

5 Ways To Unleash The Selling Power Of Your Blog

Presented By Nicole Dean

Lesson #1 of 6

Why Most Business Blogs Miss It

And How To Fix It

- By Lynette Chandler -

What if I told you, the reasons people give you for having a business blog are inaccurate or misguided? It's a huge generalization but give me a few minutes and I'll tell you why. In the earlier days, when businesses were just beginning to explore blogs as a possible marketing media, there is much need to educate business owners about the more technical aspects how blogs can work to their advantage.

It is true, a blog can help bring you traffic much faster because it can notify search engines you have added new content. It is true that blogs with the power of RSS built right in, help bring people back to your website and yes it's true that blogs are easier to update and do search engine optimization for. If you build a blog for these reasons, you are certainly not wrong and are probably reaping some of its benefits. However, you may be missing out on perhaps the more powerful use of a blog and that is To Win Friends And Influence People.

In case you haven't noticed, marketing today has changed considerably and if you want to do business online, that change is even more distinct. It's no longer about a company telling people about their products it's about customers discussing and sharing experiences about a product. People do not want to interact to machines or customer service reps who seem to have no authority to do anything but answer and log phone calls. What people want is to become **part of a company's business process, be heard and to communicate directly**. In short, winning friends and influencing people work a lot better.

Your blog can and should do just that. Do not try to hard sell on your blog it doesn't work. You can include a friendly, no pressure note or two about special offers, products or your joint ventures but if sales pitch is the theme of your blog, you probably won't get many repeat readers or interaction. **Your blog's ultimate goal should be to share your knowledge, get people comfortable with you, gain friends and better yet, fans**. Have you ever recommended a friend for a job or a friend's product to others not because she is your friend but because you have intimate knowledge how she operates, you know she will do the employer or customer right? That is the kind of relationship you want to build with your blog readers.

Maybe you're thinking why do it with a blog when you are already applying the same principles to your newsletter? Good question. Email is an awesome marketing tool, nothing comes close to it. Unfortunately, nothing comes close to email spam either. People are weary and with fake emails threatening to rob people of their identities, bank accounts and what not, it's scary and makes people guard their email address even more closely. By blogging, you aren't forcing them to give you anything. If they are interested in what you have to say, what you have to offer, they can return to read your insight at their convenience without any kind of commitment. This is a very important time in the sales process especially online because people can't be in your presence and experience you for what you are. Since blogs are so informal, where your personality often comes through, it gives you a chance to **warm up your prospects**. When they are ready, they will not only give you their email, they will be loyal customers.

The other thing about blogs is, they allow comments which is a great way to allow your customers to be more involved with your business. Unlike a forum where the discussion is group centered, when you participate in a discussion with prospects and customers on your blog, it feels much more like a direct one on one communication which is what people are seeking.

Put this to the test right away. Center your blog around the prospects; blog to make friends. You'll be surprised where it might take you.

Nicole Dean's Notes

You know, Lynette started blogging way back when the term 'blog' wasn't even fashionable. Since then, she's helped many entrepreneurs with their blog. This article is only a sampling of what you can expect to find in her Blogging Starter Pack audio-video course. Do take a few minutes to review it [start your business blog on the right path](#).

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What In The World Do I Blog About?!

- By Carrie Lauth -

If you're like most people who start a blog, you initially have a bit of writer's block. Good news- it will likely go away, and you'll find yourself thinking of new things to blog about frequently. In fact blogging becomes quite addictive.

This was certainly true of me. When I began blogging, I would often struggle with things to blog about. Now, I have the problem of not having enough time to post on all the things I want to talk about!

Here are a few tips to get you through that initial dry spell until you find your blogging voice.

1. **Subscribe to other blog feeds for your industry/target market**

If you have a blog about babies and toddlers, you'll want to have other similar (preferably high traffic) blogs on your RSS reader. It's a good way to keep abreast of what's going on in the collective consciousness of people. Just do a Google search for blog + topics of choice, and you'll come up with plenty.

