress (when the settings are taken care of) is pretty SEO friendly. Google loves unique, up-to-date content and that is exactly what a blog is on the net.

To get a handle on SEO for Wordpress, I am going to point you in the direction of an article on Yoast.com. While I could dive into the ideas in this eBook, it is better not to repeat what he has already laid out perfectly.

[Yoast.com - Wordpress SEO](#)

# FINAL WORDS ON LAYOUT AND CONTENT

When you start to really dive into you content and layout of your blog, you need to remember one simple line that will keep your blog successful...

## “CLUTTER KILLS BLOGS”

The temptation is to throw everything you possibly can at your blog hoping that someone might click that feature. The sidebars and content areas of your blog need to have only those items that MOST of your readers will need. If you find yourself saying, “well they might need that in the future”...leave it off until the future.

The second most common mistake I see with beginning blogs (outside of plugin clutter) is throwing a massive amount of outbound links in the sidebar and footer of the new blog.

When you throw up a dozen links to other blogs and websites in your sidebar, you are begging your readers to get distracted...leave your blog...and never come back. In the sidebar of my cycling blog, I do have 3 to 4 links to friends sites that link back to me. These are not paid links and there are only a handful of them. If you want people to stay on your blog and soak up your content, do not invite them to leave. Concentrate on generating value that is going to make them want to stay.

Your goal is to have an organized, clean looking blog that attracts more readers to engage with your content. By creating too many visuals and links, you can make your content hard to read and understand. Even if it is the most amazing content on the web that everyone in the world should be reading, potential subscribers will leave if they can not consume that content quickly and easily.

BLOG

PROMOTION

traffic  
targeted leads  
subscribers

install | setup | blog | grow | make money

# HOW TO GET BLOG VISITORS AND SUBSCRIBERS - PROMOTION TECHNIQUES

Time to get traffic!!! You have a shiny new blog with some great content thanks to the How To Start A Blog Series. Things are great...everything looks good... and the tumbleweed is rolling across your blog like a deserted ghost town. What the hell happened? I did everything you said. I setup a Wordpress blog, I got the right design for my needs and I put up some sticky content that is helpful...why am I not seeing any traffic? This is ridiculous!!!



As much as we all wish it was that easy, it isn't. Now that you have everything in place for a blog that can be successful, it is time to start promoting your blog so other readers actually know it is there! While you might be getting indexed by Google at this point, without any quality link backs (other sites linking to your unbelievable content) and a little age, you are not going to see significant search engine traffic in the beginning, so it is up to you to search out and attract readers in a manner that will make them want to stick around and enjoy your content.

## 6 WAYS TO ATTRACT READERS AND SUBSCRIBERS TO YOUR BLOG'S CONTENT

### Related Forums

Forums related to your niche blog topic are an incredible resource for traffic to your blog from targeted prospects. Every topic has some sort of large forum on the web. By becoming a valuable member in that community, you can see other members from that forum community visit your blog and convert into subscribers and commenters. Now...do not head over to the first forum you find and start plastering your articles all over the place. You are going to get laughed and ridiculed out of those Internet boards faster than you can hit the submit new post button. Instead, become a useful member by participating in conversations and list your blog in your signature.

At a future point in time, you are going to find that you can start to promote your blog a little bit heavier without a serious backlash because of your previous efforts to actually participate in the forum. Have a poll you want answers on? You will be able to post up a request to vote and other forum members will actually participate and help. Why now and not at the beginning? Because they now feel that they actually have an online relationship (I know...sounds creepy) with you...so they want to help. Before you built this reputation...they would want to throw you out.

## Social Media Outlets

In the beginning, I would not worry about Digg, Stumbleupon and the other traffic monsters. Unless you know someone how has a significant influence in these social media superhighways...you are going to be spending a lot of time and effort towards an activity that is going to product little to no results. Put the share buttons at the end of your posts and hope that someone likes your articles enough to submit. Other than that...you are going to be running on a treadmill...a whole lot of work and getting no where.

Instead, I would focus on Facebook and Twitter as social media outlets that can provide instant traffic feedback. These are two areas that you are going to want to have a large profile on anyway...so now is a good a time as any to start. Search out other members that have the same interests, conversations as you do on your blog and friend them. For Twitter, I use [TwitSniper](#) as a tool to search out other Twitter users by keywords, hashtags and other advanced search options but you can also do it manually through the Twitter search function (just takes a lot longer...but its free!). In Facebook, you can do a similar search, but I have found that by visiting fan pages in your niche...you can find targeted Facebook friends much more efficiently.

As with the forums...do not just spam the hell out of everyone with your blog posts and promotions. You need to be a valuable member in these communities to see real results. How many times have you deleted Tweets and hidden Facebook users (or just flat out de-friended them) because all the do is promote themselves? Well...guess what...they are going to do the same thing to you if you are not careful.

## Guest Posting

Guest posting is still the #1 way to get instant traffic to your blog and increase subscribers. I also do not see this changing anytime soon. By providing unique, quality content to another well established blog, you are able to bring extremely targeted visitors to your blog that are ready to soak up your content. These are readers that are active subscribers in your niche, so they tend to convert the best into regular readers. Some of you may have even found my blog through one of my guest posts...so you know its true!

It can be hard to give away some of your best content in beginning blogging (and even in established blogging). The temptation is to just publish it on your own blog and forget the guest post, but the rewards you get for your work are HUGE. I highly recommend searching out established blogs and submitting content right away if you really want to grow your blog quickly.

## Commenting On Other Blogs

Yes...commenting on other related blogs still works in today's blogging. If you are submitting quality, well thought out comments on another established blog, readers will click on your link and visit your blog. If you expect to throw up a comment like "wow...great article", you might as well not waste your time typing those 3 prolific words. Instead, write a longer, relevant comment with your unique opinion to actually join in and contribute to the conversation. By taking this extra time (and actually reading the article!), you will see much better results.

**Note:** *There is a great side affect to participating and contributing to the conversation on a larger blog. You are building up a reputation with the blog owner that will make guest posting and joint ventures much easier in the future. By creating conversation around his/her blog articles...you are generating more pageviews and comments...thus...you are now an asset and not just a causal reader.*

## Joining Groups

Facebook, Yahoo and other sites have a TON of groups related to your niche. There are also several (check out meetup.com) local, face-to-face groups that get together in your area. These groups are a fantastic source of traffic and collaboration that equals growth. Search out...join...and participate in these groups and you will see growth in your blog and your standing in the community. Blog growth and repeat traffic can be heavily dependent upon the outward appearance of expertise and respect in your niche. By participating in groups outside of your blog, you further strengthen your reputation in the industry.

## Something Incredible and Unique

Have an ebook or idea that is incredible and unique? If you have something that no one else has, and there is a large audience for that item or idea...other bloggers and readers will promote your blog for you! It might seem impossible at first, but it is true! Bloggers and readers are looking for something new and exciting. If you have an asset that can fulfil this need, you can watch traffic and subscribers roll in like crazy. All it takes is a little bit of promotion on your end to several people and then you can sit back, relax and watch it go viral.

Now...it should be noted...this is not an easy thing to accomplish. For some reason, it is very hard to tell what will go viral and what will not. A fair amount of research and testing goes into successful, viral eBooks and related products while others can be a lightning bolt of luck. If you have something that you feel a lot of people in your niche need but don't have...simple promotion techniques like the ones outlined in this article can equal an explosion of traffic and success. It has happened before for others...and it can happen for you too.

What to do with this new traffic...

What do you do with this new traffic? You make sure you have all of the right tools in place to convert these new visitors into subscribers and repeated visitors. There are some simple things you can do to guarantee success in this area. Pay close attention to the layout instructions provided in the last section of this eBook. It will insure that you convert new readers into subscribers.

# HOW TO GET YOUR GUEST POST PUBLISHED ON A PROBLOGGER'S BLOG

It is a known fact in the blogging world that the fastest way to grow your readership and attract new newsletter subscribers is to get one of your articles published on a pro blogger's blog. By leveraging their large traffic and rss subscriber count, you are able funnel their traffic to your site by providing quality content on their large blog. One problem...large blogs are bombarded with hundreds...if not thousands...of pitches, guest post ideas and random emails on a daily basis. With hundreds of eager bloggers all begging for a spot on the Internet's largest blogs, how do you stand out from the rest and get your article published?

## ROBB SUTTON'S RECENT GUEST POSTS

Before we jump into how I seek out high profile guest posts on large blogs, I want to show you that these methods actually work. Over the past week, I have been putting the push on [robbsutton.com](http://robbsutton.com) and Ramped Reviews to get more exposure for the blog and the eBook. As mentioned before, there is no substitute when it comes to traffic from high quality, large and targeted audience blogs. While there are other guest posts currently in the works, I wanted to point out two at this time (some of you may have found this blog through these recent articles!).

- [How to Treat Your Blog Like a Business](#) – ProBlogger.net
- [How to Review Blog Posts that Make Money](#) – Entrepreneurs-Journey.com

Now...I think you would agree that both Darren and Yaro are leaders in the industry when it comes to blogging and how to build a credible blog, so with subscriber counts in the 110k+ and 70k+ range...they can provide an extreme amount of positive exposure for your blog and newsletter if your blog is related to blogging and how to build a successful blog. I have seen fantastic results through these to guest posts and I am going to continue to find other blogs to market my content through.

