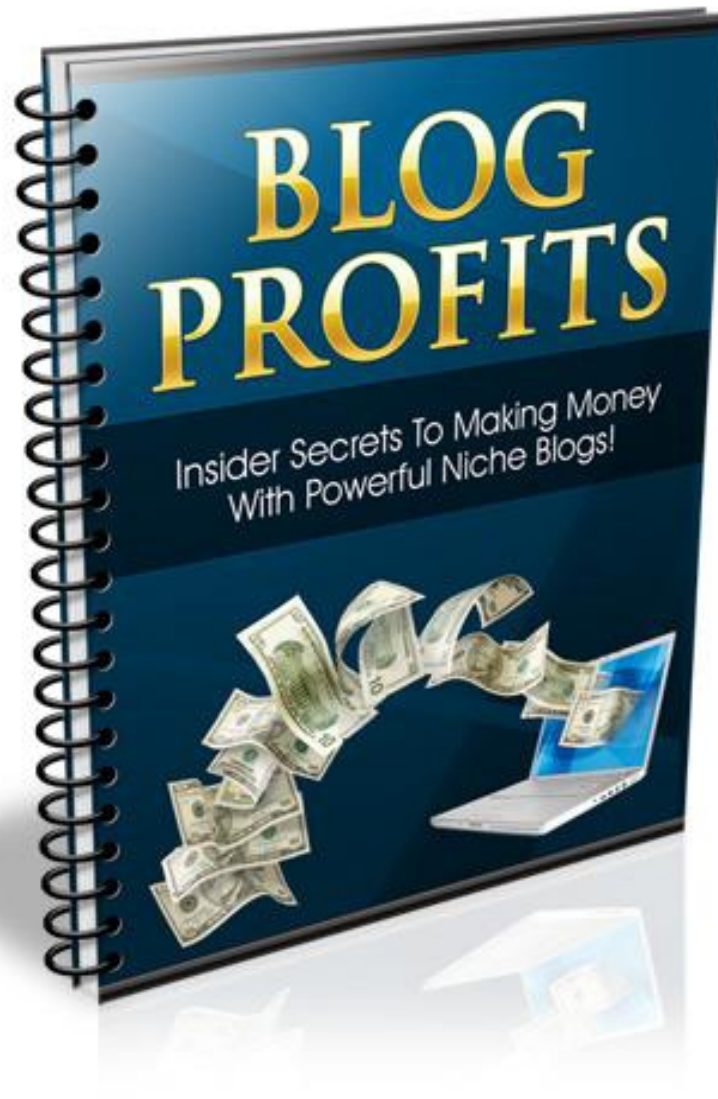


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4 Blog Profits Introduction

Welcome to the world of profitable blogging, where you will be able to create websites that are monetized from the very beginning, while being thoroughly optimized for top search engine ranking.

With just a few clicks, you can instantly install a blog and begin to add in high quality content, to attract subscribers and prospects from various niche markets, and because of the fact that Wordpress is a free open source platform, your overall costs are limited to only needing a domain name and a hosting account.

This means, that you can easily venture into numerous markets and test the waters without having to invest money in creating websites, hiring designers or search engine specialists.

When it comes to creating your online blogs, you have a few options available. For those who are unable to register a domain name and set up a hosting account, choosing a free blog hosting option sounds like a good idea.

The problem with this, is that if you truly want to establish a professional presence online, housing your website on a free hosted account not only puts you at risk for not being taken seriously, but since your website is hosted on a third party server, you are also unable to fully control and manage your website.

Worse, there is no guarantee that your website will not be removed or suspended, without notice, meaning that you could put a lot of time and effort

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into building a website that is at the mercy of someone else.

Instead, if at all possible, try to register your own domain name and set up your hosting account so that you are given full control and creative freedom over how your website is created, what content is offered, what forms of monetization are integrated, and how much traffic is directed to your website from various sources.