Keeping up with other blogs in your niche means that you can link to their posts (and you should always link to a blog that inspires your own post!) and add your own "spin" on the subject.

2. **Look at trade magazines and newspapers in your niche**

Again, going back to the baby/toddler theme, read parenting magazines. Magazines are a great place to look for inspiration...the articles are mostly short, pithy, "quick fix" and solution oriented (similar to blog posts). They also change to reflect what's going on in the world and with your target market.

Keeping up with the news is also a good idea...you can find news feeds to add to your RSS reader too. When something is happening in the world that impacts your target market, blog it.

3. **Keep a notebook (or file on your desktop) of blog fodder**

When a thought or sentence hits you, write it down immediately. These sentences can be lengthened into blog posts (and later lengthened into articles...that's another ecourse!). The more you do this, the more aware you will become of the unlimited topics you can blog about, even in your niche.

4. **Milk Your Content**

If you're publishing a newsletter and write articles, then blog a short intro paragraph along with a link to the rest of the content on your website.

5. **Product Reviews**

Review products that you've tried and books you've read that relate to your niche. Anything that would help your blog readers make a decision (and we all need that help in a world with too many choices!) is a good thing.

6. **Involve Your Visitors**

Your newsletter subscribers and blog readers can be marketing partners and content generators for you! How? When they email you with a question, ask their permission to post it (along with the answer) on your blog.

May you soon find yourself in the predicament of so many blog posts, so little time!

Nicole Dean's Notes

One of the best things about Carrie's newsletter is her frankness and her candid ability to relate the joys of parenthood to running a business. She also just released [The Natural Mom Business Guide](#); the perfect guide for moms who want to turn their passion for natural parenting into a business

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Blogging Your Way to Loads of Content

- By Nicole Dean -

Many people freeze up when they sit down to write an article or *gasp* an entire e-book. But, yet, they can blog all day. Does this describe you? Well, I have good news for you...

Article Marketing And Blogging

If you think about it, blogging is the perfect way to draft articles for submitting to article directories. In my "**Easy Article Marketing**" course, I refer to blog posts as "baby articles". Why? Because every blog post you've written is the start of an article. Just expand upon the topic, add some more good information and you've got a full article!

What Can You Do With An Article?

If you're not familiar with Article Marketing, it is basically sharing articles you've written in order to get free advertising for your website. WAIT! You don't need to be a writer to benefit from Article Marketing. Believe me. All you need to be able to do is share your passion for what you enjoy.

But, how do you get advertising?

Look at the end of this article. You'll see, plain as day, a little blurb about me. I didn't pay a cent to have my link included in this report. I just shared a topic that I love with you -- Article Marketing. You can benefit in the same way.

Free Report

Now, you're wondering what all this has to do with an e-book. Once you've gathered all your baby articles, put them together into a "report" or "e-book". Both are basically the same thing, it's just that a report is a short e-book. For examples of free e-books and free reports, check out Free-eBooksOnline.com

Paid e-Book

If you've got a topic you love, then get PAID to share your passion. This is truly the best thing in the world – getting paid for simply sharing what you love. Can you do it? Of course! If you're blogging, then you're already on the path to your first infoproduct. Just keep at it, put together an outline and start compiling your thoughts. You CAN do it.

Nicole Dean's Notes

I'm always intimidated by the thought of writing articles. It's exciting to know that while you're building the relationship on your blog, the content can be re-used or re-mixed for something much bigger and potentially profitable. Nicole's ideas are great and it has helped me look at my own blog through yet another lens. Visit her today to see [how YOU can profit from your content](#).

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Making Money with Your Blog

- By Nell Taliercio -

I'm sure you've heard before that it's a possibility to make money with your blog and you may be wondering how? Were they really meant for making money or just for journaling your personal thoughts? I'm not sure what they were intended for but blogs are great ways to make money.

I have a personal blog which is just my own private little place to go online and jot down my thoughts, but I also have my business blogs.