## HOW TO GET YOUR GUEST POST PUBLISHED ON A PRO BLOGGER'S BLOG

Let's jump right into it. I know you are just foaming at the mouth thinking about all of that targeted traffic you can generate through guest posting.

Guest Post Beginning Research

Before you even type that first word of your guest post, you need to do some market research and seek out top blogs in your niche. Obviously, if you are blogging about gardening, hitting up a high profile blog on blogging is not going to do you much good. Hopefully, at this point in your blogging career, you have a pretty good idea who the top bloggers in your niche are. If you do not...go to Google and start to search for popular terms in your niche.

Once you have found 3 to 5 top blogs in your niche, take a look over their sites and see if they feature guest posts on their blog. Many top blogs do not publish guest posts. You can still contact these blogs, but just know it might be a waste of time. Ideally, you want to contact blogs that are guest post friendly and have large subscription counts.

### THE CONTACT PHASE IN GUEST POSTING

Once you have your 3 to 5 blogs picked out, it is time to contact the bloggers and pitch your guest posting ideas. Before you start writing your pitch email, there are a couple of things you need to complete.

**Read their blog** – You need to know exactly what kind of information that blogger is posting on their blog. Your guest post ideas need to fit into what their target, core audience is already reading. Submitting an article on how to grow vegetables to a blog that specializes in flowers is not going to yield the results you are aiming for.

**Prepare 2 to 3 article ideas** – Once you know what the blogger's readers are looking for when it comes to content, come up with 2 to 3 article ideas to include in your pitch. This will give the blogger a choice on article topics that will best suite his or her needs.

**Read the about page** – If you are not a regular reader of that particular blog, read the about page carefully to get to know the blogger and their goals. You need to have a personal interest in who they are and what they are trying to accomplish with their blogging.

Now that you have this information ready, it is time to contact the blogger with your pitch. Pitch emails for guest posting articles need to be short, sweet and straight to the point. High profile bloggers get thousands of emails, so you do not need to waste their time with a long, elaborate email filled with a bunch of unnecessary information.

Joe Blogger,

I would like to submit a guest post for your blog Ramped Gardening to help promote a new ebook I just published titled “A Beginners Guide to Happy Gardening” (or your blog/blog title here). I see that you write a lot of how to articles on vegetable growing, so I have a couple of ideas I wanted to throw by you.

- How to grow the biggest tomatoes in any soil.
- How to prepare your soil for the winter.
- A beginners guide to the tastiest strawberries.

If one of these would fit the needs of your readers, I would like to write a guest post and get it back to you no later than a week from today.

Thank you for continually putting out great content on your blog. The article on “Why I Grow My Own Vegetables” really hit home with me as I too am tired of over processed grocery store goods.

I have attached a copy of my ebook to this email and I look forward to hearing back from you.

John Blogger  
Growing for Dummies – [dummygrowing.com](http://dummygrowing.com)  
[john@dummygrowing.com](mailto:john@dummygrowing.com)

As you can see by the email, there is a personal connection and no fluff. Just straight to the point with examples and proof that you are not just sending out mass emails to the world. Your goal with any pitch email is to start a dialogue on content.

## I JUST HEARD BACK! NOW WHAT?

You sent your pitch email to the top blogger in your niche...he responded with a great email back and picked a topic for you to write about...now the pressure hits. It is time for you to deliver the goods. Guest posts on any blogger's blog should be some of your best content. This is your first impression on their readers, so if you want them to click your blog's address or perform some call to action, you better bring your A game. You also need to bring your best content because your content is going to have to be approved by the blogger and it reflects on the other bloggers blog!

After you have completed your amazing guest post that is going to be soak up by readers like sun on a desert, you need to email it off to the blogger for review. Typically...and this might be overkill...I submit guest posts with two files.

- 1. Plain Text Document** – I submit a plain text document (created with a simple text editor like WordPad or TextEdit) as an attachment to the email with zero formatting. The blogger can copy and past the contents of this file into their post screen and apply the formatting necessary to match it to their blog.
- 2. Formatted Text Document** – I submit a second html formatted text document that has all of the headline tags, list tags and any other relevant tags inserted. Before I submit this attachment, I check several of the bloggers articles by using view page source in FireFox. By looking at each of the posts code, I am able to determine which of the H1, H2, H3, etc. tags that particular blogger uses and format the post to their needs.

Then I send the email.

Joe Blogger,

Thanks again for the opportunity to guest post on your blog. I have attached the proposed guest post for your review. Included in this email are two files.

- A beginners guide to the tastiest strawberries – formatted.txt: A text document that is already formatted according to the tags that you use on your blog.
- A beginners guide to the tastiest strawberries.txt: A plain text document ready for formatting.

Please let me know if there is any further information that you need.

John Blogger  
Growing for Dummies – dummygrowing.com  
john@dummygrowing.com

## **CONGRATULATIONS! YOUR GUEST POST IS LIVE!**

You did it! All of your hard work is paying off and your guest post is live. Your amazing content is engaging with Joe Blogger's readers and they are visiting your site and signing up for your newsletter and rss feed. Life is great as you continue to watch the stats climb on your own blog...but you are not done yet.

Your job as the guest poster is to keep the conversation going. Watch the comments section of your guest post and respond to the conversation that takes place. By engaging with the blogger's readers, you are showing that you take guest posting (and their blog) seriously, and you are adding to the value of your guest post. The more you engage with their readers, the happier the blogger will be with the results of your efforts.

After the dust has settled and the guest posting event has come to a close, write a short email thanking the blogger for publishing your guest post. If you had a great experience over this time period, mention that you would like to try this again

sometime in the future. If the partnership was beneficial for both parties involved, a future guest post will be welcomed.

## **GUEST POSTING ON A-LIST BLOGS**

That is the nuts and bolts of how I approach guest posting on pro blogger's blogs. While some of these actions might be going overboard, I have found that it is extremely efficient and rewarding. The next time you go to propose your guest post to a top blogger, really sit down and contemplate what you can bring to the table. The more value you present in your content and your interaction with other bloggers, the more long term relationships you will grow for future success and partnerships. Blogging is all about fostering and maintaining relationships with your readers and other bloggers, so you need to treat every one of these partnerships with respect and professionalism.

# USING FORUMS TO DRIVE TARGETED TRAFFIC TO YOUR BLOG

Online forums and bulletin boards related to your blog niche topic can be a great source of traffic and long term readers to your blog. For this reason, you have probably seen blog owners lurking around the boards throwing up links randomly looking for that massive wave of targeted traffic to hit their site. Most of the time, they are heckled or ignored as they approached online forums as a source of blog traffic in a manner that is completely wrong.



Online forums can be a fantastic source of traffic, but you need to understand the mentality of a forum member before you start jumping in head first promoting your new or established blog.

## UNDERSTANDING ONLINE FORUMS

Before you even start your first post in an online forum, you need to completely understand the community. Online forums are much different than anything else on the web. Most of them are loosely moderated and anyone can say close to anything they want. Forums are an open community where topics typically surround one subject matter, but are known to go off topic on a frequent basis.

**Credibility Is Everything** – Unless you are a superstar in your niche, your credibility on that forum is all that matters to those forum members. They do not care what you have done outside of that forum and even if you tell them...it is not going to matter. That online forum is their home and you are going to have to prove yourself with your replies and posts before you get the respect within that community. Do not walk in with an ego thinking you are hot shit and expect to see good results. You are going to have to start building up your own reputation within that community.

**SPAM Is Not Tolerated** – The quickest way to lose all credibility is to appear that you are spamming that community. Wanting to jump in and throw up links right away? Be ready to be thrown to the wolves. Members of an online forum protect their community with a vengeance. If anything is looked at as SPAM...not only will you lose all credibility within the forum, but your blog will lose that same credibility with its members.

**Post Count Actually Means Something** – Typically, your post count within a forum actually means something to the members. It shows that you actually stuck around and contributed for more than a week. Are there members that reply to every thread with worthless crap just to pad their post count for perceived expertise? Yes...but you don't want to be that person. Instead...you are going to need to have a higher post count that actually has value. Having 6,571 posts that are nothing but "I agree", "wow...really?" and a bunch of other 2 word responses doesn't mean anything.

**Forum Credibility Takes Time** – For the most part, new members of a forum aren't completely accepted right away. It is going to take some time to build a reputation and prove that you are not there for other motives.

## HOW TO FIND ONLINE FORUMS IN YOUR NICHE

Now that you know online forums and bulletin boards are an incredible source of online information and traffic, where do we go to find forums in our niche blog topic?

**Google** – Do a simple search on Google for "basket weaving forum" and you will find online forums dedicated to basket weaving. This is probably the quickest and easiest method to find online bulletin boards and forums on the net.

**Ask** - If you are blogging on a topic, you should be directly involved with your readers and other members of that community. Start asking around to see where most of the other basket weavers are hanging out online. You can even run a poll on your blog to see where your readers are posting on online forums. If you have a large blog readership and most of them are hanging out in one particular forum, you probably want to start at that forum as you will have instant credibility backup.

## HOW TO DRIVE TRAFFIC TO YOUR BLOG USING ONLINE FORUMS

Now the part you have been waiting for...how are we going to leverage the fickle beast to generate traffic to our blog and convert these forum users to blog subscribers? Luckily for you, online forum members convert extremely well when done correctly. Why you ask? Because online forum members are already on the web talking and conversing about your subject matter on a daily basis. Forum members can also be an incredible source of blog commenters as they are already used to conversing on the web. So...now that we know there is a great untapped resource out there for your blog, we need to capitalize on it effectively.

