

Let's Blog:

You all have heard the term Blog before, but you might not know what it means. Blog is a word derived from Web and Log. It is an online journal that you can post in addition to your core website. Blogs are created as journals, soapboxes, or information sites by many people who don't have a website or want to add additional content to an existing website.

The fact that anyone ever reads your Blog or ever visits it is almost irrelevant. Why is that? Because as a traffic generation strategy, our primary goal is that the search engines know that the blog has been updated. This is done with a procedure called blog and ping. Pinging simply means that search engines are notified of a change in your blog and it creates an indexing of the blog and the links from the blog. Now the search engines are paying attention to your blog and your website.

Setting up your Blog:

As a first blog, Google's Blogger is the best way to begin. Blogger is free, easy to set up, maintain, and is provided by Google. Start by going to <http://www.blogger.com> and click on the orange arrow link, "Create Your Blog Now." In setting up your account, you will need an existing email address, a password (you choose and it must be at least 6 characters long), and a display name. You then need to pick a blog name that will become part of your blog URL. For example: If your blog is BioFeedCat, use biofeedcat as part of the URL. The resulting URL that will direct visitors to your blog would be: <http://biofeedcat.blogspot.com>. This is the link you will put on your website to direct visitors to your blog.

Choose a template. This is the look and feel of your Blog (12 templates to choose from). If you know HTML, you can actually modify the template further. However, for our purposes, just pick a template and go with it. Your blog is now created.

Posting your first Blog:

Now you are ready to start posting. A primary focus of blogging is creating keyword rich content. Create an entry that is keyword rich and about 200 to 400 words long. Not only do you want to add targeted keywords that support your website, but you also need to link those keywords to specific web pages on your website. This is a linking strategy that search engines will use to begin indexing your pages more frequently (DO NOT always link to your homepage)

Your post should contain relevant information that supports the purpose of your website. For example, if your website is a veterinarian website, pet care topics are almost endless. Don't post on automotive care if you are a veterinarian. Makes sense right? Well, the fact is, a lot of peoples blogs get way off topic.

Take an article that you might have written for your website and break it into smaller chunks and post it to your blog. However, make sure that you modify the posting by at least 25% before you post to your blog. Search engines are very conscious of content and you are rewarded for content.

The blog entry screen is very similar to a word processing program with buttons that allow you to bold, italicize, change fonts and font sizes, align text, create bulleted paragraphs and add images. However, one of the most important buttons on this button bar is the hyperlink button. When you write a keyword or keyword phrase that can be used to lead the viewer (or the search engine) back to your website, highlight the words, click on the linking button, and type in the destination URL to your website.

Blog Settings:

Once you have created your posting, you need to look further at the settings for your blog. In actuality, most of the default settings will work just fine without adjustment. However, there are a couple settings

that need to be addressed. Click on the Settings tab; notice that there are 8 sub-tabs. On the Basic tab, add a description of your blog that will be displayed under the blog name. Do not change any of the other default settings on the Basic sub-tab.

On the Publishing sub-tab, change Notify Weblogs.com from no to yes. This setting will result in an automatic ping to the search engines every time your blog is changed. The Formatting sub-tab does not need to be changed. The “Comments” sub-tab does not need to be changed yet, but if you are getting unwanted comments to your blog, you may want to modify some of these settings. No changes are required on the remaining sub-tabs (Archiving, Site Feed, Email and Permissions).

Go back to the Posting Tab, preview your posting and if it looks okay, publish the posting to your blog.

Pinging your posting:

The last step in this process is to Ping your blog. By setting the Notify Weblogs.com setting to yes, you are automatically pinging that important notification site. However, one more ping site to use is <http://pingomatic.com/> for pinging several notification sites at once. You will enter your blog name, blog URL (<http://biofeedcats.blogspot.com> for example) and then check off all the ping services. Some will not be appropriate, but they will just be ignored. Click on Send Pings, and you are finished with your first blog entry.

For this to be effective you should be blogging and pinging regularly and frequently. Minimum should be once a week, but no more than once a day is necessary. It is more effective to post one time each week than to post 4 times in one day each month. More importantly, sometimes Google ranks blogs as high or higher than your primary website.

Your homework this week is to setup up your new blog and then find or write several short 200 to 400 words articles that you can quickly post to your blog. Remember to respect the copyrights of others and don't plagiarize their work, but rather create your own. Don't forget the most important step of linking your keywords and keyword phrases back to your website.

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