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Blogging For Maximum Profit

**The Blogging Plan For You To
Cash In NOW!**

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INTRODUCTION

So What Is A Blog - Really?

Just in case you are new to blogging or are just considering starting your own blog, or you have a blog and are just now considering monetizing your blog, I think a short introduction to what a blog is will be appropriate.

As the internet developed to become what it is today, many webmasters discovered that netizens wanted to know which websites had recently been updated and which had new information on them. Web surfers were searching new and exciting information and did not want to have to go check sites themselves to see if they had been updated recently. They wanted someplace they could go and see just what was new.

There were some pretty sharp programmers started posting logs on their own websites which told their site visitors which websites had recent updates or new information on them.

These weblogs, as they were called at that time, were like an informal directory of "what's new" online. These weblogs, and the technology which powered them, eventually grew and changed to become the blogs of today.

A blog is simply a website which is written in a friendly news format which is frequently updated. Rather than be a listing of new or updated websites, blogs came to be new news, and always changing websites in themselves.

A blog takes the same role online as your local television daily news program or newspaper do in their respective media types. Blogs are somewhere you go when you want new and interesting information on any given topic.

A blog is a website which is always being updated with up to date information. A blog serves the sole purpose of educating and entertaining people. Just like a good daily news program, or local newspaper, good blogs provide you with a nice balance of education and entertainment.

A good blog is one which has a lot of content, teaches you something new and entertains you a bit in the process. For your blog to be successful you will want to make sure you incorporate each of these three things into your own blog as well. The most successful blogs on the internet do this and do it quite well.

Where a weblog used to be a list of new or changed websites, they changed over time and exploded in popularity into today's blogs. Where a blog used to be something only a programmer had, blogging now allows anyone, without any programming or HTML (hypertext mark-up language) skills, to set up their own blog. The weblogs of yesteryear paved the way to the blogs of today.

With the proliferation of free blog sites such as Google's [Blogger](#), it is simple for anyone in the world to have their own blog. Blogger uses templates and signing up for an account and starting your blog takes all of about five minutes and you are up and on your way! If you can e-mail and surf the web, then you can have your own blog. It really is that easy. And, best of all - it is free!

Today's blogs are maintained by both companies (large and small) as well as individuals all over the world. In this day and age even your grandmother could have her own blog if she wanted to. All she would have to do is sign-up for a Blogger account and start typing about her family, her hobbies, her pets, or whatever else she might want to talk about. A family blog can be a great way for families who want to stay in touch with each other.

A blog can simply be an online diary or notebook you use to publish your thoughts. A blog can also be a more formal website used to educate people about just about any topic you can think of. Your blog can be as personal or professional as you want it to be.

Through the use of Blogger's great templates you can adjust the look and feel of your own blog to match the type of blog you wish to have. You are also free to have more than one blog and can have the look and feel of each separate blog vary depending on their individual topics. And the best thing is that both a personal or professional blog can have AdSense on it and make you some money!

Online there are currently blogs on topics ranging from workplace politics, world politics, relationships, frugal living, sports, religion, family life, children, family pets, and just about anything else in between. Chances are if you have an interest in something then there is a blog out there on the topic.

However, if you search and can't find a blog on a topic which interests you then that can tell you that it might be a great idea of a topic for starting your own blog and making some extra money with it! Obviously you would need to do a little market research before just jumping into setting up a blog because you couldn't find one on a particular subject.

Blogs are an excellent way to make money online. The search engines love them they are easy to use, and are incredibly flexible.

A WordPress blog can become a membership site, an authority site, a sales page, a review site, an information site, a magazine and more, just by applying a theme and some plug-ins.

It is very simple and easy to make money with a blog, and this course is going to show you exactly how to make money with your blogs.

Whatever your niche, whatever your location, there are ways for you to monetize your blogs. I am going to be assuming that you know how to set up a blog and how to drive traffic to it, because we are going to dive straight into the money making aspects of blogging.

This report is designed to compliment the accompanying video course. If you watch the videos, they will show you exactly what you can do to monetize your blog. There are so many different options from AdSense, to CPA, to Affiliate products, to your own products and more.

All of these will be covered in the video course that accompanies this guide and were designed to get you monetizing your blog and earning from it. You will learn the two key requirements of any successful, profit pulling blog, and multiple ways to earn an income from your blog.

Chapter 1: Making Hard Cold Blog Cash

Blogging is one of the only truly "free" start-up business models on the internet. You can quickly and easily sign-up for an account with a free blog service such as Goggle's Blogger. From there you can add AdSense and other affiliate links to your blog and make money from your visitors clicking on those links. This is referred to as monetizing a blog - making money with a blog. You can accomplish all of this without ever spending a single cent of your own money.

Cashing In On GOOGLE Adsense

Google started a program called AdSense. AdSense is for website owners to make money by hosting other business's advertisements on their websites. These AdSense ads can also be hosted on a blog, even if it is hosted by a free blog service. Google owns both Blogger and AdSense so they are both programmed to be very simple for anyone to use. Because Google owns both Blogger and AdSense, they go extremely well together.

With AdSense you paste the code the AdSense program generates for you into your Blog template. Where the advertisements will show up on your blog depends entirely on where you choose to paste the AdSense code into your template. Later in this eBook we will talk about how to generate AdSense code and exactly where in your blog template to paste that code is.

AdSense additionally allows you to blend in the ads with the content of your blog. This helps to make your AdSense ads look more like your written content and less like advertising billboards.

AdSense is also intuitive enough that it will serve you ads which match the topic and content on your blogs. For example, if you have a blog on saving money then AdSense will likely serve up ads for coupon clipping services, freebies online and other things which match your blog's topic. On your saving money blog you will not see ads for irrelevant things like animal care or technology products.

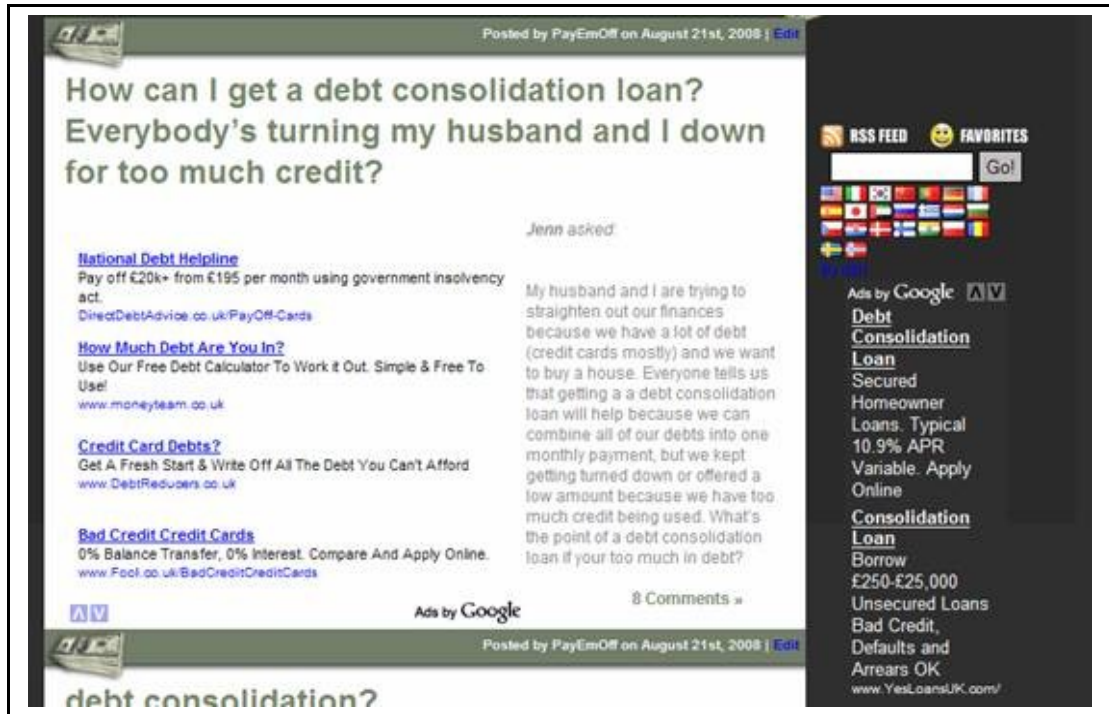
How do you make money with Google's AdSense? Google pays you when the visitors to your blog click on the AdSense advertisements on your site. This is called "click through." Google pays you a varied amount depending on the ad which was clicked on.

AdSense is only one of the better ways to monetize your blog. It is simple, passive, and people are almost used to seeing AdSense ads and therefore will be more apt to click on them. If you don't have an AdSense account then you need to sign up for one. A similar system you should probably check out is Bidvertiser.com which has come into prominence fairly recently.

Before you do, make sure you have a website already set up with some unique content on. Create a blog at blogger.com if you have to or if you can install WordPress from the control panel from your hosting account, that is a better choice. So long as it has unique and appropriate content, Google will be happy and approve your account.

The first thing to do is to make sure you blend your ads in with your website content. People are used to seeing AdSense ads, but don't make it too obvious! Blend them in to the same colors as your website and make them look like normal web links.

You can see from the following example how the AdSense adverts are blended into the website design. In the posts on the left, the adverts look like links and are blended into the text so they are very hard to miss.



On the right you can see the adverts are blended into the sidebar. Below these adverts is the navigation menu, but the ads are above the fold, making sure the visitor sees them.

You should also remember that Google doesn't allow you to show more than 3 ad blocks on a page, which means you need to set your blog to only display 2 or 3 posts per page. If you have AdSense in the sidebar, like the above site, you can only really have 2 posts on a page.

If your AdSense adverts appear to be untargeted, then that is because you haven't set the meta tags on your blog correctly. If you install a plug-in called [Headspace 2](#) then it will allow you to set the meta-tags across the

whole site and on individual posts. This will help to ensure that your ads are relevant.

There are over 3,500 different [plug-ins for WordPress](#), which means 3,500+ different ways of extending the functionality of the blogs, so you can add different features to it. There are thousands of free themes, so you can change how it looks, or you can create your own. And you can do all this without being technical and in just a few minutes. WordPress with plug-ins is incredibly powerful and extremely flexible. What plug-ins you will want for your particular blog are up to you, but they can extend the functionality of your blog and make it FAR more search engine friendly if you will just use them. For the most part they are easy to install. They can literally turn your blog into a cash machine if you employ the plug-ins that will help you target your ads. An excellent article on what is considered the “[Top 30 WordPress Plugins](#)” by ‘Speky Boy’ is a must read article on the subject.

As you consider themes for your blog and pictures you will use in your blog posts, be sure to remember to use the “Alt Text” attribute for the image code. Search engines will read these tags and if your “Alt Text” is relevant to your ads, the higher likelihood you will have for AdSense to present ads for higher priced keywords.

The more relevant your adverts are, then the more likely you are to get more visitors to click through on those higher paying keyword relevant ads.

Remember that if you are displaying a lot of advertising on your page, it can get confusing to your visitor. Remember you want to earn from them so pick your method.

