

Blogging Basics (1)



A blog is a website that typically arranges posts in reverse chronological order. Posts are as varied as the people who write them, and each blog typically has several categories under which posts are arranged. Categories make it easy to find relevant information by breaking content into categories or topics. Most blogs are written by a single person, but there are group blogs as well. Women in Consulting's blog is one example of a blog with multiple authors.

A blog is a great way to share information and engage your audience. Like any social media tool, a blog should never be about imparting your wisdom and messaging to the masses. Rather, it should be about engaging your audience and participating in "the conversation." As such, readers are usually allowed to post comments. In fact, I don't recommend launching a blog unless you're willing to allow comments. It's not about controlling the conversation. It's about opening up the channels of communication.

First Steps

- Determine the purpose of your blog and design it to support that purpose.
- Determine the overall topic of your blog and the various categories you want to cover.
- Establish how often you're going to publish, and have a few posts ready in the queue before you launch the site.
- Choose a platform: there are many to choose from, but WordPress is by far the easiest and most robust.
- Hire an agency to build your blog. Yes, WordPress is easy. However, it's faster to have someone well-versed with the software build your blog for you. You'll have fewer headaches. It will function more efficiently and effectively. And it's not that expensive.
- Start blogging and do it regularly!

Blogging Best Practices

- **Allow commenting**—good and bad. Use negative feedback as an opportunity to demonstrate your responsiveness and willingness to engage and help your audience. Not allowing comments at all conveys that it's all about you. Allowing only positive comments conveys that you're trying to hide something or control the conversation or both.
- **Let go of control.** Social media tools aren't about controlling what is said and not said. They're about conversation. They're about engaging with your audience and listening to what they have to say.
- **Develop targeted search terms**—ideally with the help of a search engine optimization (SEO) consultant. If you don't go through a keyword exercise and the other associated strategic tasks, the other SEO work is basically for not. These key phrases should be the ones you'd like your blog to appear in the results for when a user does a search.
- **Limit the number of categories you have.** The key is to not spread yourself too thin, especially if you care about SEO or you want to be viewed as authoritative.

Blogging Basics (2)



Blogging Best Practices

- **Make it easy for users to find older posts.** There are a lot of ways to archive your blog posts. Two of the most common and useful to users are by date and by category topic. If you have multiple authors, you might also consider an archive by author. The key is to avoid making users repeatedly click the “previous” button and scan numerous pages. Search is a good option, but don’t let that be the only way readers can access your archives.
- **Provide some type of automatic feed/syndication.** RSS feeds push updates out to readers who add your feed to their feed reader, allowing them to read updates without having to manually go to your blog to see if you’ve posted anything new. Make sure the link for the feed is prominently displayed in the sidebar.
- **Ask to be shared!** Include prompts for sharing individual posts via various social media tools, such as Delicious, Digg, Facebook, Google, LinkedIn, Reddit, StumbleUpon, Twitter, and more.
- **Register your blog** in the various directories after it has been active for about four – six months, and you’ve posted regularly.
- **Participate in the blogosphere.** Don’t just post to your own blog. Read other blogs relevant to your area and participate in the conversation on those sites. Comment on others’ posts or write posts on topics other bloggers have started.

Blogging Tips

- Have a clear goal
- Write in the first person—blog writing is like thinking out loud
- Don’t use marketing or corporate speak
- Use a conversational tone; informal grammar and slang are okay, such as gotcha
- Let yourself go, have fun, be real—and real isn’t perfect; although write as if it will be published, because it will
- Be consistent in how you write
- Develop your own distinct voice/style—and RELAX!
- Provide points of view....have an opinion!
- Write for scan-ability: use heads, subheads, bullets, bold text where appropriate; minimize the number of paragraphs over four or five lines, and manage white space
- Encourage comments by the way you write your post
- Admit to the “uncomfortable-ness” and be self-revealing if/when it fits the situation/topic
- Include counterpoints, exploring and addressing both sides of an issue
- Boil down complex thoughts to a few sentences—less is more
- Include at least one link to something pertinent in each post, if at all possible