**Sign Up and Become A Member of the Community** – First and foremost, you need to sign up for the forum and start conversing on topics. Since you are going to have to use a lot of your online time building a reputation on this forum, I would recommend only joining 2 forums to start. Any more than that...and you are going to stretch yourself too thin between the forums and your other online activities to get the results you want. Take a look over the forum topics and start to converse with other forum members. Ideally, this should be something you want to do anyway outside of traffic generation, so really start to dive in and become a valuable member.

**Complete Your Profile and Signature** – Every bit of forum software out there has two features at your disposal...a profile and signature option. Fill out your profile completely including an avatar. Your forum profile is where other members are going to go when you start to pop up on the radar, so...in the spirit of transparency...fill out your profile truthfully and completely. The second step is to throw a link to your blog in your forum signature. This signature will appear in the bottom of every post you make, so you will start to see some click throughs as you continue to converse within that forum. Do not announce your blog or draw attention to the link any an obnoxious way...just throw it down there and get back to posting.

You are going to get to a point in your forum experience where you start to notice that you are building a reputation within that community. By helping out other members and sharing your experiences, you are going to start to build up some trust that you can convert into traffic.

**Post An Entire Article** - Once you have built up this credibility within the forum, start to watch trending topics. Once you have seen that there is a large amount of posts surrounding a certain subject matter, post up a complete article (typically one that teaches or helps...not just news) on the forum. Start a new topic and write a beginning intro that goes something like..."I have seen a lot of discussion on here lately on which wood to use for basket weaving. Last week, I posted up a wood comparison that I thought you guys might find useful. I have copied and pasted the complete article below..." And then paste the complete article...not just a link to your blog.

You are not looking to drive traffic to a specific article. You are looking to build up your blogs credibility through your forum credibility. This will increase click through rates on your forum signature and increase conversions. By doing this simple step, you have married the reputation of your forum profile and your blog together in one simple step by giving away your content in a way that does not look like you are spamming the forum.

After you have posted the article, participate in the discussion and comment on the feedback. Not everyone is going to agree with what you posted, but the conversation that takes place is invaluable.

Afterward...keep on participating in the forum and rinse and repeat. Typically, I would only post a complete article once a month.

**Linking To Articles On Your Blog** – Once you have increased the reputation of your blog on the forum, you will be able to causally link to your blog in replies to other threads on the board. If there is a topic that directly relates to something you have previously written, write a short response and say something to the affect of..."I also wrote about this last month if you want to check it out. Here is the link." Again...you are adding value to the conversation not just throwing up new threads with links in a vain attempt to get traffic.

## FINAL THOUGHTS ON ONLINE FORUMS

As a blogger, you should want to be a part of these communities online outside of the desire of traffic generation. As someone who is involved with the niche on a daily basis online, you are able to make friends and connections with other like minded people through the use of online forums. As geeky as it sounds, I have actually made some great friends through different social communities online that benefited my life outside of my blogging. There is no better way to find more people that have the same interests that you do than through online forums, so get out there and start conversing.

***Hint:** The Side Affect Of Forum Conversation – Another reason to pay close attention to online forums related to your niche? The topics list might as well be your brainstorming list for new blog articles. These are subjects that are currently being talked about on the web. If you are not using these topics as a source of potential blog articles, you are missing out on a huge resource.*

Traffic Image by Mohsan CC

# FACEBOOK AND TWITTER BLOG PROMOTION TECHNIQUES THAT WORK

You created a Twitter account (or you already have one that you want to use for your blog promotion) and you already have a Facebook account (unless you live under a rock and haven't seen the light of day over the past couple of years.). The question becomes, "How do I use these social media outlets to further my blog and not look like a spammer that is traffic and conversion hungry?" If you have been using either of these sites/apps for more than 5 minutes, you already know how annoying it can be to see hundreds of links all promising you something different. Your goal should be to increase your blog's awareness, but also become a USEFUL profile on these outlets.



## TWITTER BLOG PROMOTION TECHNIQUES

Let's tackle Twitter first because our actions on Twitter are going to directly affect what happens on Facebook (it will all make sense in a minute).

Twitter can be one of the best online resources for traffic and making connections with other like minded people in your niche. What started off as 140 characters or less, has exploded into a social media extravaganza. So how do you tap into this and help promote your blog.

First, Twitter is nothing without followers. You can sit there and type out all of the Tweets you want to, but if no one is listening...you are just talking to yourself. Start off by loading up your profile with relevant Tweets. You are not going to get any followers if you haven't said anything.

Next, you need to start promoting your Twitter profile on your blog in a prominent location.

After you have all of this setup, it is time to go out and search for people to follow your Twitter account. As much as we all wish we had a famous name or something extremely unique about ourselves that attracted a huge following without any

work...that just is not the case for 99% of bloggers. You are going to have to work for your Twitter followers until you have proven yourself blogging or on Twitter.

The #1 way of getting new followers in your niche is to follow them first. So how are we going to find these people to follow and interact with on Twitter?

## RESOURCES FOR GROWING YOUR TWITTER PROFILE

This is going to be the nuts and bolts that I use to grow my Twitter account (BTW... you can follow me [@robbsutton](#))

**TwitSniper** - [TwitSniper](#) (mentioned previously in this ebook) allows you to do a number of things. It will automatically search out Twitter users that use your specified keywords and follow them (you can also do advanced searching by hash tags, replies, etc.). Once you have followed all of these targeted users (done automatically for you via the online app), you can wait a period of time and then unfollow all of those users that didn't follow you back. Basically, this paid application handles all of the dirty work for you. As a paid application...I would expect it to! And it has been my easiest resource for growing my Twitter following with targeted leads.

**Manual Searching** - You can search the Twitter records manually for specific keywords and follow those people. While this option is free, it is very time consuming and I would rather be blogging instead.

**IncomeDiary.com Article** - In an article by Michael from IncomeDiary.com, he has a code that will automatically follow another Twitter users follow list one at a time. (he also has some other tools in the article...[so click here to check it out.](#))

**Twitter Karma** - The last tool I used to use before I jumped on the TwitSniper bandwagon is [Twitter Karma](#). Twitter Karma will allow you to bulk unfollow Twitter users that are not following you back and it is free to use as well.

Why do you need to unfollow people that don't follow you?

Because...like most everything in the web industry, if you are following more people than are following you back (especially if that is by a large margin), there is

the perceived notion that you are a spammer or a worthless Twitter user. Ideally, you would want to have a large following with a small number of people you are following. But...like I mentioned before, unless you are a superstar or rockstar blogger already, that is probably not going to happen.

## HOW CAN I PROMOTE MY BLOG THROUGH TWITTER?

You can manually link your blog posts and hope for the best, or you can use the tools below to put these tasks on autopilot so you can focus on your blog and Tweeting other useful information and links that your Twitter following would find interesting.

**TwitterFeed** - [TwitterFeed](#) is a service that will automatically post your articles to your Twitter account based off of your rss feed. Every time you post an article, it will handle everything for you, so you can sit back and relax.

**TweetMeme Plugin** - The Tweetmeme plugin (mentioned previously in the plugins list) will automatically insert a reTweet badge in your posts so that your readers can spread the word for you! The idea is to make tweeting your posts as easily as possible for your users. This plugin also provides stats and figures so you can keep track of how you are doing out in the Twitter world.

**Twitter for Wordpress Plugin** - The Twitter for Wordpress plugin will display your latest tweets on your blog allowing easy following for your blog readers. By displaying this widget, you are showing your readers and new visitors that you are an active Twitter user that is worth following.

## ONE LAST NOTE ON TWITTER

Twitter is much like the online forums I discussed earlier. You can not just go on Twitter and spam your site and expect great results. You need to be a valuable member by tweeting other bloggers relevant posts and interacting with your following.

## FACEBOOK BLOG PROMOTION TECHNIQUES

Facebook is a social media monster. What used to be reserved for college students is now a massive intermingling of everyone from 5 year olds to your grandma. It is crazy how big it has become in a short period of time.

To get your spread on Facebook, you are going to have to have Facebook friends. Much like the issue we ran into with Twitter, you are not going to get a lot of friends unless you are a celebrity or rockstar blogger already.

### HOW TO GET MORE FACEBOOK FRIENDS

You are going to have to initiate the interaction with more Facebook friends and here are a couple of ways to get that accomplished. Make sure that you have some information related to your blogging topic (and of course your blog) live before attempting these tips. You do not want to lose potential Facebook friends because you appear to be unrelated to the subject matter.

**Find A Group Related To Your Blog and Friend the Followers** - This is a great way to start interacting with other Facebook users that share your same interests. They are already interacting on your topic through another Facebook resource.

**Promote Your Profile On Your Blog** - Start promoting your Facebook profile on your blog inviting your readers to friend you.

### HOW CAN I PROMOTE MY BLOG ON FACEBOOK?

Remember how I said we can let Twitter do the work for us? I don't know about you...but I hate posting the same thing in several different places, so I link my Facebook account to Twitter so that every time a Tweet hits...it is posted on my Facebook status. This will include all of my automatic blog postings as well! Simple as it gets right?! All you have to do is add the [Twitter app](#) to your Facebook...take care of the settings that link the two accounts together...and you are set!

Another way to promote your blog is to create a Facebook Fan Page where your readers can interact and share pictures and video.

# OTHER BLOG PROMOTION TECHNIQUES THAT WILL HELP BRING IN TRAFFIC

Outside of your conventional social media outlets, there are several ways you can promote your blog that can prove to bring in some extra traffic and subscribers.