I would recommend if a post is promoting an affiliate program or another product, then it does not have AdSense on it. The reason being you want to make sure people know where you want them to click. In fact your posts promoting affiliate programs should be relegated to a page of their own. You can post a promotion in its own page in your blog and it will not have AdSense ads your regular post will have where you placed them in your post template; But more on that later.

A visitor may click on your AdSense ad near your post and you could earn a couple of dollars, but then you've lost the opportunity to sell them an affiliate product that could have earned you \$20-\$30 a sale.

Google AdSense is an excellent way to monetize your blog and something you should be using. If, for some reason, you can't use AdSense, then try some of the other contextual advertising networks - there are lots out there that you could use. Remember to read the AdSense terms of service and adhere to them. They are not above banning people and taking your commission away!

Chapter 2: How Your Layout Affects Blog SEO

Comprehending how each element of your blogs blends with the theme of your blog is crucial for the long-term success for your business blog. Once you have acquired some experience figuring out with the blog program you've chosen, it will be time well spent if you take a careful look at each area and learn what can, and perhaps cannot be, optimized to for search engines and still be adapted to your theme. Besides your traffic stats, the general construction and how the different elements of your blog come together can help to gain visibility.

Everything from the blog set up, the Theme you choose, fonts, font colors to your html heading tags that you use will have an impact on your final blog and how well it converts with the monetization methods you incorporate. You'll want to decide showing wisdom when it comes to each area, particularly in paying close attention to coloring strategies and other thematic considerations that may help with branding purposes and making your readers want to return to your site or better yet, pick up your RSS feed.

Do keep in mind that every area of the blog can help your site become more search engine-friendly. Not only does this reduce overall marketing costs when you are trying to obtain search engine rankings, but you'll also start to see more 'organic' traffic simply by tweaking a few areas.

Layout, Color Themes, Columns and Fonts

The layout is a part of your blog design, and your goal is to create something that will leave a lasting impression. More and more blog networks are creating 'generic' blogs that have very little creativity and are

focused more on the new content instead. Even though the content of your blog is the critical element, what the visitor sees and feels as they explore your blog is just as important.

If you choose a simple layout and design, just makes sure to navigate it yourself and see what your focal point is. Are you focusing too much on the sidebars? Is the header distracting? Can you easily read the content, or do you have to squint to make sense of the font and style? All of these elements will be unique to your blog, and since it may be an extension of your company and brand, it's vital that you use something that will make a lasting impression.

Generally A Blog Layout Has These Elements:

- Fonts
- Color themes
- Line spacing
- Header styles
- Image boxes
- Advertising space
- Columns (one-, two-, or three-columns)

Color Themes and What Colors Mean

The first step in constructing an appropriate layout involves the color theme. You want to use colors that either match or complement your main website, or even just go along with your printed materials.

Remember the value in branding, especially if you have traditionally been an offline company and are now moving things ahead on the web.

Color psychology can have a positive or negative effect on every single visitor that reaches your site, and you can make the most of your branding strategy by using special colors that evoke specific feelings. The following colors are generally associated with different emotions, feelings, and reactions in both positive and negative ways:

- **Red:** excitement, warmth, energy, and stimulating in the positive, but aggression and excessive visual impact in the negative. Red is a strong and powerful color, and can be used properly in subtle ways. It demands attraction and recognition, but can also be perceived as overly aggressive.
- **Blue:** intelligent, cool, efficient, and trustworthy in the positive, but unfriendly and aloof in the negative. Blue is essentially soothing, and the different hues can create a peaceful and serene feeling. However, it can also be perceived as cold and unemotional so you will need to pick the right tone to deliver the appropriate message.
- **Yellow:** confident, creative, strong, and friendly in the positive; depressing, irrational, and even fearful in the negative. Yellow is a very stimulating and energizing color, but overusing it or using the wrong tone can work against you.
- **Green:** balance, rest, peace, environmentally friendly in the positive, but bored, bland, and stagnant in the negative. Green can be used in very positive ways for a refreshing and energizing color palette, but too many dark tones can be perceived negatively.
- **Orange:** warmth, security, fun, and abundance in the positive, but frivolity and disorder in the negative. Orange is a very energizing

color, and can also attract immediate attention; however, too much of it can indicate foolishness or not being taken seriously enough.

- **Pink:** femininity, love, tranquility in the positive, but weakness and inhibition in the negative. Pink can be soothing and attractive, but can be draining and overdone very easily. Avoid using it unless it clearly matches and represents your brand.
- **Brown:** seriousness and warmth in the positive, but lacking in 'flavor' or taste in the negative. Strong browns can be helpful as accents, but a site completely done in brown can indicate boredom or lack of creativity.

Using powerful color combinations is very helpful when choosing the layout of your blog, and most blog platforms offer 'color combos' so you make the right choice. If you are designing your palette from scratch, just remember the principles of each color's psychological impact and proceed accordingly.

Font Types and Your Blog

Unless you are using a customized blog template, there are only a few standard font styles to choose from. This is not necessarily a bad thing, since most web users are becoming with the typical font styles such as Arial, Times New Roman, Verdana and Sans Serif fonts for Mac Computers. These are easy to read, and can help people 'scan' blogs much more easily.

Choose a style that complements your website and company image, and you'll easily avoid using something that may not even download correctly on all web browsers. Just keep in mind the impact and readability of the text on screen, and you'll be making it much easier for all readers to continue reading.

The Number of Columns Varies From Blog To Blog

The number of columns in a blog has been debated time and time again, and there are both advantages and disadvantages of each. All blogs are set up in as one-column, two-column, or three-column structures. The best way to pick one is to simply choose something that suites your blog's purpose.

For example, if you plan on linking out to partner sites or other blogs, you'll need a three-column structure. This will give you enough space to create a blogroll and relevant links on the right sidebar, include your blog commentary down the middle, and then put advertising and other links on the left side bar.

A two-column blog is most advantageous for a blog that has limited advertising. You will still have space for an extensive link roll and perhaps some contact information, but all reading will take place on the left side of the page.

A one-column blog is very basic, and is a good place to start if you want the blog to stand alone and not link out to different areas. This will help you create immediate interest to the content itself, and will definitely be less distracting for most web visitors and readers. Sometimes a minimal

look works better, especially if you have a lot of content that requires attention

Formatting Blog Article Posts

Blog posting works under a similar format as writing articles, and the more SEO-friendly you can make each entry, the higher the chances of reaching the top of the major search engines. When you are writing your headings and titles, be sure to include keywords as often as possible. Each title of your blog will become an extension of the URL, and this is what search engines can find and rank accordingly.

A well-formatted blog entry will also include bullet points and headings. Even though blog posts are generally much shorter than articles, developing a well-organized post will help increase readership and be more favorable to search engines. It's a simple step that many startup bloggers overlook, and can help significantly as you make your presence online.

Making sure that you tag and organize all blog entries is another important element of your blog site design and overall layout. Archives of each blog entry are automatically created for review, but you can organize each entry by adding 'Categories' and posting each item into the appropriate section. This makes it easy for people to find specific keyword-based posts, and will also help with search engine rankings.

Designing a Customized Blog Template

If you decide to do something a little more creative, you may want to pursue a customized blog template instead. Customized blog template

services are offered by many web designers and companies, and give you the chance to pick exactly the colors you want from your own website's color palette. If you want to include a special font, logo, or other artwork of your own, this is your best choice.

If you have web design skills, try developing your own blog template with the basic layout elements in mind. A customized template can be made with the same elements of a typical blog, but you will have the freedom to place and organize it as you would like to. Alternatively, there are upgraded versions of blogger platforms available.

A Few Notes on Square space for a Customized Blog

[Squarespace](#) is another valuable blogging and content management system platform. Squarespace is very similar in setup to WordPress, but gives you more freedom to set up your basic blog layout, include specialty items such as catalogs, media galleries, and discussion forums, and works with a simple drag-and-drop format.

If you're new to web design, this is a great choice when you're looking for something professional but unique. Squarespace offers different packages depending on the bandwidth and customized options you need, but even the basic plan is comprehensive enough to develop something that will stand apart from your competitors. You don't need special software to use it, and everything is very clean and efficient.

Why a Free Template Or Theme Might Be a Better Choice

Still, if you're new to blogging or simply can't decide how the color scheme and layout should come together, a free template will save you time and

upfront investments. You can always change your color choices later, and can try different types as you go along. WordPress, TypePad, and Blogger make it very easy to switch between themes as you start publishing, but you'll want to settle on something well before you start marketing and promoting your blog.

Changing themes and colors too often may lead to confused visitors, so be sure to make some final decisions before you move ahead with promotions.

A free template will be your best choice when you want to:

- Save time
- Start publishing immediately
- Cut down on initial startup costs
- Create a simple accompaniment to your website

Blog Layout and Page views: understanding the Connection

The visible layout and overall look of your blog has a strong impact on steady web traffic, and there are many elements of basic web design to consider as you piece together the blog. Making sure that all the graphics, logos, headers, and fonts of your blog are consistent with your message will help you deliver information clearly. Avoid the temptation to fill your blog with random content and images; the quality of your postings is always important.

Making sure you are posting frequently is another easy way to increase page views. The more that people realize you are updating the blog regularly, the higher the chances of regular subscribers. You want to make sure your layout is attractive and can transmit the right message on

every visit. This will create a unique experience, and help you develop steady readership over a period of just a few months.

Chapter 3: Looking Deeper Into AdSense

What Makes AdSense Post Relevant Ads?

The AdSense engine at Google sends its bot, called Googlebot, out to visit your site on a regular basis to examine your pages. This bot is simply a program which reads your pages. Googlebot looks at your key words, the structure and formatting on your web pages, the native language of your site, etc... Using the information gathered by the Googlebot, Google then sends AdSense ads to your site which are the most likely to entice your visitors to click on them.

The Googlebot will even tell AdSense if your blog is in a language other than English, so that your ads come to you in the language of your site. It wouldn't be very good to see English ads on a Spanish site or vice versa. AdSense is available in many languages and regions around the world. And, the ads you will receive on your blog will be from your own region and in your native language.

The longer your website is up, and the more you are scanned by the Googlebot, the more tightly matched the ads become to your content. At first the bot might misunderstand the meaning of your blog if you have not done a great job of using lots of relevant keywords.

If you have a blog about coffee yet you talk a lot about your children in your blog Article posts, then you might end up with ads which would interest readers of a child care blog. If you want to monetize your blog it is important to stay on topic, most of the time, so that the Googlebot reads your blog and serves up the ads which you want to show up on your site.

Knowing what standards Google is looking for on your website with their Googlebot, and keeping your blog compliant with those standards, makes AdSense work it's best for you.

Googlebot sees larger or bold text and Heading <H1> and <H2> tagged headlines as having more importance than regular text. This means that posting preferably headlines tagged as <H1> and sub-titles tagged as <H2> words can help AdSense zero in on the subject of your blog better. It also means that you will want to keep the photos and graphics to a minimum but on the images you do use, don't forget to use the "Alt" attribute in the image call that stays on topic with your content. If you want to have a blog with a lot of photos you might consider starting a second blog and hosting them all there and then link the two blogs together.