Blogging Basics (3)



How to write or edit a Wordpress post Quickstart

- Either enter the blog from your website (if linked from there) or go directly to your blog's admin URL.
- Enter your username and password.
- Under the blog header, in the upper left side, click the down arrow next to "Posts" and then select "Add New." This is the page on which you write your blog post.
- Enter the title of your post in the field at the top of the page under "Add New Post."
- Copy and paste your article copy or your text into the 'Post' box or type it all yourself (NOTE: If pasting from Word, make sure to click the icon with the little "W" in it, so that it strips out all of Word's "weird" stuff. If you don't see the little "W," you need to click the "Kitchen Sink" icon in the top row, far right. That will give you all the other editing tools, including the one for pasting from Word.)
- After you've entered the text, use the editing buttons above the post box just as you would if you were using Microsoft Office Word when you are in the 'Visual' tab section.
- Add links by highlighting the text you want to link, and click the chain icon in the middle of the top row, which will launch a new, smaller window.
- Use Bold to highlight your subheads.
- Use the advanced options as appropriate. If you are unsure what these are for, you can check various online references, including WordPress Help in the upper right corner.
- Choose only one category and as many tags as are appropriate for your post.

Adding Media to Your Post

- Add media to your post by selecting the image or embedded media icons in the top row (one is a tree, the other a film strip).
- Remember that adding media and links makes the post more interesting and will get your blog more attention. You can find media on YouTube, Flickr, and many other sites.

How to Publish a Post to the Your Blog

- If you're an administrator and you have multiple authors on your blog, make sure the appropriate author name appears in the "Author" pull-down near the bottom of the page. When entering a post for someone else, be sure their name appears, as yours will be the default.
- Click the "Save" button in the right channel near the top of the page (in a black box) before you publish and before you click "Preview this Post" to ensure you don't lose your entry.
- Click the "Preview" button to check your post for mistakes, etc. before publishing.
- Click the blue "Publish" button in the right channel when you're ready to push your post live

Getting Started With Facebook (1)



Creating a Personal Page

This is just a basic overview of the key things to do once you create a Facebook account. Detailed instructions on how to do each of these items can be found on Facebook's New User Guide (http://www.facebook.com/help/new_user_guide.php). Also make sure to explore the websites listed under "Explore Resources" at the end of this section for a wealth of how-to and strategy information.

Select a Facebook Username

As of June 12, 2009, at 9:01pm, Facebook started allowing users to choose a username for their Facebook account, so they can have an easy-to-remember URL for their Facebook profile (www.facebook.com/averyh, for example). Go to <http://www.facebook.com/username/> to select your username.

Set Up a Profile

- Click "Edit My Profile" in the left channel of your profile page (or click the Info tab at the top of your profile page)
- Edit Basic Information, Personal Information, Contact Information, and Education and Work.
- Add a profile picture (<http://www.facebook.com/editpicture.php>)

Find Your Friends, Colleagues, and Other Contacts

- Friend Finder asks you for your email address and password. Facebook then checks the emails in your address book to see if any of them match people who currently have profiles on Facebook. You can then select the people to whom you'd like to send friend requests (friendships on Facebook need to be confirmed by both people).
- Name Search is located in the upper right. Simply enter the name of the person, group, organization, page, company, etc. that you're trying to find and hit enter. You can also search by a person's email address.
- Classmates Search allows you to search by high school or college. You can also narrow searches by class year. To find classmates, rollover "Friends" in the top menu and select "Find Friends." Search for Classmates is an option at the bottom of the page.
- Coworker/Search is an easy way to find your coworkers who are on Facebook, as well as people you know from previous jobs. To find coworkers, rollover "Friends" in the top menu and select "Find Friends." Search for Coworkers is an option at the bottom of the page in the same list as Classmates Search. NOTE: you can only search on company names using this tool for companies you list in your work history. To search on a company and find people, enter the company name in the name search box, hit enter, and then click on the "People" tab in the results area.