**List your blogs in your email signatures** - Simple but easy solution that will increase click throughs to your blog...even if it is just your mom.

**Cross Link Your Blogs** - If you have multiple blogs you are working on...cross link them in the footer.

**Get Business Cards** - I can't even begin to tell you how many people have asked me for business cards out in public. It took about 2 dozen people asking before I actually had some made, and now...I run out of them pretty quickly. Word of mouth is your greatest asset for a blogger, so capitalize on every opportunity and get some cards made. I use [VistaPrint](#) because they are a cheap easy way to get it handled online.

## MORE READING ON HOW TO PROMOTE YOUR BLOG

- [How Not To Promote Your Blog - 10 Broken Blog Strategies - Prologger.net](#) - Sometimes not knowing how to do something is just as important as knowing how to.
- [5 Ways To Promote Your New Blog Series - Prologger.net](#) - Great series on promoting a new blog that is relevant for established blogs as well.
- [31 Days to a Better Blog - Prologger.net](#) - Cheap ebook that will have to a better blog in 31 days or your money back by Darren Rowse
- [9 Ways to Promote Your Blog Posts - Chris Brogan](#) - The social media expert gives some tips on blog promotion.
- [Branding 101: How to Promote Your Blog \(or Yourself\) Like the Big Guys Do - ZenHabits](#) - Funny title considering he IS one of the big guys! Great tips though.
- [5 Stealthy Ways to Promote your Blog - Remarkablogger](#) - Some more blog promotion techniques.

# BLOG PROMOTION TECHNIQUES FOR ADVANCED BLOGGERS

At some point in time, you are going to start being able to use more advanced promotion techniques that will bring bigger returns in traffic and subscribers. As you continue to make a name for yourself in your niche topic, you are going to attract other bloggers and media outlets that you can use to further promote your brand and your blog's awareness on the web. While these are more advanced techniques for promoting your blog, they do not discount the previous techniques as those still work for even the biggest blogs.

**Print and News Media** - Have you done something or accomplished something on the web that can grab big time media attention? The media LOVES success stories from someone unique. You can be that unique individual who gets major press coverage and - subsequently - a flood of new traffic and subscribers.

Typically, unless they contact you, you are going to have to pitch your idea to the local news and print outlets. The best way I have found to achieve this success is to reach out to publishers far before you need them. By keeping this relationship open (typically through emails just checking in and creating conversation), when you do have a great idea that will increase their value to their audience, it is taken in a lot easier because the relationship is already there.

Personally, I have regular contacts at the major print magazines in the cycling industry. Have I pitched ideas to all of them? No...but there will come a point in time where my article idea or promotion pitch will come...and they will already have an intimate knowledge of who I am and what I do. Have I used this in the past with great success? Absolutely and that is why I recommend that once you start seeing a following on your blog that can be considered an asset, start reaching out to major media outlets to get contacts...not ask for something right off the bat.

**Speaking Events** - There are always, regardless of niche, speaking events and workshops that you can attend and deliver relevant content. If there are not, you can create your own. Speaking events and workshops do three things very well.

1. *Get you in front of new people in your niche that are potential blog subscribers* - By meeting you face to face, you are increasing the personalization of your blog. The highest converting relationship is a personal one. You can almost watch the word of mouth spread.

2. *Generates Contacts and Networking* - By participating in these events, you are also increasing your nice contacts. The more people you know that are directly involved with organizations in your niche...the better. These contacts are a huge asset to your blogging as they open up new audiences that you may have never been able to reach.
3. *Increases Credibility* - By posting about your speaking event or workshop on your blog (host a video, tell the story), you are increasing your credibility with your readers that were not able to attend. Remember, it is your goal to be positioned as an expert in your niche. What better way to accomplish this than by speaking as an expert!

## INTERVIEWS ON OTHER BLOGS AND MEDIA OUTLETS

As you continue to grow a name for yourself, you are going to be presented for interviews in your niche from other blogs and media outlets. It is my recommendation to take EVERY interview that you are presented. Interviews typically take a short period of time to complete, but they provide you and your blog with credibility, traffic, quality link backs and more content. I have found that doing interviews has been invaluable to my blogging.

Interviews are also your chance to tell your own story in your words. Often times, you can give your readers and the readers of other blogs and media an insight into your daily life that you can not accomplish through your blogging. People want to connect with bloggers, and - by doing interviews - you are personalizing yourself even more.

## AUTHOR OR CO-AUTHOR A BOOK OR EBOOK

By creating an eBook (like this one), you are increasing your presence on the web and building credibility through content that can spread like crazy. You can take this step even further by publishing a print book in your niche. While this may be a hard step to accomplish, if you have a unique idea and a publisher that wants to push that idea, having a print book can go a long way in providing income, credibility and traffic to your blog.

## NETWORKING WITH OTHER BLOGGERS AND NICHE INDIVIDUALS

As mentioned with the speaking events, networking with other people in your niche will open doors for you blogging that would have been previously closed through other outlets. Networking with companies, bloggers and members of groups in your niche can provide a long list of opportunities, but here are the highlights...

- **Joint Ventures** - Bloggers are constantly looking for ways to work together and increase their spread on the web. The only way to get into these opportunities with bloggers and other members of your niche is to get involved and start networking with other like minded individuals.
- **A 2nd Opinion** - A 2nd opinion on your blog and what you are trying to accomplish from another person in your niche can be invaluable information that will help you grow your blog quicker. Sometimes, we get stuck in our little world that we forget that there might be other great ideas outside of what comes up in our own head. By networking, you can bounce ideas off of other people directly related to your niche to get a better idea on where you are heading and where you need to go.
- **Cross Promotion** - By generating relationships with other people, you are able to cross promote your ideas for increased traffic on both ends.

The trick with networking is pretty simple. If you want really good results from networking, you have to come into the relationship without wanting anything in return. Sounds weird doesn't it? But networking is about what YOU can bring to the table. By bringing your own assets and focusing on bring in more than you receive, you are establishing long term relationships that will be very fruitful over time. And...you are creating friendships with other people that think a lot like you do! Not everything is business all of the time.

## WHERE CAN I START NETWORKING?

As you continue to grow your network through related events like the ones listed below, remember...your network is not just about creating relationships with other bloggers in your niche. You want to network with as many companies, employees and other related fields. The more quality relationships you build, the better.

- Trade Shows Related To Your Niche
- Local Meetups - Search Meetup.com for possible meetups in your area.
- Related Events - In the cycling industry, I attend races and speciality events.

## GENERATING FREE TRAFFIC THROUGH LINK BAIT CONTENT

As mentioned previously in this ebook, link bait content is a terrific way to generate free traffic to your blog. This tip is just good blog practice for beginning and advanced bloggers alike. You need to be generating pillar articles that encourage other bloggers to link back to your article as a resource for their readers. All of the articles linked in this ebook are written on that theory.

You can help promote this pillar articles by emailing predominant bloggers in your niche to give them a heads up on your content. However, you need to do this sparingly and only with your absolute best articles. No one, especially top name bloggers who receive a ton of emails a day, wants to be bugged on a weekly basis with self promotion.

# GENERATING

# CASH

make money  
affiliate revenue  
dot com lifestyle

install | setup | blog | grow | make money

# SOME THINGS THAT NEED TO BE SAID ABOUT MAKING MONEY ONLINE BLOGGING

Now the fun part, how are we going to turn all that work in the previous sections of this ebook into money...the dot com lifestyle...only working 2 hours a day and making thousands...you have heard all of the tag lines...so I'll leave it there. Before we go into how to actually make money through your blog, there are some preconceived notions and assumptions we need to go ahead and get out of the way.

## IS 6 FIGURE BLOGGING STILL POSSIBLE?

6 figure blogging...it's the dream...it's the goal...it's what new bloggers and long time bloggers alike dream about at night. Imagine it...the 2 hour work days, doing what you want when you want, having the financial freedom to go where you want. Sounds like the perfect life. That is because it is. Who wouldn't want to retire early and actually live the rest of their



life instead of slave for it? So...as you keep after that dream of making it big with your blog earning big figures while your friends still slave away for a paycheck... is that dream still alive or is it just a pipe dream that keeps hundreds of blogging based companies in business? Well, I have news for you, and you aren't going to like it.

***Becoming a 6 figure blogger is a pipe dream.*** If you are planning on starting a blog to eventually become a 6 figure or higher blogger, you are going to slave over dozens...if not hundreds...of articles just hoping for the best. As the pennies continue to flow in at a rate that might pay for a tank of gas over the course of the next 3 months, it starts to become a harsh reality because it is true.

You need to come to grips with the fact that becoming a 6 figure blogger is no longer possible. The days of thousands in AdSense revenue with gigantic cash payouts per click are gone. The industry has become completely saturated with new bloggers that are generating content all over the web. You are now one of

hundreds of thousands instead of just thousands. The future looks bleak...but... before you give up hope...

## **THERE IS STILL GOOD NEWS FOR ASPIRING 6 FIGURE BLOGGERS**

You can become a 6 figure business owner who happens to make the businesses money through blogging. This is a crucial step in the 6 figure blogging process that most bloggers completely forget. All of the 6 figure bloggers that you look up to so much are business owners first and bloggers second. If you want to own a business that generates income through blogging, there is no ceiling to what you can accomplish with words on a screen.

