marketing & PR
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DON'T UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF A BLOG

We've explored the role of inbound links in Google's ranking algorithm and the impact of expanding your PR practice into video to increase those links. Now let's delve into the labyrinth of blogging, probably the most powerful way to impact website rankings due to the constant publication of new content and the creation of "deep links."

With the rise of Twitter and Facebook, revisiting blogs may seem passé. Yet Planet Ocean Communications, a veteran SEO analyst, writes "BLOG equals better listings on Google," and the evolution of the field constitutes a sea change, best referred to as "Blogging 2.0."

THE EVOLUTION OF BLOGGING

A few years ago, you visited the popular site www.blogspot.com, registered and started blogging right away. Today's corporate blog, however, should be hosted on the company's website and is thus referred to as an "internal" blog. The Google algorithm likes inbound links to internal blogs, otherwise known as deep links because they access an interior page of the website. Deep links are viewed as indicating sites with breadth.

The rise of internal blogs led to dominance of the market by Wordpress. It expanded beyond its external blogging site, Wordpress.com, through powerful new software for internal blogs, available at Wordpress.org. Concurrently, software developers created dynamic plug-ins to increase the functionality of Wordpress. org software far beyond any competitor.

> **"**YOU CAN EMBELLISH THE BLOG BY "RE-SKINNING" IT, USING AN ONLINE DESIGNER TO ADD YOUR CLIENT'S WEBSITE NAVIGATION BAR AND BRANDING.

WORDPRESS FEATURES

The dashboard of a Wordpress.org blog offers a cornucopia of templates, widgets and plug-ins. You can click and drag "widgets," accessible through the appearances tab, onto any template you select. Include a search box, headlines of recent blog posts, an RSS icon for potential subscribers and a "blogroll" for important links. Text widgets let you add client boilerplate and a photo of the CEO.

Then, you should visit the plug-ins tab. Download Akismet to filter out spam comments, All in One SEO to add keywords and topical headlines for each entry and Sociable to automatically include social media icons for sharing at the end of each post.

A BLOGGING PR PROGRAM

Collaborate with your client to choose a theme for the blog; then, institute a weekly posting schedule. Final entries should range between 200 and 300 words to maximize SEO impact and readership.

After 12 weeks, submit the blog to search engines at www.globeofblogs. com, www.getblogs.com, www.blogcatalog.com and www.blogarama.com. Benchmark any growth in readership through a subscriber box available at www.feedcat.net.

Subsequently, you can embellish the blog by "re-skinning" it, using an online designer to add your client's website navigation bar and branding. You can also automatically post blog headlines on your client's Twitter account using www.twitterfeed.com.

Blogs are ideal for PR agencies because they constantly require new content, and their weekly schedule can smooth over any lulls in client activity. They involve constant interaction with your client's executives thus helping to build relationships. And they let you demonstrate your value on an ongoing basis.

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