You can register a domain name for less than \$10 at services like <http://www.NameCheap.com> or <http://www.GoDaddy.com> and can also set up an affordable hosting plan at <http://www.HostGator.com>

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5 Creating Profitable Blogs

The first step is to identify the theme of your blog so that you can find a relevant domain name that will work well with your market and integrate your primary keywords into your domain name.

Once you have written down a few ideas, as well as keywords that relate to your topic, you can use the services of free domain suggestion tools to locate domain names that are available to register.

One such service is available at: <http://www.NameTumbler.com> and another at <http://www.NameBoy.com>

Another useful tool is available at <http://www.InstantDomainSearch.com> that will show you the availability of a domain name as you enter it in.

One thing to consider, regardless of the domain name you choose is that it is memorable, easy to spell and can be used to build a brand or future network.

Also, be careful not to choose a domain that is not a top level extension (.com), as it's the first domain name that a visitor will type into their browser when trying to locate your website.

When it comes to choosing a hosting account, another thing to keep in mind is that if you plan on creating multiple websites, you are better off selecting a hosting account that allows you to add more than one domain name to your package. This ends up being far more affordable than creating individual hosting accounts for every website you create.

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With HostGator, you can purchase a reseller account for \$25 a month that allows you to add dozens of websites and domains to one account, so be sure to thoroughly evaluate your options and carefully consider your long term objectives before moving forward.

After you have your domain name and hosting account set up, it's time for you to install the blog software that will power your website and allow you to set up a fully functional, feature laden community where your visitors can interact by posting comments regarding your posts and content, and give feedback on the information you create.

To start, depending on your hosting provider, you may be able to use cPanel's built in Wordpress integration, where you can click on a single link and have Fantastico install a fully functional copy of Wordpress.

If you are interested in locating a hosting company that features Fantastico, and fully supports WordPress, you can review the hosting directory located at:

<http://www.Wordpress.org/hosting>

Dreamhost.com offers instant Wordpress installation, and offer affordable packages for new bloggers. Simply click on the Wordpress installation link from within “Fastastico” and Wordpress will be installed.

If your hosting provider doesn't come equipped with Fantastico, you can manually install a copy of Wordpress by downloading it from their main website, <http://www.Wordpress.org> and uploading the files to your server.

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If you need help with this, Wordpress provides a step by step installation guide on their website (view the "Docs" section for details).

http://codex.wordpress.org/Installing_WordPress#Famous_5-Minute_Install

Installing a blog is exceptionally easy, regardless whether you use the automated install feature or manually create your blog, but it's only the first step in an important process that you need to follow if you want to ensure that your blog is fully optimized and tweaked so that it's functioning at its best performance.

This includes taking advantage of pre-created plugins that will enhance your website and optimize it for search engine rankings, as well as help automate content creation and management.

6 Optimizing Your Blogs

Let's take a look at a handful of other elements that you need to pay attention to in order to create the best website that you can.

Template Customization

With Wordpress, there are literally hundreds of free templates and themes to choose from, giving you the opportunity to use different themes relating to niche markets that you are focused on.

You can download these templates from various directories online and use them

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'as is', or take it a step further and hire someone to customize the templates, or take a shot at it yourself if you are proficient with editing CSS and HTML.

Regardless what you choose, you need to make sure that the theme is fully functional and provides adequate space for advertisements, affiliate product offers, and allows for a clean interface with well managed categories and pages.

Take some time to explore the different themes that are available before making your selection and don't be afraid to download multiple themes and installing them to see exactly how they look and function.

From within your Wordpress administration panel, you can activate and deactivate themes on the fly, making it exceptionally easy to change the templates instantly should you wish to update your website's scheme or evaluate different themes until you find one that will work for you.

Here are a few theme providers and directories worth checking out:

<http://www.BlogOhBlog.com>

Explore the archives for previous releases that are hidden away. Fewer bloggers will notice them, and the quality of Blog Oh Blogs themes is very impressive and easy to work with.