One valuable tip for all bloggers is to make sure you start all of your blog posts with a large, bold, title at the beginning of the text section of each blog Article post. It is very quick and simple to do this and yet it is very effective with AdSense. If your blog is about frogs and you mention frogs in your title and then again as a bold title at the beginning of your blog Article post, the Googlebot can better understand that your blog is about frogs. Taking the time to do this simple thing will insure that the Googlebot understands more quickly what your blog is about and serves you up relevant AdSense ads. It also looks natural to your readers and isn't distracting to them. It is also less time consuming than dealing with special tag words or any other search engine games bloggers play.

Another good tip with AdSense is to make sure you use your topic's keywords often in your blog post titles, and use them again within the content of your posts as well. For example, if you have a blog about chickens you will want to make sure your post titles mention the word

"chicken" in them. You will also want to make sure you mention chickens, eggs, and other related words as much as possible within your posted Articles.

The more you can post relevant titles and content loaded with keywords, the better AdSense will work for you and send you relevant ads. You have a much higher click through rate for ads which are relevant to the topic of your blog. Think about the times you have clicked on the Google AdSense ads on a website you were visiting. Generally speaking, was it for something related to the topic you were already reading about? Of course it was.

However, all of that being said, you do not want to overload your posted Articles with keywords. Your reader wants to know that you publish your blog for them to read, not to make money from them. By posting a sentence which reads; "the chickens in my chicken coop are working on having more chickens in the spring..." looks like a sentence I tried to use the word "chicken" in as much as possible. There is definitely a balance to be struck between pleasing your readers and pleasing the Googlebot who serves your AdSense ads on your website. Instead of stuffing in those keywords try making more sentences or using them in the title and adding a bit more text to your message posts.

You also do not want it to appear that you set-up your blog with a bunch of keywords simply for AdSense. You also do not want to copy content from free sites like wikipedia and then paste them into your blog. These blogs are called splogs (short for spam blogs) and doing this can get you kicked-off of AdSense and Blogger as well. You need a blog with good original content, not just a bunch of keywords. By creating a splog you can get a high search engine ranking temporarily but why would readers want to

visit or return to your blog if all it offers them is some keyword garbage and ads to click on?

It can take a bit of time for the Googlebot to visit your website and determine what its main topic is. If your website is new to AdSense, Google will not guess about your topic, it will simply place ads on your blog for charities or public service announcements as to not waste the advertising dollars of its AdWord clients. This is good for you the blogger as well. The last thing you want to do is to see ads on your blog which have nothing to do with its topic. By putting up the neutral ads Google has solved this problem.

Who Is Buying AdSense Ad Space From Google?

It is logical that at this point that you might be wondering where the advertisements Google puts on your site/blog come from.

Google has another program called AdWords where businesses and individuals can pay to advertise their websites via AdSense. These companies and individuals are assured by doing this that the websites their advertisements end up on will be relevant to the goods and services which they want to sell. Just as AdSense saves you time in looking for advertisers for your site, AdWords saves a lot of time, energy and money for those businesses who want to advertise on relevant sites without having to go out themselves and search for the sites to host their ads.

Using the AdWords program, businesses and individuals buy AdSense advertisements in large blocks by bidding on them. Generally a business will pay for 500-1000 ads at a time. Based on their specified keywords, a

business allows AdSense to put their ads on sites which would likely interest people who would be their potential customers.

For the example above of the chicken blog, if you were a hatchery, or a supplier of chicken accessories, then you would want ads placed on blogs such as the above one for chickens. This is exactly what AdWords and AdSense do. And, they do it very well for both the advertiser and the host of the ads. The hatchery wants to find chicken lovers and the blog about chickens is the place it can easily find them. The blog wants ads which will appeal to chicken lovers, and the hatchery is one of those ads.

Just as AdSense can be a good way to make money from advertising, AdWords can be a good way to advertise your business or even your own blog! If you are looking at driving targeted traffic to a website what better way than to use AdWords where it will place ads on similar websites to yours? There simply is no easier way. If you have a blog on a unique topic and are struggling to bring it traffic, you can buy AdWords advertising and your blog link will show up on similar sites to yours, and this will bring you added traffic. From this added traffic you will get more clicks on your AdSense ads and will likely make more money from those than you paid to advertise with AdWords.

Relevant Ads Is What Adsense Is All About

Many websites and blogs use AdSense to monetize their sites. AdSense is good for monetization because it tailors the ads to your site content. AdSense also allows you to sell space on your site by setting it up once and then not having think much about it ever again, other than tweaking a bit the location and side of the AdSense ad blocks themselves on your site. Passive income is always the best form of income to have because it

frees you up to be working on other things and sits there in the background making you money.

If you spend a bit of time placing the AdSense ad boxes on your site when you build it, and then keep your titles and content inline with the topic of your blog, you can make money with AdSense without much further thought. AdSense is a great source of passive income. Passive income is very important and valuable. Passive income is money which you receive without having to do daily work for it. It is simply something you set-up once and then sit back and collect your money from it over time.

One way to publish a successful monetized blog is to find a blog topic which is fairly unique. Find a unique topic means you do not have a lot of websites to compete with in the search engines. By doing this you can generate a lot of natural visitors through search engine listings and then from those visitors a lot of clicks on your AdSense ads as well.

There are entire books written on how to find "The" topic to publish the best monetized blog. However, the easiest way is to simply search for topics that interest you and see how many page hits sites like Google returns; the lower the number, the better the topic. Understand however, that everything you search will have a ton of hits. Any search with results lower than about a two million is probably a great option for a blog topic. Any search over about ten million is probably not the best topic to choose.

Trying to get good search engine rankings with a topic like "Chickens" is much easier than trying to get a high ranking with a topic like "Computers". With a topic of computers there are literally millions of websites; some are very large sites, dedicated to the topic. All of whom you will have to compete with for rankings! Why try and compete with IBM and Dell when you can simply find something easier to blog about? It just doesn't make

sense to try. Stick to the lesser popular keywords and you will see better traffic and AdSense income.

Google's AdSense Terms of Service

When you sign up for Google's AdSense, you will be asked to agree to their "Terms of Service" agreement. This is one agreement which you should read and make sure you fully understand everything on it.

Google has very specific rules as to what you can and cannot do with their AdSense ads. And Google is very serious about their rules. For instance you are prohibited from asking your readers to click on the AdSense links. You are totally prohibited from clicking on the links on your own sites. You are also prohibited from putting Google AdSense links in pop-ups, pop-under(s), or websites with any type of pornographic material.

You are only permitted three AdSense boxes per website page. By understanding the terms of the AdSense agreement it will go a long way towards helping you to stay both ethical and profitable with their program. Ignoring their terms of service will only cause you problems and likely get you kicked off of the program forever.

Google tracks websites which are created with a bunch of junk content specifically to get AdSense clicks. Google does not like splogs and goes after them with a vengeance even encouraging other bloggers to report them when they find them online. These sites generally copy content from other websites or free content sites, and then post it on their site solely for AdSense revenue. This is against Google's policy and they will pull their ads from these sites when they find them. As an ethical blogger this is actually a good thing for you and your success because it can keep the

splogs from getting higher search rankings than your real and valid blog which you put your time into creating and keeping up to date.

AdSense for Search

Google also offers a companion program to AdSense which is called "AdSense for Search." The AdSense for Search program allows you to host a Google search box on your website or blog. When a visitor to your website searches via that search box you will be paid if they go on to purchase something online from the search. In other words, Google does not pay you for the search itself, but does pay you from any revenue earned from the search which originated on your website.

AdSense for Search can be a great income generator for you. Assume for a moment that your blog is about appliance repair. Someone finds your site that is looking for information on the problem they are having with their washing machine. You have a Google Search box on your blog. After the visitor is done reading what you have suggested the problem might be, they decide to go on to search for a new washing machine. Maybe you had a review on your blog of a good washer they might consider buying. If they buy this washing machine from the search then you will get part of the revenue from that purchase because the search started on your blog. How entirely cool is that? All you did was simply host a search box on your blog!

Is There A Way To Determine Revenues Before Hand?

So, this all sounds easy so far and you want to know how much money you can earn through AdSense and AdSense for Search, right? The answer to that question is; "It depends."

Sorry, I know that's not a great answer, or the one you were likely hoping to hear, but that's the best answer anyone can ever give you. Anyone who gives you a different answer is lying to you!

Google does not release how much it pays for various clicks. The money you can make from AdSense and AdSense for Search depends largely on the volume of traffic to your site and how often you get clicks on the Google ads.

Obviously the more traffic to your site then the more potential clicks you will receive. No one knows how many visitors you will have and no one can tell you how many of those visitors will click on your ads. It is simply impossible to know.

What most people do know for sure about AdSense is that some clicks pay you mere cents and others pay a few dollars for a single click. It all depends on the specific topic and very specific keywords for the ads. For obvious reasons, Google does not release which clicks pay more and which pay less. This is one of those things you have to try and guess about.

The single absolute best thing you can do to insure that you make the most amount of money possible with AdSense is to set-up a quality blog with a good topic, post quality information on it regularly, and promote it to get the maximum visitors possible. Using this model you will make the most money possible from AdSense without having to play games with Google or your readers.

Chapter 4: EARNING WITH CPA OFFERS

CPA offers (or Cost Per Action) are another great way to monetize your blog. These are offers where you display an advert for a free trial, a survey or to fill in your details and you get paid per lead.

These often convert very nicely because there is no selling involved. People are signing up for a freebie and the companies will pay you for that lead.

Merchant and campaign names	Start Date	Rate	EPC	Status
MaxBounty Inc. 321 Foreclosure	2008/08/25	\$10.00/lead	\$0.25	APPROVED
MaxBounty Inc. Auto Warranty Today	2008/07/28	\$8.30/lead	\$0.03	APPROVED
MaxBounty Inc. My Debt Superhero	2008/06/04	\$25.00/lead	\$0.13	APPROVED
MaxBounty Inc. Home Foreclosure Fighter	2008/05/26	\$6.50/lead	\$0.11	APPROVED
MaxBounty Inc. Debt Relief Consultant	2008/05/12	\$20.00/lead	\$0.05	APPROVED
MaxBounty Inc. Credit Check Total - 3 Free Reports	2008/05/07	\$23.00/sale	\$0.05	APPROVED
MaxBounty Inc. Quicker Auto Loans	2008/05/02	\$18.00/lead	\$0.13	APPROVED
MaxBounty Inc. FreeCreditReport.com	2008/05/02	\$20.00/sale	\$0.20	APPROVED
MaxBounty Inc. ElitePlus Special with Cash Advance	2008/04/24	\$18.00/lead	\$0.45	APPROVED
MaxBounty Inc. SuperCashSource.com	2008/04/11	\$8.00/lead	\$0.05	APPROVED
MaxBounty Inc. 411 Tax Relief	2008/04/02	\$20.00/lead	\$0.02	APPROVED
MaxBounty Inc. Quote Wizard - Home Insurance (4 Fields)	2008/03/31	\$2.30/lead	\$0.02	APPROVED
MaxBounty Inc. Quote Wizard - Auto Insurance (5 Fields)	2008/03/28	\$3.75/lead	\$0.06	APPROVED
MaxBounty Inc. Turbo Tax Premium (One Field)	2008/02/04	\$1.10/lead	\$0.03	APPROVED
MaxBounty Inc. Grant-A-Day - FREE Government Money	2007/09/04	\$27.50/sale	\$0.14	APPROVED

The picture above shows you a number of different CPA offers. You can see the payout varies and some are paying you per lead and some per sale.

