

A Basic Guide to Starting Your Blog

Whether you want to promote yourself, your business, or are just looking for the creative outlet, creating a blog can be a rewarding tactic. Fortunately, starting a blog isn't that complicated but writing one can be time consuming and intimidating. If you want to write a blog, focusing on something specific and allowing you to showcase your unique experience and distinctive voice is a good way to go.

Here's 10 reasons why you or your firm should consider a blog?

- To increase visibility
- To bolster your firm's reputation and brand
- To communicate your expertise
- To highlight your problem solving skills for issues readers are be facing
- To develop and strengthen relationships with existing and new customers
- To become an industry thought leader
- To attract more prospects and generate qualified leads
- To keep your website fresh and create shareable content
- To drive web traffic and improve search engine optimization
- To tell your story

Consistency Counts

If you can blog once a week great. But, if you can only do it bi-weekly or monthly that's OK too. Just be consistent. Updating your blog consistently with fresh, current content helps boost SEO, brings new readers to your website and keeps current readers returning. For posting consistency, it's best to use an editorial calendar. HubSpot has a [editorial template](#) to get you started. Use it to plan posts and keep track of upcoming article ideas, as well as social media posts.

Content Counts

Most experts say that blog posts should be at least 300 to 500 words, but recommended word count of a post varies based on your business and the reason for blogging. As a general thumb, most say try to keep it between 1,000 and 1,500 words. However, more content (3,000+ words) generates more social media shares then shorter blogs. Also, try to use images and/or videos as much as possible. Blog industry studies show that image-rich content gets over 90% more social shares compared to text-only blogs.

Three Types of Popular Blog Formats

There isn't just one type of blog post you can use. There are several formats you can pick for your next blog post. Here's break down of three of the most popular blog post types and formats.

Pillar Blog (3,000 to 4,000 words)

Pillar content typically provides a complete answer to any question a user may be searching for on a given topic. It's specifically designed to provide value for the reader. With the right content, it can rank higher in the search engines than smaller blogs.

The basic characteristics of pillar content includes solving problems or answering a question with comprehensive, detailed information. Here are typical pillar article concepts that you can post to your blog:

- The "How-To" Article
- The Definition Article
- The Theory /Argument Article
- The List Article

Keyword Specific Blog (1,500 to 2,000 words)

There are keyword opportunities that are relevant to your target audience. Once you identify them write one blog per keyword phrase. Make sure to use the keyword in the title tag because it is a key signal for search engines. Also, use your keyword, and relevant variations on your keyword, in the text. When applicable, use internal linking to your advantage by adding links to content within your site.

The Question and Answer Post

Answering questions is a great source of material for your website's blog. It provides information people are looking for and can increase your search engine visibility. Try to be as detailed as possible and as helpful as you can. Your goal is to help, not to be the only source of information. If there's a quality website that has a great answer to the question in your blog, provide your own insights first and then link to that site.

Blog Strategies to Put to Work

Remember, before you start blogging make sure you know your target market. You want to understand what they care about and what outcome they are seeking from reading your posts. Also, learn more about who or what influences your audience. Lastly, determine how you will want to engage them when they are ready to buy.