

How to Fill Your Empty Blog

By Susanna Perkins

I admire the über-organized blogger. You know the one — the blogger who decides quickly on a profitable niche, does some thorough keyword research, sets up a marketing plan, and sticks to it.

While I admire those bloggers, I'm not one of them. I took a more circuitous route when getting my own blog up and running. But I learned a lot.

If thinking about zeroing in on a niche and establishing keywords for your website gets your heart to pounding and your palms to sweating, relax. You're not alone. You can still create a successful blog for your freelance web-writing business.

And you should — because a blog can make a world of difference in how many leads you attract, how many clients you land, and how fast you succeed.

Yes, You Need a Blog

The first reason for blogging is to help prospects find you.

Google loves blogs. Update frequency is one of the major components in Google's algorithms. On a blog, you're constantly adding new content — Google likes that and will reward you accordingly.

With a better search ranking, more prospects will find your blog.

The second reason for blogging is to start developing a relationship with that prospect.

Your freelance website tells the prospect about your background, training, and what you can do to help her business. It gives you one chance to make a great impression. Your blog, on the other hand, offers her free and valuable content, positions you as an expert, *and* lets her get comfortable with you over time.

Remember, people do business with those they know, like, and trust. Your blog is your chance to develop that "know, like, and trust" factor.

Help! What Should I Write About?

If you've already decided on a niche for your freelance business, finding blog topics becomes much easier.

Pam Foster created a niche for herself in the pet industry. Her blog is called [Web-SEO Tips](#), and she highlights ways that pet-related organizations can use blogs to improve their businesses.

Steve Slaunwhite has positioned himself as The Marketing Coach, so his entire website focuses on information about marketing. He calls his blog [Marketing Memo](#), and he uses it to share marketing tips and tricks.

Nick Usborne spent years as a copywriter, but recently he's been transitioning to more teaching, coaching, and other passive forms of income. [NickUsborne.com](#) provides "articles, programs, and coaching for freelance writers."

His blog is right there on the home page, where he writes about interesting self-improvement tips (did you know spending 20 minutes outside makes you smarter?), using social media in your business, promoting your business, and similar topics.

If you're just starting out and haven't zeroed in on a niche yet, you can still blog successfully.

For example, if you plan to work in the lucrative B2B (Business-to-Business) market, come up with four general topic areas that B2B marketing managers (your target market for copywriting) would be interested in. Those might be in the general areas of:

- Lead generation tactics
- Getting the best results from case studies
- Getting started with B2B social media
- Using video in B2B marketing

If you're excited about writing autoresponders, your four general areas could include:

- Different uses for autoresponders
- How autoresponders can save the company time
- How autoresponders can save the company money
- How autoresponders convert prospects to clients

Now sit down and brainstorm in each of these areas to come up with topics for blog articles. Yes, you want to showcase your writing, but more importantly, you should use your blog to position yourself as a marketing consultant or expert.

You can brainstorm using paper and pencil, or create a spreadsheet. There are also brainstorming tools available online. I like a mind-mapping program called [X-Mind](#) (it's a free download).

Come up with at least two dozen topics spread among your four areas, and you've got a solid foundation for your blog content.

How Often Should You Post?

To gain traction with your blog, plan to upload a new post **every week**, at a minimum.

Some bloggers post every single day, seven days a week. Others post on weekdays, or on set days during the week. I've found a twice-weekly schedule works well for one of my blogs.

When you're first starting, it's tempting to think, "Oh, I can post every day." Perhaps you can, but posting every day is a big time commitment. It's better to start more slowly. Don't risk running out of topics quickly and finding yourself staring at an empty screen with a deadline looming.

You can always add to your posting schedule later. Editorial Calendar

Once you've decided on posting frequency and general content topics, you need to establish a calendar. This will help you:

- Post regularly
- Rotate topics
- Avoid writer's block
- Keep track of what you've already written

Your calendar can be as simple as a page in a notebook or an Excel spreadsheet. There's also a handy WordPress plugin called [Editorial Calendar](#).

I use [X-Mind](#) for brainstorming, then I lay out a schedule using the WordPress Editorial Calendar.

Since WordPress lets you schedule your posts, you can group your blogging tasks together.

Perhaps you can, but posting a blog of 500 to 2000 words every day is a big time commitment.

Set aside a whole day and knock out three or four (or more) posts, then space them out according to your planned schedule.

Be Personable

Your blog posts should reflect your personality and give the reader a flavor of who you are.

This doesn't mean you should share every detail of your life on your blog. But when you include some personal details, the reader finds you more likable.

Don't be afraid to use stories about your kids or pets or a favorite TV show to illustrate points you want to make, when that's appropriate. Share your sense of humor, too (but don't go overboard with it unless your writing ambitions include stand-up comedy).

Spend Time on Your Headlines

Your blog posts are no different from any other copywriting in this respect. The headline catches the reader's attention and gets him to read your first sentence. Your first sentence leads him to the second sentence, and so on.

Don't spend hours writing a killer blog post and then throw it onto the website with a drab headline. You're doing yourself a big disservice if you skimp here.

Headline writing is an art form in itself. If you're shaky in this area, there are plenty of resources available. Check out these articles:

[Write Better Headlines](#)

[Crafting Headlines That Rock!](#)

What About SEO?

Yes, SEO is important. If people can't find you, they won't do business with you. SEO gives a big boost to your find-ability.

But if you're not yet well schooled in SEO, relax. There's no need to obsess about keywords, although you should certainly work to improve your SEO competence.

Write the best content you can. Write it to appeal to your ideal client, and let your personality shine through.

Today, unlike in the early days of the Internet, if you're writing for real people, you're also writing for search engines.

And with Google's ever-changing algorithms, keywords have become less important. The quality of sites that link to you is a huge influence on how well you rank, for example, and quality sites won't link to you if your content is shabby.

Yes, you should learn about the elements of good SEO.

But let me share a little secret with you. I heard this from Brian Clark of [Copyblogger](#), an enormously successful blog about copywriting.

... Do your best writing. Do it now, get it out there now. Later, when you know more about SEO, you can go back and change keywords.

Hey, if it works for Copyblogger, it'll work for you, too!

Setting up a blog and adding content to it regularly are proven ways to establish yourself as a credible freelance web writer. You'll develop a loyal readership online, and the paid assignments will follow.

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5 Responses to "How to Fill Your Empty Blog"

The key is to write and post on a regular basis. There is no substitute for a consistent schedule.

Too many people put off writing because they are worried about how they will be perceived by others.

This prevents them from contributing and adding value and leaving a mark.

There are excuses galore that can be overcome by sticking to a fixed schedule.

For example, writing first thing in the morning as yours truly is doing right now.

Thanks for a wonderful article here.

Archan Mehta – over a year ago

A great comprehensive post on writing a blog. Thanks for sharing on Bizsugar.com

Guest (Sian Phillips) – over a year ago

I found we need to always be moving ahead, and stop looking back over our shoulders. We can miss alot of opportunity looking back, and it slows us down from achieving our goals. I am glad I checked out awaionline, great networking source. Please reach out and connect.

Guest (Donna) – over a year ago

i love you yarr

Guest (scattravels) – over a year ago

It is remarkable, rather useful piece

Guest (avenue17) – 3 months ago

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