CPA ads tend to come in a wide variety of formats, which means you can pretty much find anything to fit that unused corner of your blog.

This is an example of the different sizes and types of adverts available.

Not all offers will have all of these ad formats:

text ad 21912	banner 22048 300x250
text ad 21913	banner 22049 160x593
text ad 21914	banner 22050 300x250
text ad 21915	banner 22578 88x31
text ad 21916	banner 22579 120x240
text ad 21917	banner 22580 120x600
text ad 21918	banner 22581 125x125
HTML solo email 21919	banner 22582 125x125
HTML solo email 21920	banner 22583 120x60
HTML solo email 21921	banner 22584 120x90
text solo email 21911	banner 22585 120x90
banner 21963 728x90	banner 22586 180x150
banner 21964 160x593	banner 22587 234x60
banner 21965 600x160	banner 22588 234x60
banner 22044 728x90	banner 22589 250x250
banner 22045 160x593	banner 22590 300x250
banner 22046 600x160	banner 22591 728x90
banner 22047 160x593	banner 22592 728x90

This really allows you to pick and chose adverts to go on your site. You can find small squares, large rectangles, skyscrapers and banners.

Which will perform best you will have to work out through testing on your website, but CPA offers are a very good additional stream of income as you can host them with Adsense adverts without any problems.

Be aware that CPA ads do change fairly frequently. Companies tend to run a campaign for a certain number of weeks and then stop them, so you may have to change your ads every month. However, this is to your benefit as you can advertise newer offers, you can almost change the look of your blog by changing the adverts and can react quickly to news / events by placing relevant offers on your website.

CPA adverts are another valuable source of income for your blog and will help to break up the AdSense ads and give readers something else to click on. With many paying per lead and not per sale, they can be very easy to convert if you pick ads that are targeted towards your niche. Just GOOGLE "[Cost Per Action Programs](#)" and you will find numerous CPA programs.

Chapter 5: SELLING ADVERTISING SPACE

Once your blog has built up some traffic you can start to sell advertising space directly rather than fill your ad space with Adsense, CPA and affiliate programs.

If your blog is high traffic and popular, you can get a lot of money for your ads, perhaps more than you would make from promoting affiliate programs.

Start by creating an Advertise Here page on your blog so that people can find it and see what you are offering. As your site builds in popularity and traffic, you can gradually increase your price but you may have to start relatively low.

A good way to gauge price is to look at what your competitors are charging and see how their site stats compare to yours.

If you display stats on your Advertise Here page that demonstrate the popularity of your blog, it will help to justify the fees you are charging. Here's an example from a popular technology blog:

Site Stats

- 📊 Alexa: 2,377
- 📊 Technorati: 40
- 📊 RSS readers: 25,000+
- 📊 Average comments per post: 50
- 📊 NorthxEast [Top 50 Most Influential Bloggers](#)
- 📊 Winner of the [2007 Performancing Blog Award](#) for Most Controversial Blog

Different sizes and placement of ads will also influence their fee. Ads above the fold in prominent positions will attract a premium price. Here's an example of an ad size and requirements from a popular blog.

Here's a larger ad on the same site:

300×250 Embedded Ad Sponsorship

Taking orders for October 2007.

The 300×250 ad is embedded into the first two posts of the front page and into all single posts. **The ad also appears in the first two posts of the full feed RSS.** Over 1 million banner impressions per month.

Your ad will go in rotation with nine other banners. You may purchase more rotation if you wish your ad to show up more often - buy ten rotations and you'll own the entire ad spot. Price per rotation is \$500 per month. The banner can not be bigger than 25K in size. Animation allowed but no Flash.



Here's another example of another advertising spot on the same website:

125×125 Button Sponsorship



The 125×125 button appear on every page, under the heading "John Chow dot Com Sponsors." Button locations are randomized with each page load to give advertisers even exposure. Pricing is \$500 per month per button. Only eight spots are available. The button can not be bigger than 15K in size. Animation allowed but no Flash.

If you're interested in securing a 125×125 button sponsorship, Email your ad to johnchow@johnchow.com and pay by clicking the PayPal link below.

Here's an advert that goes into the RSS feeds on the blog:

RSS Text Ad Sponsorship

29576 readers
BY FEEDBURNER

Text ads under each RSS posts are available for \$200 per month. Only five text ads will appear under each post and number of advertisers are limited to ten at any one time. This means your ad will show up on every second post. Like post level text ads, RSS text ads can have a full 80 character title and 150 letter description.

And here's another opportunity to earn revenue:

Sponsored Reviews

The blog accepts ReviewMe reviews at a rate of \$500 per review. Sponsored reviews receive at least 12 hours as the top front page post. The gives your review maximum exposure to [REDACTED] readers. You can read some of our reviews [here](#).

ReviewMe represents this blog for sponsored reviews. You may [order your review here](#).



Plus on top of this, you could sell advertising in specific posts, sell links on the blog and so on.

All of the above illustrate the multitude of ways of advertising on a blog. You can see this website could make thousands of dollars a month from selling advertising, and any advertising slots that aren't sold can easily be filled either by affiliate programs or your own products.

Selling advertising on your website is a great way to create additional streams of income. If your blog is popular and high traffic then you can charge a lot of money for these adverts and people will be happy to pay for it!

If you want to increase the value of the adverts you can sell on your website, then keep driving traffic to your blog, add unique and interesting content and make sure that your blog is focused on your niche

Chapter 6: Affiliate Program Revenue Streams

Affiliate programs are another excellent source of revenue for your blog. There are a massive numbers of affiliate programs out there on the internet just waiting for you to promote them. Not only can you promote products created by affiliate marketers, but big brands such as eBay, Amazon and many high street stores now have affiliate programs.

Two popular places to find affiliate programs are www.commissionjunction.com www.affiliatewindow.com or maybe <https://www.fusionquest.com/> . Between the three of these sites you can find a massive amount of affiliate programs for almost any niche.

When selecting an affiliate program, you can usually see what the earnings per click are and how successful the ads are. Some ads just do not convert, but you will find that out as you test adverts on your blog.

Affiliate program managers want to make your life, as the affiliate marketer, as easy as possible. To this end, they provide you with a wide range of different ad styles plus make it simple for you to incorporate the code into your page. They create the code and you copy and paste it into your blog. I am sure the affiliate managers aren't that far away from inserting the code for you! They really are that keen to help you succeed, because your success means their success.

When picking an affiliate program to promote, it is important that you really think about what your site visitors are looking for, i.e. what problems they have that need a solution.

There may be times when you can't find a precise affiliate program to match your niche, but you may find some that could fit. For example, if your website is about confidence, you may find that you can't find many confidence boosting problems.

But if you step outside of the box for a moment, you may realize that people lack confidence because they are shy, overweight, consider themselves unattractive, and so on. Suddenly, a whole lot of affiliate programs open up - weight loss, cosmetic surgery, etc etc.

Thinking laterally like this will help you significantly in finding good converting adverts to use on your site.

Most affiliate programs designed for bloggers require a minimum amount of traffic and a reasonable amount of quality visitors each day. Many companies and merchants do not want to work with blogs unless they've reached a specific page rank or search engine presence, so it's important to read the guidelines and learn what the requirements are for each. Knowing how you fare against similar blogs will help you learn about which affiliate networks to join, and there are many ways to get started.

Today's leading affiliate programs include:

- " [Linkshare](#)
- " [Clickbank](#)
- " [Commission Junction](#)

Linkshare

[Linkshare](#) offers a very comprehensive affiliate link network, and is made up of some of today's leading brands and e-tailers. The linkshare program is easy to setup, and costs nothing to join. Commissions on products sold are competitive and set at attractive percentages; you'll find brands including Chase, Avon, Macy's, Best Buy, Netflix, and others that can complement your blog and industry.

The list of Fortune 500 clients offers you an opportunity to create a strong lineup of new products, but balancing this out with quality content on your blog and a diverse set of links is a top priority. The reporting system is smooth and easy to manage; you can simply log in and learn about traffic results and the analytics section helps you learn about how your customers are responding. Linkshare is one of the largest pay-per-performance affiliate programs available, and can turn out to be a very valuable opportunity for your business blog.

Clickbank

[Clickbank](#) is another popular resource for bloggers interested in affiliate programs, and offers a range of e-books and software products instead of 'tangible' products. These are valuable for companies that may be looking for educational or resource material to add to their blog, and isn't necessarily a good fit for all e-tailers and ecommerce sites.

It's a good idea to take a look at the type of inventory available; Clickbank is broken down into different categories including entertainment, health, B2B, computing, and society/culture. You may find some e-books and

other digital products that complement your website, or write a post about your own experience after downloading a specific piece of text or software.

As long as you keep in mind that you are simply recommending these products for your users, you can use Clickbank to your advantage. Commission rates are fairly high, simply because there is such a large assortment of 'niche' products available; some commissions offers as much as 70% per sale.

Commission Junction

[Commission Junction](#) is a fast-growing affiliate network that has gained recognition by many professional bloggers. This affiliate network also offers digital products from a variety of industries, and works as an intermediary between your company and the affiliate programs themselves. The company provides steady statistics of your performance with each company, and a multitude of products; you can choose different styles of your 'ad placement' as well, to include text links, buttons, or your choice of ad banners. Whatever the case may be, it's a good way to learn about the multitude of affiliate merchants available, and applicable to you.

The application process for all the major affiliate programs is relatively simple, and rarely requires an upfront investment. Clickbank is the only exception, and there are different programs available for businesses interested in participating in a network of 'premium' merchants. Premium level affiliate networks enable you to earn higher commission rates, and in some cases you'll have access to a wider range of products and merchants.

After reviewing your website, traffic counts, and approving your registration information, each site will offer a username and password for easy login. Once you login to your account, you can apply directly to each participating affiliate merchant and learn about the terms of service.

Make sure that you read the entire terms of service agreements for each program you intend to join; there may be conflicts of interest with your own business or advertising on the site, and you will want to review the requirements in detail as you get started. After agreeing to the terms, you will have an opportunity to send in a request to join. All merchants that approve your site will then notify you about your status, and you can start building a roll of links to include on your posts. Some merchants require a direct link with a picture accompaniment, while others are satisfied with an embedded URL only. Your goal is to make sure that the post itself is in line with your company goals, and can strategize and place each link accordingly.

Consider In Review Posts, Links To Product Demos

I have found that I get good results promoting affiliate programs when I write about the product I am promoting and include text links. If you write a post as a review, then it will help you make sales, particularly if you point out what you didn't like in the product and how you think it could be improved - people will be more likely to think it's an honest review then and it will help conversions to a product in your niche that you do recommend.

Of course, you can take this a step further. What about recording a video demonstration of the product? Not only can you put this on your blog, but

you can put it on video sharing sites such as www.YouTube.com and others.