## **SOUNDS GREAT! WHERE THE HELL DO I START?**

For many bloggers looking to become business owners that blog, they have absolutely no clue where to start when it comes to treating their blog like a business...instead of just a blog. If you are a serious entrepreneur looking to make it to the dot com lifestyle, there are some steps you need to consider outside of building your brand, your readership and your income.

## **NOT MAKING ANY SERIOUS INCOME YET?**

Now is the perfect time to start the process. One thing to remember...every successful business started off with nothing but a name. Even if they had investors, it all started with an idea and a small business with big dreams. You too are going to start off with next to nothing or maybe enough to cover costs... but...with time and the right mindset, you will capitalize on proper setup when the money does start to roll in. Then you will be a 6 figure business owner explaining to others how you run your business that makes money through blogging.

# ANOTHER HARSH REALITY IN BLOGGING... AND YOU NEED TO LISTEN CAREFULLY

Blogging is extremely cheap to get into. For less than 100 bucks, you can be up and running with a professional looking blog that is generating as much content as you want to produce. Due to this low level of entry capital, there are a lot of bloggers that go into this new venture with the following thought.

“I am going to try this blogging thing out. If it doesn’t do anything...it didn’t really cost me anything, but – hopefully – it at least makes me a little bit of money on the side.”

What they aren’t telling you out loud is that this new blogger is secretly wishing they can make a full-time income from blogging, but they are entering in this new online business with the take it or leave it mentality.

You are going to FAIL to ever make a full-time income online if you have this mindset with your blog. You might get lucky. You might have a bolt of lightning hit you on the top of the head and deliver a massive amount of traffic out of the blue that makes your blog the hottest thing on the web since Facebook. But...you would be in the top .005% of bloggers and since you weren’t that into it to begin with... you have zero clue on how to turn that massive amount of traffic into dollars.

The beginning blogger trap is getting into the mindset that your blog is a take it or leave it venture. For probloggers, most of them got into their blogging with a much different mindset. They started from day one with a long term goal that was going to be achieved one way or another...problogging status and making a full-time income online. This was not a pipe dream or a side thought. It was a goal that was going to be accomplished by treating their blog like a business from day 1. Then... through a massive amount of effort and testing what works, they work with time to create a business that generates income with their blog.

This was not a side project that they hoped would maybe make some money someday. This was a mission to create a different life by creating monetary value with their content.

## MOST BLOGGERS WILL NOT SUCCEED

The harsh truth is that most bloggers will never see that kind of income online and it is not for the reason that you would think.

There are a lot of people that get into blogging for money that do not have the discipline to own and operate a successful business. If everyone was able to generate their own income, we would never have any employees. Creating and running your own business takes sacrifices and dedication that the majority of the people out there are not willing to take.

If you are the kind of person that just wants to turn their brain off of anything business related at 5 pm and never look back, owning your own business is probably not for you. While many bloggers tell you that they only work 2 hours a day and generate full-time income, the reality is that they only spend 2 hours a day generating content on their blogs. The rest of the time, blogging is on their mind and that doesn't turn off at 5 pm. If an idea hits them at 11 pm...they go to work and make their idea successful. They are not sitting in front of the TV wasting their night away...they are producing a successful business through their actions.

***Does this mean that you are not capable of turning your blog into a business?*** Absolutely not. Everyone is capable...what you have to figure out for yourself is if you are willing to take those steps and sacrifices to get to your goal.

I talk a lot about how anything that is worth having doesn't come without sacrifice and your mindset controls your outcomes, so you have to ask yourself...are you will to take these beginning sacrifices to achieve your goals, or are you going to find the excuses?

## SUCCESSFUL BLOGGING COMES THROUGH ACTION

You can download every single ebook and paid course on the net in search for that perfect bit of information that will sent your profits sky high, but - without action - it is all just words on a page. I am challenging you now...to take a different approach than you have in the past and actually take action on the steps in this eBook. No one can do it for you...you have to do it for yourself.

Over the years, I have had the same conversation with a lot of really successful bloggers about their informational products. It seems to be common knowledge that the #1 reason most bloggers are not afraid to give away how they achieved success for free is because only about 1% of the people that read their products actually take action on their tips!

That is an extremely sad statistic, but it is true. How many people have you run across in life that had some fantastic idea they wanted to tell you all about? How many times did they tell you this idea and for how long? Did they ever follow through with that GREAT idea? Probably not..they were too busy telling everyone the dream instead of taking action on the goal.

As a blogger, you need to focus on taking action on the goals and not daydreaming about the end result. If you really want to be successful and make money through blogging, it is going to take dedication and action.

## **BLOGGING DOESN'T HAVE TO BE ABOUT MONEY**

The flip side to this entire conversation is that blogging does not have to be about money and making a living online. Blogging can be a hobby that you share with family and friends. Blogging can be something that you do at night just because you like to write. There is a lot of focus in the blogging world about making money and living the dot com lifestyle, but the reality is that dream is not for everyone. If you want to start a blog and just have some fun with it, that is completely up to you and you should rock it with as much passion as you want to. Everyone needs a hobby and blogging can be your outlet for your thoughts.

The idea here is to have your goals set from the beginning and set out to achieve those goals. If you honestly want to take a stab at making a significant income online through your blog, you need to start thinking about how you are going to achieve that goal today. You need to forget about side income. Side income from your blog is not what you want. You want full-time income so that needs to be your goal and it can not be a take it or leave it situation. You have to attack this goal and make the reality your own. If you keep the take it or leave it mentality with your blog, you are going to end up leaving it when you hit the first hard spot in your quest. Then – like many others – you will be telling other beginning bloggers why it is not possible to make a full time income online.

The truth...because of the mentality you brought to the game...you never had chance to begin with...

If you take one thing away from this entire ebook...it is to TAKE ACTION!

## **ARE YOU READY TO JUMP IN AND START GENERATING CASH?**

If you are...we can move forward into monetizing your blog and generating income from your efforts.

# MAKING MONEY FROM BLOGGING DISCLAIMER

Ahhhh! More disclaimers! Let's get to it already!

I know...but there are a couple of things that need to be said before we jump head first into making money from our successful blog that is bring in traffic. And I am going to keep it to a short list.

- **Testing, Testing and More Testing** - The following tips for making money off of your blog are suggestions that are stemmed from A LOT of testing. However, that does not mean that everyone of these tips and tricks are going to work perfectly for your blog and your audience. You need to test different avenue streams and their integration to see what will work best on your blog. And never stop this testing!
- **I Do Not Guarantee Anything** - This is not an ebook that guarantees you will be making 6 figures from blogging if you follow these easy steps. Unfortunately, I can not control what you do and if you don't take action... you are not going to make a dime. That said...if you don't end up making any money from blogging...I'll give you the money you paid for this ebook back (haha...I know...I gave it away for free!)
- **Have Fun With It Or Don't Do It At All!** - I do not know one blogger that got into blogging to be a slave to money and be miserable. It's not worth doing if you are not enjoying it...life is too short.
- **I Do Not Claim To Know Everything About Making Money Online And I Never Will!** - I am not a "guru" or "expert"...and hopefully I never will be. Making money through blogging or online in general is an ever evolving process and you will always be learning. Get used to the fact that even if you are making loads of cash...you still know a little bit about nothing.

# MAKE MONEY ONLINE TERMS GETTING USE TO THE LINGO

Like any industry, you are going to have to know a few terms to get you by in conversation and research. This is not a comprehensive list by any stretch...but it will get you by as you start testing different ways of making money on your blog.

- **Affiliate Promotions** - You promote the product on your blog and receive a percentage based commission off of every sale. Typically, affiliate promotions are the top way blogs make money online.
- **Commission Rate** - How much of a commission you get per sale on a percentage basis.
- **Cookie Duration** - Affiliate sales are tracked by browser cookies. These cookies track users and tell the retailer/seller where they came from. For most affiliate promotions, you get a number of days (30 days, 24 hours, etc.) where if the visitor revisits that site and purchases...you still get the referring commission.
- **CTR** - Click through rate/Click-Through Ratio - Percentage of clicks a certain ad gets in relation to pageviews. You use this data to improve on revenue.
- **Direct Advertising** - A company or other outside individual that buys ad space on your blog for a monthly fee.
- **EPC** - Earnings per Click / Earnings per 100 Clicks - How much you earn per click on average for PPC campaigns.
- **Payment Trigger** - The dollar value that triggers a payment on your advertising and affiliate accounts. \$50, \$100, etc. Ex. Google AdSense does not pay you until you pass \$100 worth of revenue.
- **PPA** - Pay per Action - PPA campaigns pay you on a per action basis. Ex. If your referral submits their address or makes a purchase.
- **PPC** - Pay per Click - PPC campaigns pay you per click on their ad. Ex. Google AdSense

While there are dozens of other terms you will see while making money on your blog, these are the nuts and bolts of typical blogging income. If you get further in depth with pure affiliate marketing through multiple sites, you are going to need to make yourself aware of more terms and conditions. For the purpose of this ebook...those terms should have you covered.

# PAY-PER-CLICK AND PAY-PER-M BLOG INCOME

In this first section of how to make money online with your blog, we are going to take a look at a form of online revenue generation that you are probably most familiar with...ppc and ppm. The reason you are probably most familiar with this category is thanks to Google and their product AdSense.

While that is the most popular form of PPC advertising, there are other companies on the market that offer this popular form of revenue generation.