Back In the Beginning

To be honest with you in the beginning of my blogging experience I really wasn't sure what I should do with my blog. I knew I wanted to make money with it, but I didn't know how. I didn't know what I could do to not only be a value to others so they would come back to my blog, but that I would still enjoy writing it.

So it was really important to me that I find a topic in which I would be excited about, and have enough to offer so that I could blog every week or so. After starting a blog that was meant to just be an add-on to my business at MommysPlace.net and struggling with the direction of that blog, I came across one of Alice Seba's blogs, which she used to write about her experience through a traffic product.

So every couple of weeks she would update her progress through this course. She would tell us all about her successes with this product and how great it was for her business. And it made me think of how I could do something similar.

Product/Service Focused Blog

And this is when the light bulb moment went off in my head. This is when I realized what I should have been doing all along. I have been a member of an exclusive coaching program for mothers in business.

Since joining this program my business has seen great success. My income has increased more than 10 times what it was before I joined, and my traffic has increased even more than that.

I enjoy and believe in this coaching program and it happens to have an affiliate program. I often got emails from other work at home mothers who wanted to know my thoughts on this program.

Taking a cue from Alice's blog I decided to start my own such blog. And named it Mom Masterminds Grad and it can be found at MMGrad.com.

I use this blog for the purpose of documenting my successes with my business. My projects, new content added to my website, keyword phrases I was ranking for...etc. Basically anything that has to do with my business that was directly or indirectly because of my joining Mom Masterminds, I jot down.

Not only was this the best move I could have made for my promoting this affiliate link it also served as a great way to really see for myself the successes my business was achieving and also to keep me on track.

This is one way you could make money with a blog. There are other ways you could make money with a blog if you don't want to devote a blog to one service or product you're promoting.

Side Kick Blog

For instance, my blog at TelecommutingMoms.com is a side kick to TelecommutingMoms.com and my forums. This is a blog in which I update my members on additions to the website, newsletter and forums. And also use it as a vehicle for updating members on any important telecommuting news and promoting affiliate programs.

So this blog serves more than one purpose. My main goal with this blog is to get traffic to certain sections of my website. I have a large website and it's not always easy for people to find my information. This is a great way for me to keep certain new pages or sections of my website in the public eye and get traffic to those pages. It also serves as a way to make money with affiliate programs. And lastly it gives exposure to my forum and my newsletter.

There can be many ways and, many topics in which you can make money and gain exposure to other businesses you may have, or can help in creating you as an expert in a certain field.

Just take the time to really think about what you could be writing about and then how you can make money with that as well. You can take a look at others blogs to get an idea and see what other people are looking for.

Making Money With Your Blog - Resources:

Blogs to Riches- is an e-book that details ways you can make your blog profitable. And the really cool thing with this is if you list the publisher's link on your blog for 45 days he will give you this e-book for free! If you don't want to wait that long you can also purchase it for a low price. Read more about Blogs to Riches - www.blogstoriches.com

Increasing AdSense - is an e-book about how to increase your adsense revenue. This e-book isn't specifically geared towards blogs, but the information you will learn you can use with your blogs. (As well as websites and forums...anywhere you have adsense.)

* Don't know what adsense is? Go to www.google.com/adsense to learn more.

Ready To Blog?

Are you ready to take the leap into a blog? If so, it's really very easy to set up a blog. The one resource I have used for my old blog is blogger.com and what I use for my current blogs is WordPress. Blogger is a great option for the newbie and you can host it with them. WordPress is a bit more complicated and must be hosted on your own domain, but it's by far my most favorite option for blogs.

Valuable Product: [The Blogging Starter Pack](#) is a step by step learning product which will help you start a blog, set up rss feeds, teach you how to use your blog for your business and much more!

Watch Out Blogging World - Here I Come!

See how simple this really can be? You can make money with a blog, gain exposure for another business or websites, you can build yourself as an expert on a certain topic, you can create a blog for free, you get it listed for free and start an RSS feed for free! Now get out there and start blogging.