This benefits you in two ways.

1. You get traffic from the video on the video sharing sites and from the search engines where the videos are ranking for keywords
2. The video demonstrates to people how the product works, which can help make up the mind of those people who are sitting on the fence.

Another technique for promoting affiliate programs is to compare two products. Pick two competing products, ideally one higher in value than the other (this will help your conversion rate) and compare the products.

Write a review comparing product A with product B and point out how they differ as well as their bad points. This will help you to make sales because some people will buy the cheap product because it meets their needs. Other people will buy the more expensive product, because it meets their needs, or because they are the sort of people who when given the choice always buys the higher value product, assuming it is better.

Additional Items to Consider when Selecting an Affiliate Program

Using affiliate marketing on your blog requires some strategy, but the step can benefit both readers and blog owners simultaneously. The goal is establish credibility first and gain a good understanding of what your

readers may enjoy. Then your blog can serve as a product recommendation site, rather than a 'seller.'

It's important to think about the potential impact of every post, especially when you are providing links and directing visitors outside of your own site. Knowing what is acceptable - and what isn't - will be critical to the success of your business blog.

When making the selection of companies and programs you want to work with, you'll always want to consider your audience. IF they are generally shopping for specific products, a little research on recommendations and similar products may be required before you start posting about them. Making a genuine recommendation is much better than having random posts just 'selling' all the products in your affiliate channel.

Remember the value of credibility as you proceed to populate your blog with affiliate links. This will help you filter out any potential damage to your readership.

Any time that you are promoting or talking about a product, you will want to include links embedded within your post. This is the best way to 'soft sell' and avoid being intrusive. Instead of direct banner advertising, or even putting in a picture with a link attached, contextual advertising will help you promote the product with a 'helpful' link of the product for sale. This can help with positioning and avoid turning off new visitors if they realize it is an affiliate link.

Even though many people are turned off by the idea of blogs as 'selling platforms,' you can be strategic about positioning and create advertorial-like placements as needed.

The Importance of Trust In Your Blog

Making Affiliate Links Work for You

Increasing readership of your blog will take time, marketing, and quality posting on a regular basis. As a result, you'll need to be very careful how you present affiliate links and related products. In many cases, people will simply be turned off by the idea that you are attempting to sell something, and careful positioning is a huge factor in how valuable your affiliate links will be.

Web readers are looking for fresh and new content, so there is no reason why your posts should fall short of quality, whether you are making a product recommendation or even attempting a direct sale.

A blog is a very powerful tool for your marketing and overall business presentation, so partnering up with affiliate merchants that are relevant to your industry is just as important as writing quality posts and presenting valuable information.

Building trust is an essential element for ongoing readership of your blog, and you can earn your reputation as an expert by being consistent.

If you choose to write about site and products, make sure that they offer a unique perspective and are not just a simple 'show-and-tell.' This can help with the integrity and credibility of your site tremendously, and will be likely to be shared with others more often than not.

Some bloggers use the tactic of 'cloaking' affiliate links by adding text links within simple text, and not mentioning the product at all. This can be

helpful in some situations, since most web-savvy readers will catch the link code and affiliate ID, and may be turned off.

Others may choose to 'hijack' or bypass your affiliate link because they are uncomfortable with this unknown link. Others may simply be blocked by anti-adware programs so users may not see them. Another, perhaps more valuable strategy, is to mask your affiliate link by redirecting them to another page within the site or blog.

Redirecting for Affiliate Links

When the user hovers over the link itself, clicking on it will take the visitor to an internal redirect page that you need to create separately.

The redirect page is a simple page that lists all the products and affiliate links so anyone who clicks on the link will be taken to another page with just the product.

Another important factor to consider is the value of comments. You may decide to place affiliate links in comments that you post on other websites, or in response to reader comments on your own blog.

Again, keep in mind the credibility and value you are providing; if it seems like a 'direct sell', you will simply start turning off potential visitors.

Answering comments appropriately and regularly will help you earn the respect of loyal readers. Increasing traffic with credibility in mind is one of the most effective ways to market and promote your blog, and ultimately, your business.

Of course, you are not only limited to selling other people's products.

If you find that you are selling a lot of a particular type of product, it may be time for you to create your own product in that niche along the same lines and sell that and instead of settling for a commission, you take the whole lot for yourself.

Selling affiliate products on your blog is a great way to conduct market research and find out what is selling and what isn't. It will help you to create laser targeted, high value products which you will be able to sell really easily.

Not only that, but you can survey your site visitors to help you create the product they want to buy plus you have an instant market and sales funnel for your product!

Affiliate programs are an excellent additional source of income, not only to advertise on your blog, but to sell to any lists that you are building.

Now that we've settled on three distinct ways you can monetize your blog, let's fall back, re-group and consider the structure of your blog.

Chapter 7: Blog Traffic Through Compelling Content

Everyone who publishes a blog has two main goals in common. These goals are to bring people in to read their blog and to keep readers coming back to read it as often as possible. Regardless of anything else you do or don't do with your own blog, these must be your two main goals as well. If you do not have visitors to your blog, and those visitors do not click on your AdSense ad links, then you will not make any money with your blog. It is just that plain and simple.

But I Can't Think Of What To Write In My Blog?

You have gone through the process of setting-up your blog, you have AdSense strategically placed on it for maximum clicks, and now you find yourself with zero idea what to write about. Been there, done that, bought the proverbial t-shirt. Most of us with our own blogs have been in the exact same position. We want to blog, we know how to write a decent paragraph or two, but faced with the blank text box on Blogger we sit and stare at it. We think to ourselves that no one wants to read what we have to say. Or, worse yet, we can't think of a single thing to write about. We have temporary blog writer's block. Don't worry, there are simple solutions to the problem.

One of the best ways to build-up a popular blog, translation - one which has the potential to earn you lots of money, is to have both frequently updated, engaging, content and good ad placement. In my humble opinion, ad placement is the easy part. The hard part, at least at first, is thinking of a topic which you can write about day after day.

You quite literally have unlimited options as to what you can write about on your blog. However, this can be more of a curse than a blessing. It's like a child walking into a toy store who has been told they can have anything they want. It is overwhelming. What do they choose? There are so many options. Being told "write about anything you want" is similarly overwhelming; there are just too many options available to you.

To help you decide what the topic of your blog should be, it is important to understand a bit about how search engines and AdSense work. If you were simply interested in publishing a personal, non-monetized blog, then you could write about anything you wanted. You would send the link to your friends and family, post updates about your life on it from time to time, and you would be good to go. However, if you want a monetized blog, then you need to understand how to get visitors to come to your blog, how to make them keep coming back, and how to make the most amount of money possible from your visitors clicking on your AdSense ads.

We will examine Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and the inter-workings of AdSense more in other chapters of this e-book. For now it is vital to the success of your blog that you understand that knowing a bit about how both SEO and AdSense work can be a big help in deciding what you should blog about. If you are interested in making money with your blog, then you want to find topics which will bring you traffic through the search engines. Search engine optimization can help to bring you some readers, fresh content keeps all of your readers coming back and relevant AdSense ads on your blog help to get you the clicks that make you money.

Just simply looking at search engine optimization or AdSense will not guarantee your blog success with any specific topic. However the additional information search engine optimization and AdSense provides can help to steer you in the right direction with your blog. Use these two things as guidelines in building your blog and all of your content. It will be to your advantage to do so.

Coming Up With A Topic For Your Blog?

Think long and hard about your life. Think about your skills. What do you do for work? What do you like to do in your spare time? What are your hobbies? What are your unique skills? Do you have children? Do you have pets? What are your dreams and aspirations? What is unique about you? What is unique about what you know versus what other people know? You can easily use the answers to these questions in your quest to find a good blog topic.

If you have trouble answering the questions above then find someone close to you and ask them to answer the questions about you. Find out what others would suggest you might want to publish a blog about. Often you cannot see what is right before you, but others who are close to you can. You might be surprised at the great ideas they might come up with for you. Listen to their suggestions. Answer the questions for yourself, and decide on a good topic.

The most important thing you can do is to blog about something interesting, both interesting to you and to other people. Something you either know a lot about, or have the desire to learn a lot about. For example, I may find that a topic like “lime green paint” would be good blog topic for search engine optimization and AdSense, however after about

three posts then what would I write about that could possibly be interesting to anyone? There probably isn't much after those first three posts to write about. This would make lime green paint probably not the best topic for my blog.

You will need to strike a balance between search engine optimization, AdSense ad block placement, your knowledge of your potential topic, and your interests.

Finding a topic you like and are knowledgeable about helps you be able to write interesting posts. Your posts do not have to be brilliant works of literary art. They simply have to be engaging, interesting, and most of all fairly frequent. You will find blogging to be the easiest and most enjoyable if you pick a good topic for yourself.

Trust me when I say that you are setting your blog up for failure if you choose a topic based solely on search engine optimization and AdSense yet don't have any real interest in the topic. You will likely run out of interesting things to say before too long and your readers will get bored and not stick around. You will also find that you do not have the motivation needed over the long-haul if you choose something you do not enjoy writing about. You are much better off by taking the time to find the right topic for your blog(s) right from the start. This will give your blog the best chance for success and generate you the most passive income possible.

Posting Articles on Your Blog

I prefer to post Articles on my blogs four or five days each week. Posting more often than that isn't necessary, but you also do not want to post too

infrequently either. Nothing will loose you readers faster than if you only post now and again when you feel like it. If your readers come back to your blog even once or twice and find the same content with nothing new then they will likely think you have abandoned the blog and they will not come back. Your readers will have a very short attention span and will always be looking for new and exciting information on your blog. If you can't be bothered to write some new content for them to read then why should your readers keep checking back in to try and read it?

Likewise, it is totally unnecessary to post multiple Articles each day on your blog. Some people say you should post three Articles each day on your blog. This just isn't necessary and sort of defeats the entire purpose of generating yourself some passive income. You want to keep your readers coming back but you do not want to bury them in content either. They should be coming to your blog, reading a new posting or two, clicking on some ads, and then leaving to return again in the next day or two.

The style in which you write your blog posts can greatly affect the readership of your blog. You should always write as if you are talking to your best friend. Write as if you personally know each person who is reading your blog. Work to develop a relationship with your readers so they feel they "know" you. By taking this time to get to know you and by you taking the time to get to know your readers you will develop a loyal reader base for your blog.

Ask your readers questions in your blog posts and encourage them to post their answers as comments on your blog. When your readers take the time to post you a comment, make sure you always post an answer to them. If you cannot personally answer all of your comments then at least refer to your reader's comments in your next post. By this simple

interaction with your readers they begin to feel like you care about them. Because you care, and are interested in your readers, they will become loyal to reading your blog and will help you out by sharing your blog with people they know. This brings you more readers and ultimately more AdSense clicks. They will also see your blog as the authority on your topic and will be interested in the ads which correspond to your topic and content.

Try to be somewhat entertaining in your blog posts. You don't have to write great tales of amazing feats, or be overly humorous or anything, but you don't want to put your readers to sleep either. Keep your posts light, use some humor when you can and when it is appropriate, tell about yourself and your life occasionally, and try to look at your Articles from the perspective of your readers.