<http://www.themes.wordpress.net> <http://www.wordpress.org/extend/themes>

<http://www.FreeWPThemes.com>

<http://www.ThemeLab.com>

<http://www.Fresheezy.com>

<http://www.topWPThemes.com>

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From within the “Design” area you can access different controls including Widgets, Themes and the Theme Editor (I do not suggest editing your themes code unless you are familiar with HTML and CSS). Go ahead and download a theme, and upload it into your Wordpress wp-content directory.

I would suggest sticking with one theme so that you can begin to brand your website so that when visitors return to your site they instantly recognize that it's your blog, rather than confusing them with different styles or color schemes on a frequent basis.

Any time you would like to log into your Wordpress' administration interface, you would visit:

<http://www.yoursite.com/wp-admin>

If you install your blog into a different folder other than your root directory, you simply include the folder name: <http://www.yoursite.com/blog/wp-admin>

From within the “Design” area you can access different controls including Widgets, Themes and the Theme Editor (I do not suggest editing your themes code unless you are familiar with HTML and CSS).

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7 Using Plugins To Enhance Your Blog

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In addition to customizing the look and feel of your blog, you can also choose to add plugins to your Wordpress blog that will enhance your website and work as extensions of the blog software that can make your blog more interactive as well as easier to manage.

In order to put these plugins to work for you, you simply download them from the developers website and upload them into your wp-content/plugins in the same way that you uploaded your themes.

And just like a theme, you need to activate each plugin from within your Wordpress admin center before it becomes active and visible on your blog.

9

One example of a useful plugin is found at <http://www.CodeBanter.com> a site that features a free Wordpress plugin that will instantly add an autoresponder opt-in box to your blog. Since it's important to start building a list, integrating this plugin makes capturing subscribers a breeze.

10

Plugins are exceptionally useful, especially when optimizing your website for the search engines. I have created a swipe file of the top plugins that I add to every blog that I create, and I suggest that you add these to a folder on your desktop so that you can use these on your websites as well.

Here they are, in no particular order:

All In One SEO Pack

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<http://wp.uberdose.com/2007/03/24/all-in-one-seo-pack/>

This plugin ensures that your blog is well optimized for the title, meta description, and meta keywords. It should be a required plugin with every installation of Wordpress.

Google XML SiteMap

With every blog you create you will want an auto-generated sitemap. This is important so that the search engines can get a clear guideline regarding the pages from your site that you would like indexed.

<http://downloads.wordpress.org/plugin/google-sitemap-generator.3.1.2.zip>

Related Posts Plugin

<http://www.w-a-s-a-b-i.com/archives/2006/02/02/wordpress-related-entries-20/>

No Ping Wait Plugin

<http://onemansblog.com/2007/04/15/no-ping-wait-wordpress-plugin/>

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12 *You can also explore other plugins at <http://Wordpress.org/extend/plugins/>*

13 Monetizing Your Blogs

When it comes to making money with online blogs, there are many different opportunities available. Like regular websites, you could integrate Google AdSense, or other advertising networks such as AdBrite, or you could implement CPA offers from services like CPALead.com.

But it doesn't stop there.

As a blogger, you can make money by promoting affiliate products on your website, by growing a list that you can promote your own products and services to, and you can even make money by joining blog project databases, where you are paid for writing about new launches, providing feedback on company products, or in offering paid reviews for other new bloggers who are interested in gaining traffic from you.

Of course, how much money you can make will ultimately depend on how much traffic you are able to generate to your website.

The more traffic, the more lucrative your blog will be to potential paid sponsors, and of course, with consistent traffic you can make money through commissions from affiliate products that are purchased through your referral.

As someone who has been blogging for over five years, I always recommend to new bloggers that they focus on growing traffic before ever trying to monetize their blogs.