Nicole Dean's Notes

For many of us, we think our blog's sole purpose is to be a traffic mill, feeding traffic and directing people to buy from our websites. But that need not be the case. Nell has given us some pretty cool ideas how to dig deeper into the income possibilities after all, you're already blogging and putting work into it, you might as well maximize your earning potential. Visit her at <http://www.> for more

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10 Ways to Boost Your Brand On Your Blog

- By Krisite Tamsevicius -

It used to be that you had to have a website to be a somebody online. Now the bar has risen a bit. Blogs are becoming a status symbol of sorts. To own a blog, shows you have arrived. That's why the cutting edge companies of today are quickly jumping on board with blogs to stay with the times.

And when it's about image, those cookie cutter blog templates won't do. You need a blog with style and flair. So how can you transform your blog from boring to brilliant?

Here are some branding tips to kick up the brand on your blog.

1. Personalize your template. Make the look and feel of your blog match your website. People should be able to visually identify that it belongs to you. You can either adapt the header from your website, or just add your logo and use the same color theme.

Tweak the footer. Add information about how to subscribe to your ezine. You can also add Technorati and Delicious Tags. These identify in those blog search engines what topics your blog is about.

Jazz up your sidebar by adding links for media room, products, books you are reading, and blogs that you visit.

2. Bio – Add a short bio that lets your readers get to know you.
3. Description – Create a short zippy 1-line description that says what kind of content they can expect on your blog. You want it to be engaging enough that they'll say, "oh, that sounds interesting..." and jump on down to start reading posts.
4. Name it! Give your blog a fun, inviting name that grabs someone's attention. For instance, we named our Webmomz Blog, Kristie T's Home-Biz-A-Pa-Looza to show the fun theme we wanted to portray.
5. Serve up regular doses of fresh content - Blogs are meant to be an ongoing conversation with your audience. If you aren't posting at least 2-3 times a week, your blog goes stale. A little trick is to make an editorial calendar with a list of topics that you'd like to blog about. You can also keep a "blog idea file". Whenever I run across an article or idea that I want to blog about, I tuck it away in this file.

6. Lively topics – Your readers want to hear from you. So reward them with original content. There is so much you can share with them. You can offer comments on current affairs, product reviews, or books you are reading.

You can post inspirational quotes, views, opinions, and jokes. Some of my favorite blog posts include what the blogger is going thru whether it be a good day, a problem, a learning moment, or an off the wall point of view. Be authentic. Let your blog readers get to know the real you.

7. Create a conversation – Some of my favorite blogs are the really conversational ones. They make you feel like the person is writing just to you. Have you ever been to a workshop and the speaker looks directly into your eyes and you feel like they are looking right into your soul? That's a powerful feeling of connection. And you can create that same sense of intimacy in your writing. To do that, try creating a mental picture of one person you are blogging to. Give that person a name. Think about what they do for a living, what car they drive, what music they listen to, what books they read etc. Then write your blog posts just to that person.

8. “Jenny Jones” your blog titles – When you write blog post titles, try to be fun and inventive. One thing I do ask myself, “If this blog post was on the Jenny Jones show, how would they introduce this segment?” The answer always gives me a title that stirs curiosity.

9. Snapshots Rock – A picture is worth a thousand words. And adding photos to your blog really adds impact. istockphotos.com has great photos for web resolution for just \$1 each. ClipArt.com has a week long subscription where you can download as much clipart and photos as you want. So you can go and grab a whole bunch of images that relate to your topic.

10. Sense of connection – One way to create a relationship with your audience is thru comments. Make sure that it's easy for your readers to see how to comment on your posts. Also, if at the end of your blog posts you ask a question and tell them how to comment and add their answer, it will increase your posts. When the conversation is 2 way, it's much more fun for your audience. And when someone does post a comment, email them back or go comment on their blog. The blogosphere is a very social medium. Make friends, build connections, expand your network and reach.