Would **you** return to your blog each day to read it? Why? Why not? Use the answers to these questions to improve your blog over time. Keep your blog changing and interesting for your readers. This will make your readers enjoy it more and you will enjoy posting on it more as well. It will also show your readers that you are serious about your blog and in it for the long haul as well. This will help them want to come back often and keep coming back over time.

Formatting Your Posted Messages

Start your posted messages off right by using a title which matches both the content of your post and the overall topic of your blog. Suppose for a moment you have a blog about your pet cat named Felix. Your cat did something funny this weekend so you want to write about it on your blog to share with your readers. Your main goal on your monetized blog is to

have your AdSense ads show up to be about cats so they blend in with your blogs topic. Rather than use an ambiguous title like “My Weekend Adventure” use something more specific like “My Weekend Adventure with Felix My Pet Cat.”

By using just “My Weekend Adventure” as your title, AdSense is liable to return you ads for things like weekend vacations and other topics which are not of interest to your cat blog readers. By including the word “cat” in your title, and even using the word “pet” too, you are much more likely to get ads about cat products which are much more relevant to your blog. You are also much more likely to come up in search results when people are searching for “cat” or “pet” related websites in search engines.

You also want to have a link to each of your blog messages. This is the field directly below your title in Blogger. A good rule of thumb online is that any type of link is always a good thing. The more links a website has the higher the search engine ranking of the site. Good search engine ranking equals more of those natural visitors to your site and thus more clicks on your AdSense ads. (We will talk about links in detail in Chapter 9 of this eBook.)

To start off the text sections of your post always take the time to re-type your title in bold type. Below this second title, which of course has good key words for AdSense and search engine optimization, follow up with the actual text of your post Article.

Within your Article text itself you will also want to try and use as many of your keywords as possible. Mention “cat” and “pet” multiple times where it makes sense to do so if your blog is about pet cats. However, do not add things into your posts simply for search engine optimization and AdSense

because it will irritate your readers. You want to use your keywords but use them when it makes sense to do so.

Another simple tip to help you write exciting looking posts, and ones in which the search engines like, is to use a variety of formatting. If you say something which has importance – **use bold**. Use larger text for things like titles, subtitles and keywords. However, don't irritate your readers just to improve your rankings. Make your posts read well and not look like you created them just for the rankings.

If your posts are distracting to read because of weird formatting or stuffing of keywords in them then it will make your readers feel like your blog is just about the income and search engine rankings rather than about their own learning and entertainment. This will cause your readers to move on to other blogs which are more about their learning and entertainment and less about income for the blogger. Always remember that your blog is not the only one on its chosen topic, but you can always strive to be the best blog on that topic!

Think for a moment about your local television news broadcast. You turn on the television to watch after a hard day at work and then you found it to be 95% commercials. You would likely be very disappointed and you would likely change the channel. You would feel like there isn't anything there for you and that the broadcast was all about advertising revenue for the news station. Same thing for your readers, they do not come to your blog to be targets for advertising. They come to your blog because they feel a connection to you and an interest in what you have to say. Provide them with the necessary ads but give them the good content so they can tolerate the ads as well.

The Content of Your Posts

For the meat of your posted articles, or the actual content, I have to first suggest that you stick to writing your own blog posts. Some bloggers do purchase large batches of articles written on a single topic, and then post them to their blog each day as if they had written them themselves. There are a few flaws with doing it this way. I'm not saying you absolutely should not use PLR articles. Of course you can, it's your blog. If you do however, using them as a model to build a post around and/or re-writing the article would be better.

You will never get good quality content from purchased articles unless you pay a decent price for them, which sort of defeats the purpose of having a blog you want to make money with. And, you just plain cannot connect with your readers and give your blog that personal feel it needs to have if you are just posting pre-written articles.

Writing decent content really and truly does not take a lot of time, but it is well worth the effort for the returns you will receive. Even if you post less often than you would like, or with shorter posts, that is still better than an impersonal blog of cheap purchased content.

Your blog Article posts do not need to be long. Trying to aim for posts which are about 300-400 words is probably ideal. Even a simple paragraph or two every few days is enough writing if that is all the time or writing ability you have. The most important thing is that you post regularly and try to engage your readers with your writing style and content. Make your readers want to come back and "visit" with you each and every day! Even if all you can muster on a given day is what is going on in your life and why you haven't posted anything on the topic of your blog that day or week.

So, what do you write? An example of good content would be a product review. If you have a blog on horses you might want to do a review on the new hoof cleaner you just bought. By mentioning a specific product you will find that AdSense gives your blog ads which are similar to the product you are reviewing.

This helps you to get clicks because the ads blend in to your content and if they are positioned in the right place on your blog can look like personal product recommendations from you. Other horse lovers will read your post and then either click on a link to go buy the same hoof cleaner you mentioned, or they will use your Google for Search box and buy one through that. Either option will result in income for you from Google. Simple.

Other good content is anything which educates or entertains your reader. If you have a blog on horses you might want to talk about their care, their health, or even their personality. You might want to entertain your readers with stories of your personal horses or a review of the best horse movie you have seen. Think of your blog like television.

Some programs educate while others simply entertain. Either type of show serves its purpose, and both have advertising that goes along with their content. All television stations offer a variety of programming so that they can appeal to the largest viewing audience as possible. And, we as viewers put up with the ads because we know that without them we would not have our favorite shows available to watch.

Another way you can get good content for your blog is allow people with a similar blog topic, or website owners offering similar goods and services, to “guest” blog on your blog. This allows you to have great and relevant

content on your blog which you did not have to take the time to personally write. You can also offer to guest blog on their blogs in exchange for a link back to your own blog.

If you really cannot write or have little interest in writing your blog, then you can always hire someone to do your blog posts for you. However, if you do choose to go this route you will want to find someone who writes well, with English as their native language if you have an English blog, and someone who is very knowledgeable about the topic of your blog. You will want to work closely with them to make sure that they care about your blog and your readers as you do. Read what they post on your blog each day and decide if that is what you want your blog to be about.

Finding freelance writers who want to blog for you is not hard to do. There are several websites where you can post a “writer wanted” Article and come up with suitable candidates to post to your blog on a regular basis.

Chapter 8: Driving More Traffic to Your Blog

Forum Signature Files

One way to increase traffic to your blog is to post messages on internet forums. An internet forum is simply a message board where people gather to talk and form their own online communities. There are forums on just about any topic you can think of. Seriously, you would be surprised what topics you can find forums on! You can find forums on anything from childbirth to finance, from politics to world history, and literally every other topic in between.

Most online forums allow you to have a personalized signature file. Within this personal signature file you can generally put a link to your blog, a link to a website you own or frequent, your name, the city you live in, or any other basic information you choose to have visible to anyone who reads the forum messages. When you post a message on the forum, your signature file will automatically post the information you entered into it, at the bottom of each of the messages you post. Using a signature on forums can be a great way to get people to come and read your blog while being able to reach your target market easily.

What you will want to do first is to sign-up for forums which either relate directly to your topic, or where people with similar interests to your topic hang-out online, and then include the link back to your blog in your signature file. You want to make sure to only post good quality and more important relevant messages to the topic of the forum.

You should aim to become a valuable participant in the forum. If your messages add value to the forum for the other community readers, and you get to know some of the other posters and build an online friendship, then they will likely check-out your blog and start reading it. When they find that they like your blog they will also post messages on their favorite forums about it and bring you more readers. They will begin to advertise your blog for you. What's better than some passive advertising? Nothing!

What you do not want to ever do is join a forum and simply post about how great your blog is and how everyone should check it out. This is considered spamming and will result in you being banned from most forums, and might even get your blog itself shut-down. You will not gain any meaningful traffic from doing this. All you will do is irritate people and possibly get some nice rude comments added to your blog. People will not check out your blog because you say it is great.

Finding Forums of Interest

Finding forums which are relevant to the topic of your blog is a very easy thing to do. Suppose for a moment that you have a blog with a topic of "trout fishing." You can simply go to www.google.com, or any other search engine you prefer to use, and type in "trout fishing +forum" and you get back 258,000 possible locations to visit for forums relating to trout fishing. The list which Google returns to you will include some duplicates and some other junk, but you will also find that there are more trout fishing forums than you ever imagined!

Because of the way search engines work, you will find that the most popular forums will show towards the top of the search result pages. Those are probably the best to join and get to know people in. Because

they have a high search engine ranking tells you that they have a large membership and a good grasp of the topic of your interest. They are the most likely places where people who enjoy trout fishing are hanging out online.

As well as searching for "trout fishing," you might also consider searching for other topics which would be of interest to other people who trout fish. Some of these topics might include subjects like backpacking, camping, fishing, fly fishing, hiking, outdoor life, outdoor recreation, living off the land, etc... Think about all of the other things you are interested in and think about whether or not others who trout fish would also be interested in those things. From there you can come up with relevant words to search and a whole new batch of forums to introduce yourself on and participate in.

If you think outside the box a bit you can come up with unlimited options of where to share links to your blog. The more ideas you can come up with then the more readers you can bring to your blog. The more readers to your blog then the more potential AdSense clicks and the more money in your bank account.

E-Mail Signature Files

Most every e-mail client these days offers you the ability to create a signature file. Even free e-mail accounts, such as Yahoo or Hotmail, allow you to create a signature file. Exactly the same as on an online message board or forum, this signature file is attached to each and every message you send out from your e-mail account. Think of all the people you send e-mail to each day and all of the possible new blog readers you can gain from this one simple signature file.

If you attach a link to your blog in every e-mail message you send out people will invariably click on it whether it has to do with what you e-mailed them about or not. People are very curious creatures and they want to know what's up with other people and what they are thinking. Your blog allows them into your brain a bit, so they will click on the link to your blog and look it over.

These e-mail contacts may be potential blog readers who you would not have reached with online advertising in any other way. Using signature files allows you to easily reach a large variety of people yet not spend more than the couple minutes it takes to initially set up the signature file itself. And, if you have a good quality blog then it is entirely possible these new readers will pass along your link to all the people they know as well.

If you have multiple blogs and multiple e-mail accounts you can put links to all of your blogs in the signature files of each e-mail account or you can put one link per account. Try to think what will generate you the most traffic to the specific blogs you choose. You should always take the time to promote your own blogs and your own sites through your other blogs and sites; even if they are not directly related to each other. Your goal for any blog or website should always be to have the most visitors possible and you can do this through promoting your sites wherever you can both online and off.

Back-links Bring Traffic to Your Blog

One of the best ways to bring up your search engine rankings, and bring traffic to your blog, is by having a lot of back-links. A back-link is a link on someone else's website to your blog. There are many ways to get back-

links to your blog, you can write and submit articles to directories and other websites, you can write and submit a press release online, or you can simply post comments on other blogs which will then link back to your blog. Other ways to get back-links is to link all of your blog to one another and to link up with other blogger's sites for the mutual benefit of all of you.

Article Submissions

There are many places online where you can submit a short (400-600 word) non-fiction article about something you know. This article could be your first blog posting, it could be something you come up with just to post on an article directory website, or it could be an article you have someone else ghostwrite and then publish under your own name. This is one time where having other people write for you probably isn't a bad thing. As long as the article is good and sound it really doesn't matter if it was written by you or a ghostwriter you hired to write it.