Long story short, a company pays for advertising spots on these automatically generated ad spots on your blog only when one of your readers clicks that link and goes to their site. You get a percentage of that cost for referring that visitor. Seems simple right? That is because it is. All you have to do is sign up for an account, setup your ads, insert the code and you are good to go!

## TIPS FOR IMPLEMENTING PPC ADVERTISING

PPC Advertising can be very intrusive to your readers if not done correctly. Typically, PPC ads perform their best when they look integrated into you blog rather than standing out screaming “click me!”.

- When you are choosing a color scheme for your ads, pick colors that are going to blend in and look like they are a part of your blog.
- Ads that are within your content typically perform the best by getting the highest click through rates, but they are also intrusive to the reader as they interrupt the flow of the article. For this reason, I keep any ad to the top, bottom and sidebar of the content as a personal preference. Only through testing will you find out what works best for your audience.
- Google AdSense’s highest performing ad size on my sites are the 300x250 ad with images ads activated. These image ads have had the highest payouts and click through rates through my testing.
- [Chitika](#) (another PPC provider that displays ads to your search engine visitors) Premium ads also tend to have the highest payouts.
- By using the less is more theory, you can increase click throughs and payouts. When I went from 3 ads to 2 on one of my blogs, I actually saw increased payouts due to concentration on the 2 better placed ads. Also,

less intrusive advertising will encourage higher click throughs rates due to not having ad overload.

- Too many is too much. If you want your readers to click on advertising (especially PPC ads), do not clutter up the whole page begging for clicks. You will end up making your readers ad blind by overloading their senses.

## RECOMMENDED PPC AD COMPANIES

[Google Adsense](#) - The largest PPC server in the world.

[Chitika](#) - Search engine keyword based PPC that tends to convert well and hides (or places another ad in that spot) when regular readers from other sources land on your page.

# AFFILIATE ADVERTISING ON BLOGS

Affiliate advertising is the holy grail of blog income. By referring sales of a product through your blog, you get a percentage of that sale to keep for yourself. In the high pressure/high volume sales market (where my background is), these were called sales reps. Basically, you provide the exposure and targeted leads in exchange for a piece of the action!

Affiliate promotions and advertising is where all of the big name money makers are making the bulk of their online income these days. By referring sales of real products and services, you are providing a service and audience that the company or individual was not able to reach previously.

## HOW DO I START WITH AFFILIATE MARKETING?

A lot of you have probably already dabbled in affiliate marketing in some form or fashion in your blogging. If you are new to the whole blogging scene, this will clear things up a little bit.

You need to start by signing up with a company or product that has an affiliate promotion. 99 times out of a 100, this is handled through a 3rd party affiliate company. Here are some to start...

### *The Ones I Am Currently Using On My Blogs*

- [Share-A-Sale](#)
- [Avantlink](#)
- [Clickbank](#)
- [Amazon.com](#)
- [Commission Junction](#)

### *One's I Have Used In The Past With Great Results*

- [Market Leverage](#)
- [AzoogleAds](#)

After you have signed up with an affiliate company, you need to search their database for products and services that are relevant to your blog's readership. Do not start promoting something that you either don't believe or is completely irrelevant. Your readers will see right through the BS and you will lose credibility.

Once you have found a product or service, you need to promote this product on your blog. I have found that reviewing the product on your blog generally yields the best results by providing real world feedback on who the product would be best suited for, what you can expect, the good and the bad, etc.

The key is being open and honest (yes...even say the bad stuff...you will be surprised...people will still buy and then go "yeah! you were right!). At the end of the article, you are going to want to show where you can buy what you just described to your readers. This is when you insert the link you received from the affiliate company so you get credit for the sale.

The affiliate links that the companies give you to promote these products are ridiculously ugly and people (your readers) can spot them from a mile away. For this reason, I HIGHLY recommend you pick up the [MaxBlogPress Ninja Affiliate](#) plugin I mentioned earlier in this ebook. It will take those ugly, character filled urls and turn them into pretty ones that look like this:

*<http://yoururl.com/recommends/producta>*

On top of that...it will also automatically covert words you set in the preferences to link to that affiliate promotion so you do not leave any money on the table. That thing has paid for itself time and time again on my blogs.

Now...you are sitting here with a product heavy market that you are just sure will not be found on some affiliate companies site. Well, you are wrong. There are affiliate promotions for just about every niche on the market. I actually had JensonUSA.com (one of the largest bike part retailers in the world) approach me directly asking if I would sign up to their affiliate program through [Share-A-Sale](#). If you are not sure if there is one...ask the company or individual and they will point you in the right direction. DO NOT ASSUME there is not an affiliate program that fits your needs.

# AFFILIATE ADVERTISING FOR ADVANCED BLOGGERS

Controlling your affiliate income and making large amounts of money online through your blog is accomplished through one simple avenue that is so easy to setup it is not even funny. Have you heard this phrase before?

## IT'S ALL IN THE LIST

If you haven't, you need to take a long look at how you are making money online. When it boils down to it, if you are not leveraging an email list, you are not making money online like the pros.

You need to be capturing each and every single lead you can on your blog. The only way to accomplish this is through an email newsletter and I am not talking about your email RSS feed. You have to have a specific email newsletter that is keeping in touch with your readers to do well online.

Here are several things to consider:

- Outside of the blogging industry (and somewhat in the tech industry), a very small percentage of people actually use RSS feeds. To make matters worse, you are competing in a long list of other blogs if they do. Still, to this date, the #1 way to interact with your readers is through email.
- How many times do you look at your email per day in relation to your rss feed? At least 3 times as much I would imagine. Wouldn't you rather be in front of those numbers instead of the latter?
- Affiliate promotions are done best when fed through your email newsletter for the reasons above. If you want high conversion rates, you have to be in constant contact through the newsletter.

## HOW DO I SETUP AN EMAIL NEWSLETTER?

I handle all of my email newsletters through [Aweber](#). It is a cheap and reliable service that allows me to manage my lists easily and efficiently. Aweber also has two features that I use to increase interaction on my blog outside of affiliate promotions.

1. **Blog Broadcast** - You can set an email to hit after a certain amount of posts

automatically. This is a fantastic way for your readers to stay in touch with what is going on with your blog without having to subscribe to an rss feed. When this email hits my list every two weeks, I have extremely large peaks in traffic and my comments are at an all time high. To make matters even better, when you setup a blog broadcast, your newsletter subscribers get counted as RSS readers in FeedBurner.

- 2. Lightbox Hover** - You might have already seen this feature and didn't know it. Have you gone to a blog that invited you to pick up their free ebook (much like this one) through a box that faded into the screen over the blog's content? That was probably an Aweber Lightbox. Regardless of what you may think of pop-ups, they are still the highest conversion method for new subscribers in all of my testing. However, I caution you with a little bit of advice...test it with your audience. Some niches may not take kindly to a popup in their face, so only use it if the benefits outweigh the downsides. The good news is that you can set it to only show once per visitor or once every 30 days or any other setting you choose to cut down on the annoyance.

Once you have setup your newsletter, you need to provide some kind of incentive for signup. Typically, bloggers like to give something away for free like an ebook. Since ebooks take some time to put together, I would recommend starting off with promising regular unique content and occasional promotions that will save them money on related products. It is never too early to start your email list, so you need to get on it even if you do not have an informational product to give away. I have had great success on my cycling blog by promising to send out discount coupons that are sent to me by my affiliate companies. It saves them money on gear and I get the commission.

After you have setup your newsletter subscription and popover if you are going to use that feature, you need to setup a series of follow-up emails through Aweber to stay in contact with your readers outside of blog broadcasts. I typically setup about 6 follow up emails that do a number of things.

- Provide unique content
- Point readers in the direction of older, relevant content they might not have seen.
- Review of a timeless product with a high affiliate payout.

The idea here is to provide relevant content to your readers that is built upon trust. You want to be able to trust and interact with your readers as much as they do not want their email spammed. People read blogs to connect with the blogger, so gaining that trust is essential to long term growth and financial stability.

With this trust that you have built with your email list, you will be able to point them in the direction of products that you have affiliate deals with in the future. I highly recommend only promoting products through your email list that you have a strong positive feeling for. If you are going to put your name on the line that, you better make sure it is something worth promoting.

## RECOMMENDED RESOURCES ON MAKING MONEY THROUGH LISTS

- [How To Set Up The Most Effective Email Follow Up System – Part 6 - John Chow.com](#) - Measuring email list metrics
- [How To Make Money After Building Your Email List - RetireAt21.com](#) - Numerous ways to monetize your email list.
- [Making Money with Email Marketing and an Autoresponder Series](#) - IncomeDiary.com - Great article on making money with email lists.

Another source of blog income generation is through direct banner advertising on your blog. Direct advertising is normally one of the harder things for bloggers to achieve due to the one on one nature of the relationship. There are several companies that will broker deals on your behalf for a percentage of the monthly fee, but...ideally...with direct advertising, you want to be able to keep all of your earnings.

## GETTING OVER DIRECT ADVERTISING FEARS

To really get into direct advertising when you do not have such as massive following that potential advertiser are beating down your door, you have to step outside of your comfort zone a little bit to directly target advertisers.

The first thing I do is make sure that these potential advertisers can purchase spots on my sites easily. Personally, I do this through the [OiOPublisher](#) plugin listed in the previous section of this ebook. [OiOPub](#) allows me to sell advertising spots directly on my blog through PayPal, Google Checkout and other payment services and then automatically takes care of displaying and rotating those ads. This really cheap plugin takes care of all of the work for you once it is setup!