Nicole Dean's Notes

Kristie has pointed out some truly excellent points. As I visit other people's blogs, I often come accross so many 'similar' looking blogs. They may have great information but when I need to go back to them, I have a lot of trouble figuring out if I'm in the right place. Like it or not, we humans are visual creatures. If our blogs look like everyone else's we'll lose mind share really quickly. Take a moment to visit Kristie's blog to see how she's strongly claimed it for her own <http://www.webmomz.com/blog/>

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Driving Traffic to Your Blog

- By Heather Jacobson -

Whether for fun or to supplement your business website, blogging has become one of the fastest growing trends today. Driving traffic to your blog is as important as driving traffic to your website. It is like the old saying, "if a tree falls in the forest, does it make a sound?" Just because you are keeping a blog, does not mean anyone is reading it. And, if no one is reading it, what is the point in having one?

Blogging Forums

There are many blog resources on the internet. A good place to start with your blog is getting involved with more bloggers! There are several blogging forums on the net; which are a good place to start researching what you can do with your blog and begin to drive traffic to it. (Make sure that link is in your signature line!)

[Blogger Talk](#) – For bloggers of all shapes and sizes

[The Small Business Blog Forum](#) – For Small Business Blogs

[The Blogger Forum](#) – For bloggers from beginners to pros

[Blog Party](#) - Another blogging forum

Blog Submission Sites

It is important to submit your blog to blog directories. Most people, when searching for blogs, go to a particular blog directory that they prefer. It is a preference just as some have preferences for Google over MSN or Yahoo! You do not want to just be listed in Google because you are missing the people who use Yahoo! as their search engine of choice and vice versa.

These are just a few submission sites and RSS sites that you can list your feed or URL. For a more complete list, visit [Robin Good's Best Blog Directory And RSS Submission Sites](#)

[Blog Search Engine](#) - They claim that linking back to them will increase your ranking in their search engine; however, I cannot attest to that.

[Yahoo! Directory](#) – There are 2 ways to do this: paid and unpaid. A \$299 yearly fee will guarantee your listing to appear within seven days and the free version offers no guarantee. Complete instructions on submitting your site is located here.

[DMOZ Open Directory Project](#) - The open directory project has many different directories including a directory of weblogs. You can learn more about how to suggest your site there.

[Technorati](#) - Technorati claims on their site that they are currently tracking 13.3 million sites and 1.3 billion links. Make yours one of them.

[Popdex](#) – Popdex determines the popularity of sites by crawling over 14,000 of them. It is worth a submission to their site! If you want your site to be put on the "fast track" then place a link back to Popdex as those will be looked at first.

[Blogarama](#) – A directory of blogs that is simple and easy to use.

[Blog Catalog](#) – It's exactly what it says.

[eMarketingBlogs.com](#) – Internet Marketing Blog Directory

RSS Feeds

According to webopedia.com an RSS feed is "[s]hort for RDF1 Site Summary or Rich Site Summary, an XML2 format for syndicating Web content. A Web site that wants to allow other sites to publish some of its content creates an RSS document and registers the document with an RSS publisher. A user then has the ability to use the content on a different site. Syndicated content includes such data as news feeds, events listings, news stories, headlines, project updates, excerpts from discussion forums or even corporate information."

Include an RSS feed for your blog - or several so that people who use different types of aggregators are able to sign up for your feed.

If you're looking for an aggregator to read your favorite blogs, you can get many online for free. The best one out there that I recommend is a free download from [EnterprisingMom.com](#) This aggregator comes with all the necessary feeds of blogs that you need to help your business succeed.

RSS Syndication Sites

If you have an RSS feed, syndicate it! Syndication sites will take your feed and post it on their site; which, in turn, is a one-stop aggregator. It's also another way to get your blog noticed.

[Syndic8](#) - Submit your feed and have it validated to stream onto their RSS feed site.

[News Is Free](#) - One of the oldest news aggregators, Newsisfree.com, is a great place to list your blog feed.

[Feedster](#) – Feedster claims, "everything that is timely and valuable on the web will be available as an RSS feed".