Submitting an article to an online article directory is free, simple, and easy. Simply turn one of your blog posts into an article which can stand alone, and then submit it to the article directory of your choice. (Some popular ones are articlealley.com, contentdesk.com, ezinearticles.com and goarticles.com.) There are also automated submission programs you can use to submit your articles to many article sites all at one time.

Attached to your article will be a "byline." Your byline will contain information about you and a link to your blogs and other websites. You could have your byline read something like "Jane Smith is a programmer by day and blogs on horses at night. See her amazing programming website at www.iprogram.com and read her blog at www.besthorseblog.com." This example byline just created two back-

links for every time you publish the article; one to the programming site and another to the horse blog. If you post this article five times on the web you have ten back-links to your sites.

Also, many article sites allow you to publish non-exclusive rights articles on their sites. This means that you are free to post the same article on other article sites as well. Each time you submit the article you build links to your site. In addition, other bloggers and webmasters will link to these articles on their own relevant sites and that creates even more links for your site as well. By submitting articles to article directory websites you can build links easily to your site to increase your search engine rankings.

Press Release Submissions

If you were to start a small home business, one way to receive free advertising for it would be to send a press release to your local newspapers. Online there are a few press release websites where you can submit a free press release about your new blog or website. (The two most popular are prweb.com and prfree.com.)

To make a press release, simply write up a short statement about how awesome your newly launched site is and post it on the free press release websites. Make sure to have a link to your site in your press release and you have just created one additional back-link for each site you submitted your press release to. Press releases are a great way to get links without a lot of work. They can be short and to the point.

Blog Directory Submissions

Just as there are directories online for e-mail address, phone numbers, and other information, there are also directories which contain blog listings. These blog directories are websites where people can go to find

a whole list of blogs on any specific topic of interest to them. The search this directory, just like a search engine, and the results page is one of blogs which are on their topic.

Submitting your blogs to directories will help you to get both back-links and more readers to your blog. Both results will help with your search engine rankings as well as your AdSense ad revenue.

Comment on Other Blogs

Another way to create back-links to your blog is to post comments onto other people's blogs and websites. If you leave quality comments then people just might want to find out what else you have to say on your own blog. If you leave comments on another Blogger blog, then your account will show up and your comments will automatically link back to your own blog. Readers of the blog will read your comments and click on your link to see what your blog is all about.

Some people will post a short message about enjoying a blog and then ask the blogger to check out their own blog and include the link to their own website. By simply leaving a spam message of "hey check out my blog" you will likely irritate people and not gain readers. Leave quality information and people are much more likely to check out your blog. You always want to make sure you are adding value to the web, not just out advertising your own blog to make money.

Team Up With Other Bloggers

Teaming up with other bloggers can be a great way to get links to your blog. You can have a one-way back-link to your website, or you can have reciprocal links. A reciprocal link is where you link to someone's site and

they link back to yours in exchange. Search engines prefer back-links over reciprocal links, but any link is better than none. And, the more links to your blog, ultimately the better.

Many bloggers have formed what is called a "blogroll." A blogroll is a list of links to other blogs with similar topics of interest. This allows blogs to have back-links to them and also allows you to advertise your blog to the readers of all of the similar blogs. Blogrolls can be a great way to get new readers to your blog and to raise your search engine rankings at the same time.

Another thing bloggers will often do is trade posting message with another blogger. This trade of message posts is called "guest blogging." Suppose for a moment that I have a successful blog on work at home opportunities. Another blogger who I found online has a blog on stay at home parents. We could trade posts where I would allow her guest post on my blog about stay at home parents in exchange for my guest posting about work at home opportunities on her blog. We swap "guest" posts and each includes a byline with a link back to our own blog or website. I have a back-link and she has one as well.

By teaming up with other bloggers and guest blogging in this way you can have access to the loyal readers of another blog and they will have access to your blog. Because, in the example above, our blogs do not directly compete with each other for readers, we can be an added service to each other and to our respective readers. We can both build up our readership and also create some links to our site at the same time. This is a win-win situation for everyone involved in it.

Finding other bloggers to guest blog with is not difficult. If you take the time to develop a good blog, with quality content, then other bloggers with

good quality blogs will want to exchange links and posts with you. The better your blog, the better guest opportunities you will have!

Chapter 9: The Reputation Of Your Blog

Establishing a credible reputation as a blogger is both a short-term and long-term goal for your business blog, and the more valuable the information that you provide for your audience, the higher the chances of success.

Toady's competitive blogosphere makes it challenging to meet the needs of your target market if you do not pay attention to quality and maintaining some consistent standards as you start posting.

People who are turned off by your blog are less likely to return; with thousands of blogs on similar subjects, it is easy to lose traffic because of a lack of experience, poor writing, or simply not updating your blog enough.

Valuable blogs receive ongoing traffic as they start showing up on directories and indexes across the web. You either want your site registered with these directories and/or in your blogs ping list. These include sites such as:

- [Technorati](#)
- [IceRocket](#)
- [Bloggernity](#)
- [Blogdigger](#)
- [Blogstreet](#)
- [BlogPulse](#)
- [PlaZoo](#)

Obviously there are many more, but those listed above have the highest PR Ranking. So you definitely want back links from them.

All of these directories receive thousands, even millions, of visitors each day. Each item that is listed on the site receives ratings or reviews from other users, and you can start establishing credibility simply by joining. These sites also contain thousands of articles and topic matter related to your subject; they can serve as effective research tools when you are developing blog content, and can give you some valuable links to work with as you start developing fresh ideas.

When your overall site is indexed on these directories in the appropriate category, this also provides some credibility. People who are searching across these networks can see that your blog may be more worthy of attention, especially when you include a logo, title, or description for the catalog.

Elements for a Good Blog Reputation: What Your Blog MUST Have

There are some essential elements that your blog must have in order to be credible. These are a combination of the site structure and design, as well as the style and type of content you start posting. Each one is discussed in detail below, and the blog must include:

- Author name and company (if any)
- Contact information
- A brief Bio or About Us section
- Blogroll
- Links to resources
- Well-balanced visual elements
- A steady amount of ads

- No spam in comment boxes
- Compelling language and headlines
- Proper language, free from typos
- References to sources
- Carefully placed affiliate links (if any)
- Author responses on comments
- Appropriate language and conduct

You'll start with providing the author name and company; this is essential for helping your readers make a 'human' connection to your blog, and they should be able to contact you directly with any questions. Blog readers are looking for an 'insider' perspective on most issues, and it is very helpful for them to be able to distinguish company marketing materials from an actual first-person perspective. Knowing who the author is will help to bring the message of the blog closer to home.

This goes hand-in-hand with the contact information. You can include your e-mail address or even a phone number if necessary. The goal is to make sure users can trust that the information is coming from a real person, and they have the freedom to contact the author if necessary. This can help you create a connection with both customers and random visitors, providing credibility for your content.

Next it's a good idea to provide a brief bio. This can also take the form of an 'About Us' section that briefly summarizes who you are, why the blog exists, and what you plan to include. This can be helpful for anyone who simply stumbles across the blog and needs a quick summary of what your blog is about. This information may also be included on the homepage, as it can help direct users to the appropriate resources-your main website, for example-instead.

The blogroll is a very effective marketing tool, as it helps readers see who else is linking to your blog, and where to find more information. The blogroll is your connection to other blogs in the blogosphere, and credible blogs listed here will in turn help you earn some credibility. A blogroll should be comprised of at least ten to fifteen different blogs or websites.

It's a good idea to send out e-mails to everyone on the blogroll notifying them of the inclusion, and hopefully listing you on their blogroll as well. This will help boost traffic from other resources, while helping you link up to some valuable blogs for referencing as well.

The Resource Links section is another area that will demonstrate credibility; a solid resource list will inform your readers that you are using various resources for research and keeping up to date with news in your industry, and also provide them with other navigation options as they browse your site.

The resources links section can also be followed up with an e-mail to each website notifying them of the inclusion. They may choose to participate in a link exchange program as a result, furthering your chances of increased traffic.

The importance of visual elements was discussed earlier, and it's important to remember that an attractive layout will help to boost your credibility naturally.

The visual design and navigability of your site are important for your overall presentation, and making sure that there are no major errors in site design is an ongoing project.

The opportunity to include ads on your blog makes the site more valuable to advertisers, but it is important to remember balance during the selection and implementation of ads.

Overwhelming readers with ads, or simply bombarding random advertisements throughout your site can easily turn off a fair amount of first-time visitors. Even when you start joining affiliate programs and other networks, maintain a steady amount of ads that complement your site instead of distracting your readers from the content.

Monitoring spam comments is essential to keeping your blog in good standing, and will have a higher chance of reaching the top rankings of search engines when it is free of clutter and spam-related materials.

Spam blockers are often a part of most blog platforms, but even the filters can overlook some types of comment spam on occasion. Monitoring your blog regularly will ensure that you are keeping track of visitor comments, and you can select an option to moderate all comments before they are published if necessary. You may want to seriously consider an anti-spam plug-in for your blog called [WP Spam Free](#). I use it on all my blogs.

This prevents spam bloggers 'sploggers' from overloading your site with unnecessary material without authorization, and can help you post the appropriate comments and feedback to keep your blog as interactive as possible.

Ensuring that your headlines are compelling, original, and creative will also help to reach out to your readers. Credible blogs make an extra effort to provide unique and engaging content, and your efforts will pay off when you are posting relevant information on a consistent basis.

In addition to the headlines, watch the quality of the content you are posting; use strong and effective language to deliver your message, and provide links and references to material as necessary. Editing your blog regularly is just as important as writing it and it should always be free of typos and grammatical errors.

Blog entries are designed to be short, concise, and compelling; avoid turning the blog into an article repository, and write blog posts that are only 300-500 words in length at max.

If you do want readers to read an article, direct them to your company website where they can view it in a different format, or provide a link to its home on the web. It's best to maintain consistency throughout your blog so that readers can become accustomed to your voice, tone, and style.

As you develop each piece of content, make sure you are providing references to sources. Even if you are redirecting users away from your blog homepage, you can use settings where the link opens in a new window. This will help them stay on your blog page if they need to, and providing the right references will help you establish credibility and authority on the subject naturally.

Watching how and where you place affiliate link ads is another element of credibility for your blog. If readers feel that you are simply using the blog as a vehicle for affiliate links, they are much less likely to believe that your content is coming from experience and not just a marketing ploy instead. We discussed the value of affiliate link programs in the previous chapter, and it is very important to keep this in mind as you start to introduce visitors to the blog.

Affiliate links are only valuable to your readers if you have found the products valuable yourself; if readers detect that there are ulterior motives to the placement of these links, they may simply stop visiting.

Keeping up with your blog also involves responding to comments in a timely manner, and appropriately managing negativity. Starting a 'flaming war' (Written online arguments with your contributors), will not help your reputation, and many startup bloggers make the mistake of losing focus when responding to comments on their blog. At best, it can be helpful to simply moderate comments before publishing so you can control the interactions on the site.