There is another option on the market called [OpenX](#) and while many bloggers have had great success with that option, I found it harder to setup and manage. Even though it was free, [OiOPublisher](#) ended up being a better deal for my blogs.

Both of these services provide you with the necessary feedback for your advertisers (stats).

## WHAT DO I CHARGE FOR MY ADVERTISING SLOTS?

This can be a difficult question to answer. You want to charge the most you can and the advertiser wants the exposure for the least they have to pay. Finding a balance that fills your ad spots and makes both parties happy can be a difficult decision. I have found that there are two ways to handle this that will give you an excellent starting point.

1. Charge the amount it would cost to replace a PPC or affiliate ad that is already in that spot. You might be way under charging at first, but it will give

you a baseline that is still paying out better than the ad that was taking up that real estate previously.

2. Start doing some serious research in your niche. Are there other blogs with similar statistics as your selling advertising spots? Are those spots filled? If they are filled, is their pricing public? If it is not public, email them as a potential advertiser and get a price sheet. It is not unethical to check out the competition. Who knows...you might be able to ask them directly and form another blogging friendship out of the deal. Be creative!

## FINDING POTENTIAL ADVERTISERS FOR YOUR BLOG

Now that you have everything setup to make purchasing advertising spots on your site easy, you need to actively find advertisers for your blog. The easiest form of online research is checking out the sidebars of Google search engine results and checking out other blogs and websites in your niche.

### GOOGLE

Do a simple search for keywords related to your niche. We will use “mountain bikes” as an example.

The screenshot shows a Google search for "mountain bike". The search bar contains "mountain bike" and the search button is visible. Below the search bar, there are several search results and sponsored links. An arrow points from the text "contact these guys!" to the search results.

**Search Results:**

- New Bikes Up To 60% Off** (Sponsored Link) - [www.BikesDirect.com](http://www.BikesDirect.com) Brand Name MTBs w Full Warranties Buy Direct. Save Big. Free Shipping
- Mountain Bike Magazine: Bikes, Gear, Training, Reviews, Maintenance** - 3 visits - Oct 2. Bicycling Magazine features **bikes, bike gear, equipment reviews, training plans, bike maintenance** how tos, and more, for cyclists of all levels. [www.mountainbike.com/](http://www.mountainbike.com/) - Cached - Similar
- Mountain bike product reviews forums classifieds trails** - Product reviews, ratings and classifieds for **mountain bikes, mountain bike trails, cycling, bicycle, bike, mountain bike trail, mountain biking, cycling, ...** [www.mtbr.com/](http://www.mtbr.com/) - Cached - Similar
- Mountain Bike - Sports Games at Miniclip.com - Play Free Games** - Perform crazy stunts in this downhill **mountain bike** racer ... Get the Games Arcade with over 300 games, including **Mountain Bike** It Automatically updates ... [www.miniclip.com/games/mountain-bike/](http://www.miniclip.com/games/mountain-bike/) - Cached - Similar
- Image results for mountain bike** - Report images
- Blog My Mountain Bike** - 11835 Leeward Walk Cir Alpharetta, GA 30005 - (770) 667-8261. [www.blogmymountainbike.com](http://www.blogmymountainbike.com)
- Shopping results for mountain bike**
  - Titan Fusion Mountain Bike** - \$261.99 new - Overstock.com
  - GT Force 3.0 Mountain Bike - 2009** - \$1,299.93 new - REI
  - Mongoose Maxim 26" Men's Full Suspension Mountain Bike** - \$199.99 new - Sports Authority

**Sponsored Links:**

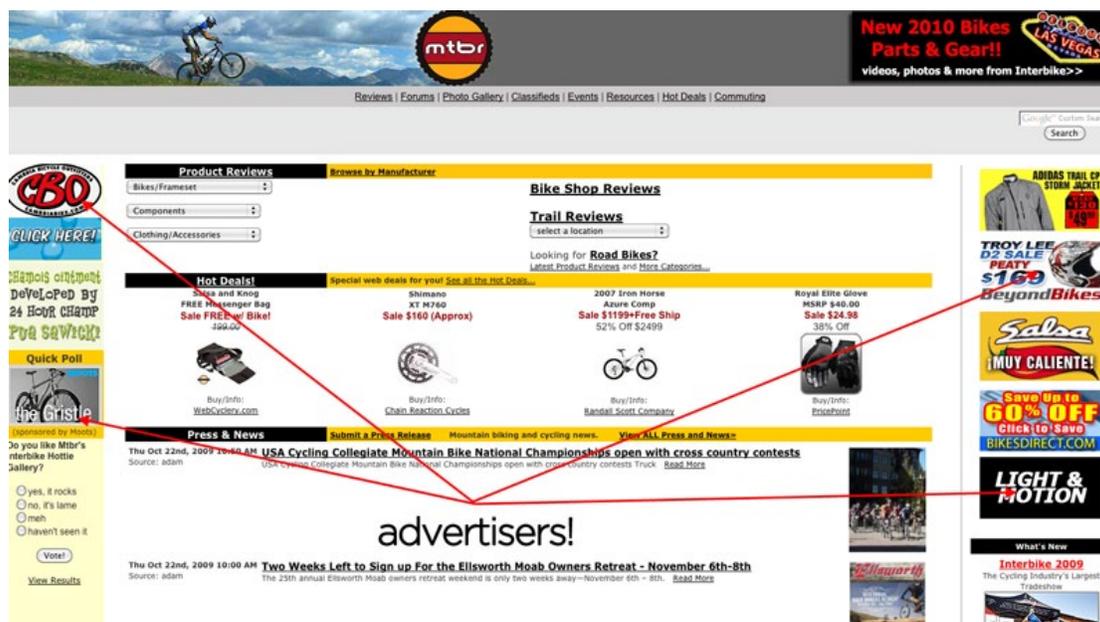
- Mountain Bike** - Find Great Deals on Sporting Goods Clearance Items at AOL® Shopping! [Shopping.AOL.com](http://Shopping.AOL.com)
- Mountain Bikes** - Shop **Bike** Nashbar for Great Deals On All Brand Name **Mountain Bikes** [www.Nashbar.com](http://www.Nashbar.com)
- Fezzari Mountain Bikes** - Buy direct from the manufacturer. Rated highest quality. Save \$100s. [www.Fezzari.com/MountainBikes](http://www.Fezzari.com/MountainBikes)
- Mountain Bikes Cheap** - Save on **Mountain Bikes Cheap** Compare Prices, Brands & More [www.smarter.com/Bikes](http://www.smarter.com/Bikes)
- Mountain Bikes Cheap** - Bargain Prices. Smart Deals. Save on **Mountain Bikes Cheap!** [BizRate.com](http://BizRate.com)
- Mountain Bikes - Sale** - High Performance **Mountain Bikes** on Sale. Save on Top Brand Names. [www.NexTag.com/Mountain-Bikes](http://www.NexTag.com/Mountain-Bikes)
- Mountain bike** - Find **Bikes** for Boys & Girls At ToysRUs. Shop Now! [www.toysrus.com](http://www.toysrus.com)
- Bikes Near Wholesale** - Mongoose, GT, Townie, and Schwinn Complete **Bikes**. Free Shipping! [www.harborcountrybike.com](http://www.harborcountrybike.com)

contact these guys!

These top and sidebars are filled with potential advertisers that are already spending money advertising in your niche, so they are a great place to start cold calling and emailing with your opportunity!

## OTHER SITES/FORUMS/BLOGS

Next, start visiting other blogs and sites in your niche. You will start to see a trend in advertising and that is a list of potential advertisers for your blog.



advertisers!

## STEPPING OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE

To really be successful with direct advertising on your blog, you need to be able to step outside of your comfort zone and directly contact potential advertisers pitching your offer. You are going to hear no...that is just part of the business, but you are trying to grow a business with your blog and that is why you are not going to give up.

**Word to the wise:** NEVER misrepresent your statistics. They will be watching page impressions and click through stats and you want to ALWAYS be a honest blogger. Why ruin your reputation by trying to act bigger than you are?

Check out [this fantastic video](#) by Gary VaynerChuk on getting direct advertisers on your blog by cold calling.

# OTHER WAYS OF MAKING MONEY ON YOUR BLOG

There are a lot of ways that bloggers make additional income through their blogging, but here are some of the more popular cash generating avenues.

**Informational Products** - Have a great idea that is unique and has a great potential audience? Creating a paid ebook may be your ticket to blog super stardom and massive amounts of income. While an ebook requires A TON of work to setup correctly, you can see the long term benefits of sales and increased awareness/reputation in your niche.

I created a paid ebook titled [Ramped Reviews](#) that teaches bloggers how to get in free product to review. After bringing in over \$100,000 dollars worth of free product on my cycling blog, I saw a need for a book that taught other bloggers how to achieve those same results, so I wrote it!

If you really want to make a serious run at publishing an ebook and really making money at it...I highly recommend checking out Naomi Dunford and Dave Navarro's "[How To Launch The @#\\$% Out Of Your eBook](#)" Their step by step guide will take you from start to finish. If you can't make your money back times some...then you shouldn't be writing ebooks.

**Consulting** - Is there an area where you have expertise that you can share with your blog audience? [Chris Garrett](#) has made a huge name for himself consulting other bloggers on their blogs. You can use this same strategy to monetize your blog by offering your expertise for a fee. There are a lot of bloggers scattered through out the web that make a great living helping others.