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You need to build a reputation within your market, generate as many back links as possible, and push your website out in front of as many potential prospects as possible before you focus on making money from your blog. You need a captive audience, a loyal following, and return visitors who find your website informative, useful, interesting and worth returning to time and time again.

Once you have solidified yourself within the blogging community, you can then take it a step further by implementing money-making strategies into all areas of your blog, but you need to lay the groundwork first and focus on generating a steady stream of traffic to your website.

That being said, even from the birth of your website there are a few things that you should do that can be monetized in the future. One of these things involves building a list.

While you may have an RSS subscription option on your website, you need to take it a step further by implementing an autoresponder opt-in form on your site that captures your visitors information and lets you stay in touch with your subscribers.

By doing this, you are able to grow a relationship with your target market, and once you have developed that relationship, you can begin to make money with direct offers, affiliate products and referrals even before your blog is generating a lot of traffic.

To do this, you need two things:

- 1) Code Banter's autoresponder plugin available free at

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<http://www.CodeBanter.com>

2) An Autoresponder Account, available at <http://www.GetResponse.com> or <http://www.Aweber.com>

With these two resources, you will be able to start growing a list from the very first day that your website is developed. All you need to do is consider what "subscription bait" (also referred to as your "opt in bribe") you are going to use in order to motivate your visitors into becoming newsletter subscribers.

The easiest way to do this is by purchasing rights to a high quality report from places like <http://www.ContentGrab.com> or in outsourcing the development of a free report or ebook from an experienced freelancer on websites such as <http://www.Elance.com> .

If you are capable of writing yourself, you could save yourself time and money by developing a short report that specifically caters to your blogs theme. You NEED to make sure that what you are offering is relevant to your topic.

Once you have a report ready, you can log into your autoresponder account and create your welcome email, which is the introductory email automatically sent to each subscriber upon confirmation of their request to join your list.

This email will thank them for subscribing and will include the download link to your report.

Just like in monetizing your website, you need to first work to build a relationship with your list so that they trust your recommendations and look to you as a sound source of advice, tips and information relating to the subjects

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that interest them.

Spend some time engaging with your subscribers, offering them free material, information, tips and resources that will help them.

If you do this, it won't be long before you have a loyal following of people who will eagerly open up your emails, respond to your offers and genuinely investigate the products that you promote.

When it comes time to promoting products, don't worry if you don't have the ability to develop your own product line. Using services like the Clickbank marketplace, you will be able to instantly locate dozens of high quality products worth promoting.

The Clickbank.com marketplace is filled with thousands of products that you can promote. It's free to setup a Clickbank.com affiliate account, so you can begin exploring potential products and services instantly.

Here is an overview of how to choose the best products for your niche:

Visit <http://www.ClickBank.com> and click on the Marketplace link. Then, enter in keywords relating to your market in order to generate a page listing products and services that you can promote as a ClickBank affiliate.

Whenever you view the details of any given offer, you will see stats located under each listing, one of these statistics is called gravity.

The gravity rating in Clickbank.com is just an estimate of the most recent sales for a particular product. The higher the gravity rating, the more popular the

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product is among affiliates since it appears that the product is receiving a large number of sales.

When a product also has a high gravity rating, since sales are factored in, it means that the product is converting. That's the critical aspect of selecting a product to promote within Clickbank.com. You always want to ensure that the product you are promoting actually converts.

Another element to monetizing your blog that you can implement even before you begin to generate traffic is Google AdSense.

With AdSense, you are paid for every click made to advertisements featured throughout your blog. It's free to join as an AdSense advertiser, and you are able to generate code that you simply copy and paste into your blogs pages that will feature advertising boxes from various merchants.

To sign up, visit <http://www.Google.com/adsense> and create your account. Once you have it all set up, you will be able to customize the size and color scheme of your AdSense advertising boxes so that it blends well with your existing blog's theme.