Getting Started With Facebook (2)



Participate!

- It does you no good to open an account if you aren't going to participate. Participating can be as simple as reading your friends' updates on your home page. It's a great way to keep up with everyone, and it allows you to build relationships with your colleagues, often on a different level than anything previously possible.
- Spend some time listening to your friends to see what they chat about.
- Enter status updates in the "What's on your mind?" section.
- You can keep your updates completely professional, but "building relationships on a different level" will require you to bring your personality into your updates.
- Comment about the sunset, pictures of your kids 5th grade graduation, current work projects, events (personal and business), news, movies you like, random thoughts and feelings are just a few of the varied topics published by other professionals on their personal profile pages.
- Link to websites, articles, and YouTube videos that you like.

Create a Fan Page

- A Facebook Page is an easy—and inexpensive way—to implement social media for your business, enabling you to interact with patients and the general public online. Fans can write messages on your Page wall; and patients can leave reviews, too.
- Updates to your Facebook page appear on the walls of your fans who allow updates to display on their pages, opening the door for greater awareness of your services.
- Like a personal profile, Pages incorporate applications, including photos, news, discussions, reviews, events, video, notes, and more, allowing you to share a host of different content with clients.
- Go to <http://www.facebook.com/pages/create.php> to create a fan page (Facebook makes it really hard to find this start page on their site)

Getting Started With LinkedIn (1)



Creating a Profile

Establishing a LinkedIn account is easy. Simply fill in a short registration form, and that's it. You have a free personal LinkedIn account. But if that's all you're going to do, you might as well not bother. It's going to do you more harm than good. The same holds true if you don't fully develop your profile.

- Spend time considering how you want to present yourself, how prospective connections might view you when reading your profile. It's not uncommon for people you don't know to find you on LinkedIn through their networks. Your profile is your calling card; make sure it leaves a good impression.
- Gather the information you'll need to complete your profile, including:
 - **Headline description:** this displays beneath your name, along with your location and industry, every time you appear in a search—give some thought to what you want people to see
 - Current and past employment
 - Education
 - Websites
 - Public profile URL preference
 - Summary that conveys the key message(s) about you and your background/expertise; think of this as your elevator pitch
 - Specialties
- Edit your public profile settings. You can elect to show nothing in your public profile all the way up to everything. Remember, the more you show, the more people outside your network can learn about your services, expertise, and skill set.
- Add connections
- Build your recommendations. Ask for recommendations from colleagues, employees, etc. Also be willing to give recommendations; but try not to make it always a quid pro quo. Sometimes, it's natural that you will recommend someone with whom you've worked. But if all your recommendations are from people who you also recommend, viewers are less likely to take the recommendations seriously

TIP: You can list up to three websites in your profile. The key is to choose "Other" and give your website a name, instead of the generic "my website," "my company," etc. that are the defaults. This makes it clear where the link will go, and it's an opportunity to brand your company or your blog.

TIP: You have the opportunity to edit your public profile URL. A common approach is to use your first and last name, such as <http://www.linkedin.com/in/averyhorzewski>. Give some thought to whether you want to use your name or something else related to your personal brand, as this makes it easy to share the URL.

Getting Started With LinkedIn (2)



Deciding Which Account Type is Right For You

Once you've joined LinkedIn and completed your profile, you might want to peruse the different account types available to you. LinkedIn has a nice table that shows the five options:

- Personal (free)
- Business (\$24.95/month or \$249.50/year)
- Business Plus (\$49.95/month or \$499.50/year)
- Pro (\$499.95/month or \$4,999.50/year)
- LinkedIn Talent Advantage (for recruiters)

Comparing Account Types

For many people, the free personal account is fine. However, if you want the option to interact more with people on LinkedIn who aren't in your network, you should consider one of the premium accounts. The difference between a personal account and the different premium accounts is related to the number of times you're allowed to do certain activities, including:

- Receive requests for introductions (unlimited across all accounts)
- Send requests for introductions (ranges from 5 – 40 at a time)
- Receive InMails (unlimited across all accounts)
- Send InMails (0 – 50 per month)
- Receive OpenLink Messages (0 – unlimited)
- Reference searches—locate people in your network who may know a job candidate or business prospect that you're considering (premium accounts only)
- LinkedIn network search results (100 – 700 per search)
- Saved searches—save a search and receive alerts when new people match your search criteria (3 – 10 maximum daily alerts)
- Expanded Linked network profile views—see full profiles, without names or contact information, of people who aren't in your network (premium accounts only)
- One-day priority customer service (premium accounts only)

Getting Started With LinkedIn (3)



Getting the Most out of LinkedIn

You get out of LinkedIn what you put into it. The good thing is you don't have to invest a lot of time and money to see results. The key is starting with a good profile, and then tapping into the various ways LinkedIn lets you connect with people within and outside of your network.

- Join groups related to your areas of interest and expertise.
- Spend time on your home page reviewing what people in your network are doing.
- Review the applications that LinkedIn offers for ones that might benefit you.
- Participate.
- Visit LinkedIn blog at blog.linkedin.com to read about the many other ways to use LinkedIn.

Top Ten Ways to Use LinkedIn

1. Increase your visibility.
2. Improve your connectability.
3. Improve your Google PageRank.
4. Enhance your search engine results.
5. Perform blind, "reverse," and company reference checks.
6. Increase the relevancy of your job search.
7. Make your interview go smoother.
8. Gauge the health of a company.
9. Gauge the health of an industry.
10. Track startups.

Creating a Group

According to LinkedIn, "LinkedIn Groups allow event organizers and group organizations to strengthen and expand their brand's reach by providing additional value through LinkedIn Group features. LinkedIn Groups allow you to join and organize communities of professionals who share a common experience, passion, interest, affiliation, or goal. LinkedIn Groups features offer members a private space to strengthen old business contacts, and to be introduced to new ones. The space offers a forum for topics to be discussed and solutions to be discovered. Group members are also able to communicate freely with one another through LinkedIn messaging."

Getting Started With Twitter (1)

To Tweet or not to Tweet, that is the question—a million dollar one at that! If you're a nonprofit organization, you should at least explore Twitter, open an account, find some people to follow, and listen. Get a feel for what it's about; how it could help you, your company, and your patients; and how you might ultimately end up using it.

The rapid growth, the media hype, the general buzz, and the sheer amount of information to be gleaned from Twitter demands you at least check it out. If nothing else, you might find Twitter to be a wonderful information resource. Tweeters are very generous with information sharing; it's like having hundreds of research assistants out there finding the latest information for you.



Account Setup

- Decide on a few possible Twitter IDs, as your first choice might not be available. Make sure your choices reflect yourself personally or your company—if you plan to use it for business. It's not uncommon for the CEO to have her/his own ID (employees, too!) and the company to have one.
- Have a photo ready for your Avatar. It's best to use an actual photo of you, your logo, or something related to your brand/company. Many Tweeters prefer to see a photo vs. icons or the default Avatar.
- Watch the video "How to Setup a Twitter Account" before you start. It shows you everything related to setting up Twitter, including completing your profile. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YlfipDumtCo>

Twitter Etiquette

- Be polite, respond when people ask you questions or mention your name
- Thank someone when they retweet (RT) you, preferably in a direct message (this may be tough if you're someone like @Mashable)
- When you retweet, indicate it's a retweet by using "RT" before the message, and credit the original author e.g. RT: @averyh [insert the message being retweeted here]
- Don't change retweets unless the original message doesn't fit within the 140 character limit
- Don't keep tweeting the same message over and over and over again
- Use a custom avatar (the little icon on your profile page) instead of Twitter's default avatar
- Respond promptly to replies and direct messages (TweetDeck makes this easy)
- Watch your mouth (i.e. don't use foul language)
- Don't pretend to be someone else
- Don't auto follow
- Be authentic, be human, be interesting
- Use Twitter to communicate, not to sell