**Membership Sites** - Membership sites are another great avenue for cash via your blogging. If you have an interesting way of teaching others or are able to create a private, members only section of your blog, you can make a lot of money through monthly fees. There have been several big name bloggers that have made this very successful.

Yaro Starak - [Blog Mastermind](#) and [Membership Mastermind](#) (where he actually teaches how to make membership sites)

Darren Rowse - Recently opened up [Prologger.com](#) as a paid forum which has been a huge success (I hang out on there from time to time).

MacCreate.com - [MacCreate.com](http://MacCreate.com) just opened up a new membership section that offers premium tutorials and plugins for popular Apple software products. This venture has been very successful.

**Multiple Income Streams** - Ideally, you want to incorporate as many incomes streams (without being annoying to your readers) as you can. As one income stream may be down, another may be up. By using multiple income streams in your blogging, you can stabilize your profits over time.

- *Use multiple tips as laid out in this ebook* - No one said you had to stick to direct advertising or just affiliate marketing. Spread out your income through several of the methods in this ebook to diversify your income on your blog.
- *Multiple Blogs* - Another fantastic way to increase your monetary spread is to have multiple sites creating your own blog network. All of my sites are under the oneniney8 umbrella, so I have multiple blogs all bringing in income. Rob Benwell actually teaches this strategy with a very successful ebook titled "[Blogging to the Bank](#)". Not only has he made millions off just he ebook alone, but he has also created multiple income streams through multiple blogs that pay extremely well.

Bottom line...you are going to need to experiment with multiple ways of making money on your blog to see what works out the best.

For some, AdSense may pay out extremely well, but - I can tell you for certain - in some niches it does not pay out well at all. As you start to test different ways of making money through your blogging, you need to define a testing period (say 1 month to 6 weeks) and give it all you have during that time period. If it does not work out, move onto the next and rinse and repeat.

Remember...just because something does not work out right now, it does not mean it won't in the future as you continue to grow your blog...test, test and more testing is going to make you successful in the long run.

## MAKE MONEY WITH TWITTER

Once you have started to grow a following on Twitter, you are able to generate some income through advertisements in your Tweets.

**Note:** *The temptation is going to be to throw a whole lot of resources at this project. I would view this as side income and not let it take away from your blogging and business building. DO NOT spend too much time on this as it will take away from tasks that will help you out a lot more in the long run. Setup accounts, set the alerts so you are emailed when you are presented an offer, and Tweet those offers if they fit in with your following.*

Each of these services will pay you to Tweet messages from their advertisers.

**Ad.ly** - [Ad.ly](#) Ad.ly automatically sends 1 tweet in your feed every other day for 7 days, for each advertising campaign that you approve. You are paid on a fee that is determined on a weekly basis. \$\$\$ per week.

**Sponsored Tweets** - [Sponsored Tweets](#) is a service setup by IZEA where you can Tweet custom messages from their advertiser base for a 1 time fee.

# A FINAL NOTE FROM ROBB SUTTON

If I can leave you with one bit of advice in this ebook it would be this...

## TAKE ACTION!

Too many times...I have seen people with great ideas that never come to light because of lack of action. I can try to give you as many tips and resources as possible to create a successful blog, but it is up to you to take action on these steps. No one is going to do it for you.

Some time ago, I hit a defining moment in my life. I was commuting back and forth from north Atlanta, GA to the south side of town on a daily basis. As I sat, day in and day out, looking at other people's rear bumpers for hours a day...I had an epiphany...we ARE NOT supposed to live like this! Slaving away for hours on end...working for the least amount someone is willing to pay us just to insure we won't quit while we work just hard enough not to get fired. I knew...on that day...I had to do something different and it would only be accomplished by getting off my ass and actually doing something about it.

Why did I give this 100+ page ebook away? Because I am hoping that you have that same feeling churning deep inside you. I am hoping you take action on the steps laid out in this ebook and you never stop taking action to achieve your goals. It is not going to come right away. It is not going to come without sacrifice, but the effort you put in now will greatly improve your future.

# THE SUCCESSFUL BLOGGING ROADMAP



What steps should you be taking to become a successful blogger? This roadmap will guide you through the process so you can take action on the steps in this eBook and realize success as a blogger. Success can not be found without a plan, so let's lay it out and get started.

1. Brainstorm Content and Niche
2. Choose and Purchase Domain Name
3. Choose and Purchase Hosting Account
4. Install Wordpress
5. Choose, Install and Purchase Wordpress Theme
6. Install Necessary Plugins and Setup Wordpress
7. Setup Pages
8. Start Generating Content
9. Setup Twitter and Facebook Integration and Promotion (only about 5-10% of your time)
10. Start Mildly Testing Monetization Techniques (Affiliate Reviews, Banners, Adsense)
11. Once You Have 20 Pilar Articles - Start Beginning Blog Promotion (Forums, Guest Posts)
12. Continue Content Generation and Promotion

13. Once you hit 500 to 1000 Unique Visitors per day - Start more advanced monetization techniques
14. Once you hit 30k uniques a month, start more advanced promotion techniques and keep guest posting/producing link bait, useful content
15. Rinse and Repeat!!!

Every blogger has a similar road to success, however, you are going to have to figure out what is best for your blog as the road continues to climb. The big thing to remember, promote and generate content. If you are seeing a low return on a huge time investment on an activity outside of your blogging, you need to stop that action and try another technique.

Now...notice I said OUTSIDE of your blogging. One of the biggest mistakes I see beginning bloggers (and advanced for that matter) make is jumping from project to project without giving their idea a chance. Nothing in blogging comes right away. If you continually give your ideas only 30 days before you give up and move to the next...you are never going to be successful.

Most successful bloggers took over 2 years to make a serious income from their blogging. This means they stuck with their ideas and used these techniques throughout that entire time, even when they were not seeing significant income. Persistence and patience will be your friend.

How long did it take me? 18 months. 18 months of continually producing content and growing my blog. I set my eyes on one major project and made it work. I didn't stretch myself too thin with 6 projects to start off with. I focused and made one work and then moved to the next while still generating content and promotion for the 1st.

If you stick with your idea, and test out what works and what does not for your blog, you can see success.

# WHO IS ROBB SUTTON? ABOUT THE AUTHOR

My professional career is colored with many different aspects of business. I started early in high school doing post production video editing in Atlanta, GA. Working with clients like Coke-a-Cola, Hooters and other large corporations gave me a unique experience with top-level managers at a very young age. I found a unique ability within myself to deliver on promises and meeting deadlines that would be a huge benefit in the future.



From there, I attended the University of Georgia where I received my degree in Economics and played around with the retail end of the market. It was there that I received invaluable insight into the average consumers shopping habits and how features affected sales. Day in and day out retail sales can be a huge learning experience...if you treat it like one. During that time, I was in the top 3 in sales for all categories until I finally left with dreams of making it big in the business world with a degree in hand.

After school, I went to work for a large manufacturer as a regional sales manager for OEM sales in the southeast United States. After increasing business in my territory by 1.3 million dollars in 1 year, I was trusted with the management of over 11 million dollars worth of accounts that spread all over the southeast United States. In this position, I dealt directly with manufacturers and companies at the corporate management level directing product releases, development, sales and business to business relationships.

## WHY SHOULD YOU LISTEN TO ME?

Because I said so...isn't this a page that just convinced you of that? heh...I wish it was that easy, but just like me...you probably want some social proof to go along with all of this rambling. I have used my experience, along with the experience of others, to formulate and build long lasting relationships built on credibility. I also have an incredibly successful blog in a product heavy market, [Mountain Biking by](#)

[198](#), that is proof of fast results through hard work.

## ROBB SUTTON AROUND THE WEB

Over the course of my blogging career, I have been featured on several blogs for different reasons. Here are some examples of other places you can find me on the web and other blogs.

[Name #30 Most Influential Blogger of 2009 by IncomeDiary.com](#)

### *Interviews/Podcasts*

- [Entrepreneurs-Journey.com](#) – Getting Free Product To Review
- [InspiredMoneyMaker.com](#) – Review Blogging and Monetizing
- [JadeCraven.com](#) – Ramped Reviews and Blogging
- [IncomeDiary.com](#) – How To Get \$100,000's Worth Of Products To Review On Your Blog
- [Internet Business Path](#) – Creating Revenue Through Product Reviews
- [RobbWebTips.com](#) -Blogging and Running Your Blog as a Business
- [WPSSwitch.com](#) – Blogging and Blog Networking

### *Guest Posts*

- [ProBlogger.net on Running Your Blog Like A Business](#)
- [Entrepreneurs-Journey.com on How to Write Reviews That Sell](#)
- [FreePursuits.com](#) – Get Out Of Your Own Way To Blogging Success

### *Reviews*

- [JohnChow.com's Review](#) of Ramped Reviews
- [Jade Craven's Review](#) of Ramped Reviews

### *Make Money Online*

- How John Chow is [making money online](#) with my Ramped Reviews Affiliate Program

### *Buy My Book – Ramped Reviews*

To add to the list of online accomplishments, I have released a highly successful eBook titled Ramped Reviews. Ramped Reviews will help you achieve the same reviewing blogging success I have and bring in thousands of free product into your blog.

Check out more about Ramped Reviews by [clicking here](#).

## CONNECT WITH ROBB SUTTON



## A SPECIAL THANKS

A special thanks goes out to [The Shatt](#), [Just the Web](#) and [Vitamin](#) for all that they contribute to oneniney8. I wouldn't be where I am today without those guys.