It is difficult to earn your reputation back after communicating publicly on sensitive issues, so be weary of this during your responses.

In addition to appropriate commenting, it's essential to use the right language and tone. Even though blogging is naturally conversational in style, it can be 'read' the wrong way without context.

Make sure you are using politically correct terms when necessary, and avoid writing posts that require reading between the lines. Offending large groups of people after writing seemingly simple posts can take its toll on readership; make sure to review and edit content as needed.

Blog Credibility and SEO

Search engines today are becoming even more refined and smarter at finding relevant and informative sites and blogs to index, and your blog will receive a higher credibility status when it encompasses most of the important elements. Search engines and directories are looking for:

- Relevant content
- Appropriate formatting and titles
- Steady visitor traffic
- Linking in from other sites
- Regular posting and updating
- Consistency in blog content
- Sites free of spam and excessive advertising
- Effective use of Ad Sense

How Visitors Determine Credibility

Making yourself a trustworthy and credible resource on the web takes time, but becoming an expert in your niche industry is an essential step towards regular readership. Even if your blog is an extension of your website, you can use it as a subsidiary resource platform that can help introduce readers to your company, and encourage them to continue reading. From the customer or visitor's perspective, there are essential signs of credibility that help distinguish one source from another. This includes:

- **Longevity of the blog** - How long has it been active, how many posts are there?
- **Experience** - Does the author have other sites and experience published around the web? If so, what are they? **Expertise** - can the author verify their expertise?
- **Design** - Is the site well-constructed and updated according to industry standards?

- **Writing style** - Is the author a strong writer, or do they seem to post poorly written content on a regular basis?
- **Readership** - Has the blog or site reached a high amount of readers? Many people turn to ranking indexes such as Alexa to determine this.
- **Consistency** - Are the posts regular and arranged in the appropriate categories, or are they simply submitted to the blog randomly?
- **Transparency** - Is the voice natural and friendly, or does it sound like it is coming from the marketing/PR department of the company?

Gaining steady readership will take time, but establishing credibility is a long-term goal for any blogger regardless of experience. Knowing how to convey a message that matches with your reader's interests is a necessary step; take the time to research, review, and edit your blog posts each time and make sure that the overall blog setup and design is in line with the competition.

Chapter 10: Search Engine Optimization For Blogs

How Does a Search Engine Work?

Before we can talk about search engine optimization you need to know and understand the very basics of how a search engine works. While the process is very mathematical and way more complex than most people care to know about, I will try and give you a very simple explanation.

A search engine, such as Google, Yahoo, MSN, etc... sends a "spider" to a new website. This spider is simply a bit of code, or a program if you will, which "crawls" the website. Crawling the website is simply a matter of copying the pages and then downloading a copy of them to the search engine's web server.

Once the site has been crawled by the spider, the search engine then indexes the information from the pages it now has copies of. The indexing is all about keywords, tags, and what the site itself is all about.

When you go to www.google.com and put in a keyword to search for, your "search results" page is based in the indexed pages from this process.

So, a search engine basically sends a spider to your pages, crawls them, copies them down to their own server, indexes the information on them, and then uses their index when someone does a search. It's not really that simplistic of a process, but as far as what most of us need to know that is basically what happens.

Search Engine Optimization

Once you have your blog established and are working to get the most traffic to visit it as possible, you will invariably hear about search engine optimization, or as it is commonly referred to - SEO. While search engine optimization sounds pretty daunting, it really is a pretty simple process to understand. Being mindful of SEO can bring your blog more visitors, and thus generate more income for you by those visitors clicking on your AdSense ads.

This eBook will cover the basics on SEO, but know that just like the actual workings of a search engine; entire books can be written on the topic! And, as an added frustration, the search engines do not release exactly how they process their information and index. This means that everyone trying to optimize their sites for the search engines is doing a fair amount of guessing and trial and error to see what works for them.

When looking for something specific online you invariably go to your favorite search engine and put in the keywords to search for whatever it is you are looking for. For example, if you want to buy a new golf club you would likely go to www.google.com and type in "golf club" in the search box.

Google, the search engine, would then return you a listing of probably a million or more pages of possibilities. The first website you see on the search results page is the page ranked #1 with Google; the second result has the #2 ranking, and so on down the list. With search engine optimization your main goal is to get to as near the top as possible of the results pages when someone searches on the keywords for your blog topic. You want to be on that first page of search engine results.

When a visitor does a search through a search engine and then clicks through to your site from there they are referred to as "natural" or "organic" visitors. They got to your website by a "natural" search engine search and not through another form of advertising you have done. Search engine optimization is all about getting you the most natural visitors to your site as possible. Why? Because these natural visitors come to you without you doing any work and then click on your AdSense ads. This gives you the best form of passive income possible!

The key to good search engine optimization is getting the highest ranking possible with the least amount of extra work on your part. When someone searches Google for the keyword which is the topic of your blog, you want your blog to show up on that first page of results, nearest to the top as possible. While the search engines use very complicated and secret algorithms to create their rankings, there are some simple things you can do to help get your blog up nearer to the top. You should be posting on your topic and often, building links, using good keywords and keyword density, tagging your posts and pinging regularly. Let's take a moment and look at each of these suggestions in more detail.

Stay on Topic & Post Often

Search engines naturally prefer blogs over static websites. They appreciated that they are frequently updated and that they generally stick to one topic. This makes it important for you, as a blogger of a monetized blog, to stick to one specific topic on your blog. It is also vitally important to update your site regularly. These are the two easiest and absolute best things you can do for search engine optimization. Stay on topic, and post quality content regularly. Simple.

Links

Links to your site from other sites helps to raise your search engine rank. The search engines see links to your site as meaning that other's value it enough to link to it. They do not see if those links are created by submissions you have done yourself or others have linked to you on their own. We have already discussed how to get links to your site through forum postings, articles, press releases, guest blogging, etc... and the reason you want to spend some time and energy gaining links is simply to improve your number of readers and to help out your search engine optimization efforts.

Keywords

Keywords are essential to getting your blog(s) seen and ranked well by the search engines. In a previous chapter of this eBook we talked about writing keyword rich content, using your keywords in titles, and using special formatting like bold to attract the Googlebot to your topics. The reason for this is simply for search engine optimization. You want to use your blog's keywords often because this will help the search engine better index your website for your keywords. Better indexing is equal to a better ranking on the search engine results page when someone searches for those keywords.

Suppose for a moment you have a blog about living in Podunk. The more times you mention Podunk in your titles and posts, the more Google and the other search engines understand your site is about Podunk. This means that when someone goes to search for Podunk on Google, your

page will return with a higher position than other sites on Podunk which uses that word less on their websites.

One of your main goals with search engine optimization is to have your blog's content have a lot of keywords contained within it. In other words you need to make sure that within the words on your page, you make sure that a lot of those words are keywords. This is commonly referred to as "keyword density."

Assume for a moment that you have a blog on laptops. You write an article of about 500 words and you mention the word "laptop" 10 times in the article. This would give you a key word density of 2%. That means that 2% of your words in that article are "laptop." If you changed that same article to have the word "laptop" in your article 18 times, use a title of "The Best Laptop For Your Money" and then include the second title at the beginning of your blog text, you would then have used the word "laptop" 20 times. Using the word "laptop" 20 times in your 500 page article would give you a new keyword density of 4%.

The examples above are very simplified examples, but enough to understand why keywords, and how often you use them in your writing, are important. Your goal should be to have a keyword density of between 5% and 10% but not much higher than that. Adding too many keywords into your blog will make it hard to read for your readers and the search engines start to think you are building a splog if you get much higher than 15-20%. Again this is an area where you will want to strike a nice balance between what will be comfortable for your readers and what will be okay by the search engines as well.

Meta-Tags

META Tags, or simply referred to as "tags," are small hidden pieces of code which tell the search engines what your blog post is about. Basically tags are just a listing of keywords and a description which your visitors don't see but the search engine's indexers do as well as the AdSense Bots. If you are not getting ads from AdSense that are relevant to your blog posts, you should probably consider a plugin called "Headspace 2". If you install a plug-in called: [Headspace 2](#) then it will allow you to set the meta-tags across the whole site and on individual posts. This will help to ensure that your ads are relevant. Tags are used to help the search engines index a website without being visible and distracting to your readers.

If for instance you have a blog on photography, then you might want to add a group of tags such as: photography, photo, photography studio, pictures, prints, portrait, camera, film, etc... You want your tags to stick to your specific topic of your blog, but you also want to include all the possible words someone could search on and find your blog. These tags help get your blog indexed for all of the words included in the tags.

Unlike other blogging software, Blogger does not contain an easy way to add tags to your blog. Some blog formats do, Blogger happens to be one which doesn't. However, it is possible to generate tags for your Blogger blog by using another website and then cutting and pasting a bit of code into your template. (Similar to what we did for AdSense.) It is very simple and free to do. And it is advisable that you do put tags on your blog posts. Anything which will help with your search engine optimization you should spend the time and make sure you do it.

Some popular tag sites include de.licio.us and www.technorati.com. Signing-up for either site is very simple and free. Once you have registered then you can generate the tag code for your Blogger blog and simply paste it into your blog template.

Once you have the code you will want to paste it into your template by going to your blog's template. First back up your blog's template just in case you do not like the changes, and then paste the tag code after the place in your template which says:

```
</Title>  
<$BlogMetaData$>
```

By pasting your tag code here, each time you post a message to your blog the search engines also get a copy of all of your tagged keywords added on to the bottom of it. Even if for some reason your blog post doesn't mention your keywords the tags will! This means that if you have a blog on Christmas but you choose to talk about your family pets in your post, the indexers will still get Christmas as one of your keywords, because they get it from the tags.

Ping

The search engines send their spider, or bot, to your site on a regular basis. They schedule their visits based on the size of your website and how often it appears to be updated. However, if you want to send a message to them letting them know you have updated your site, then you can do something called "pinging." Pinging, in this context, is simply sending a code string to the search engines which says "hey come look at my site again, it's updated, and I want it indexed again."

All you have to do to ping the search engines is to go to a ping website, enter the URL of your blog, check the boxes of where you want to ping (generally do all of them) and then click "Ping." It really is that simple and quick. The two most popular ping websites are www.ping-o-matic.com and www.pingoat.com.

It is generally advisable that you ping each time you update your blog, or each week at least. This makes sure your site is getting seen by the search engines and that it is being indexed as fast as possible.

SEO and Marketing Your Blog

Search engine optimization is a very important part of making your blog successful. It's important to understand how the search engines see your information and what they do with it. By understanding how they work you are better able to create your blog as a "search engine friendly" site. The easier the search engine can work with your site, then the better rankings you will receive from them.

While search engine optimization is important, you cannot rely solely on natural visitors to your website from the search engines. It is great to have some of your readers come from there, but you will generally want your blog's name to get out there in other ways as well. You will want to do all of the other things suggested to help drive traffic to your website. The search engines, even if you get a great ranking, will not do it all for you! You need to market your site and market it to your target audience.

You're armed with some solid information about how to make money with Blogs. Watch the videos that came with this guide and get out there and start cashing in with your blogs.