[Blogdex](#) – The weblog diffusion index – "Blogdex is a research project of the MIT Media Laboratory tracking the diffusion of information through the weblog community. Ideas can have very similar properties to a disease, spreading through the population like

wildfire. The goal of Blogdex is to explore what it is about information, people, and their relationships that allows for this contagious media."

[Blogwise](#) - 516 blogs were added in the last 7 days with almost 25,000 total on the site! Blogwise is run by volunteers and established so that people could find many interesting blogs from one site. A real person checks all submissions so the addition may take some time. All they ask in return is a link back to the site.

[2RSS](#) – An rss directory that has blogs, articles and directories.

[WeBlogAlot](#) - WeBlogAlot is another aggregator to which you can add your feed.

Pinging Services

Pinging Services alert major directories that your blog is updated; in turn, listing the most recently updated at the top. People want to read what's new. What better way to give them current information?

[Ping-o-matic](#) - currently offering 15 sites to ping as well as a few other additional sites

[King Ping](#) – advertising 18 pinged directories

Press Releases

Send out a press release stating that your blog is now open. Include what it will offer and why people should come to visit it. What will differentiate your blog from the rest?

Here are some places to which you may submit your press release:

[EWorldWire](#) – Press release distribution site for a fee

[PR Web](#) – One of the most popular offering free and paid services

[Free Press Release](#) – A free way to distribute your press release

[PRNNewswire.com](#)

[Internetnewsbureau.com](#) – There is a yearly fee but you can sign up to send to journalists, businesses, etc.

For more information on how you can use press releases to increase your profits and drive traffic to you blog or website, check out [Press Release Profits](#)

Printed Material

Add your blog address to your business cards, brochures, and any other printed materials that you send out of your office. With the influx of blogging, consumers are looking for blogs that may help them in their lives.

Newsletter

Do you send out a newsletter on a weekly or monthly basis? Include the most recent post titles for your blog and a link. It will not take up much room; and, if you are looking for filler, you can always include the first few sentences then direct them to your blog for the rest!

If you're looking for ways to increase your traffic or subscriber base, I recommend [Jimmy D. Brown's List and Traffic Video Newsletter](#).

Article Submission

If you write articles, include your blog address as well as your business address. Better yet, link to your blog within your articles! Proper linking will ensure better optimization and better rank for you in the search engines. Better ranking in the search engines drives more traffic. This is what you are trying to accomplish by having a blog!

For more information on Article Marketing, even if you're not a writer, you can sign up for a free 5 day eCourse at [EasyArticleMarketing.com](#)

Subscription Services

The fact of the matter remains that there are some people who would like to know when your blog is updated but are scared of the terms RSS and aggregators. Give them an opportunity to sign up to receive an email when your blog is updated. [Bloglet](#) offers this service; or you can maintain your own list (please note that Bloglet is not compatible with all blogging software). To reel them in, offer something free for signing up!

Comment on Related Blogs

Whether you are driving traffic to a business blog or an affirmation blog, the methods remain the same. Look in the blog directory to best place your listing. Find related blogs on which you can comment. This will lead the blogmaster and the readers to you. The possibilities are endless!

Happy Blogging!

Nicole Dean's Notes

That is truly a huge list of resources which I'm sure you will put to good use. I also want to mention that Heather can setup your blog for you if the thought of setting up a blog intimidates you. Visit Heather's website for more information [ValleyVA.net](#)

Well, we're at the end of our 6 day e-course. I hope you've taken a lot of notes and put some of these great tips into action. If you haven't had the opportunity, don't worry, we can't do everything all at once. Make a list of the things you want to implement and work through them one by one. If you're the type who prefers a bit more assistance and would like someone to be there to assist you with your blogging process, consider getting the Lynette's Blogging Starter Pack. Not only does it give you the right foundation for your blog, she updates the course monthly with new resources and information. This on it's own is valuable as the blogging world evolves so quickly. [Get your business blog on the right track](#).