This is an easy way to start making money with your blog even with little traffic, because rather than selling directly to your target audience, you are simply making money each time they click on your ads, costing them nothing in the process (you earn money even if they never purchase anything from these external websites).

You can also create campaigns within your AdSense account so that you can have a number of different advertisements across a network of blogs, which will

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give you the ability to determine what advertisements are converting and working well, and which ones may need to be tweaked to better perform.

From personal experience, larger square ad boxes convert better, with the colors modified to blend well with your website. You don't want these advertisements to intrude on your visitors experience navigating throughout your website, but instead focus on creating advertisements that fit well within your template and use a similar color scheme.

Start with the 250x250 square ad boxes or the 300x250 medium size if your blog's theme can accommodate it. Otherwise, the tower advertisements can be integrated into the side panels of most blog themes.

The 728x90 leaderboard ad box is great for the upper portion of your blog's theme, right under the header, or at the very bottom, featured within the footer area of your website.

Just be sure to avoid overloading your website with AdSense advertisement boxes.

Remember, that you want to provide your visitors with the most experience possible so that they return to your site frequently.

Besides, if that isn't enough incentive to be careful about the number of ads that appear on your website, Google's Terms of Service state that you are not permitted to feature more than three advertisements on any given page, so be sure to review their restrictions and terms prior to integrating AdSense on your website.

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There is a free plugin available for Wordpress that will help you integrate Google Adsense advertisements into your blogs pages.

You can download it from:

<http://www.wordpressmax.com/plugins/adsense-deluxe>

You will also want to create individual channels for each blog that you plan to feature Adsense on, so that you can determine what campaigns are working well, and track the CTR of each advertisement.

If you find that a particular ad isn't performing well, you can choose to change the placement, color scheme or size of the ad, as well as the general channel so that your advertisements are highly targeted to your audience.

For those who are interested in participating in blog networks that pay you per assignment or project, there are many different opportunities available to even the newest blogger. Here is a break down of the different options available to you:

Pay Per Post

<http://www.PayPerPost.com>

Pay Per Post is one of the larger services available that offer bloggers the opportunity to get paid for blogging about specific subjects. In fact, they are one of the pioneers of “paid to blog” opportunity-based marketplaces.

Blogitive

<http://www.Blogitive.com>

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This is a super program for start up bloggers as you can earn \$5.00 per post regardless of your current traffic, or how new your blog may be. I joined this network immediately after setting up my blog and have experienced great success with it. It's really a lot of fun!

Loud Launch

<http://www.LoudLaunch.com>

This works similarly to Pay Per Post where you can browse and accept opportunities however it's still growing in size and isn't nearly as popular as Pay Per Post. Still, it's a great opportunity for new blogs and bloggers with very few requirements such as the fact that your blog must be at least two months old and you must have the ability to use Paypal to receive your earnings.

Review Me

<http://www.ReviewMe.com>

The Review Me program works differently than the Pay Per Post one because with ReviewMe.com, potential advertisers will contact you directly offering to pay you to review their website or blog.

Sponsored Reviews

<http://www.SponsoredReviews.com>

This site includes aspects of both Pay Per Post and Review Me, in which you can browse and accept offers as well as allow advertisers to contact you directly with project offers.

Blogger Wave

<http://www.BloggerWave.com>

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Blogger Wave can pay you up to \$10.00 per post and have very few requirements, making this is a great choice for new bloggers.

Smorty

<http://www.Smorty.com>

This company will pay you \$6.00 + per post with the payments increasing as your blog grows in popularity.

BlogVertise

<http://www.BlogVertise.com>

Blogvertise works very differently from that of Pay Per Post and Review Me in terms of how opportunities are offered and completed. With Blogvertise, their system matches bloggers to available offers, based on the type of content and ranking.

Link Worth

<http://www.LinkWorth.com>

LinkWorth is one of the web's largest and most innovative marketing portals that caters to both Advertisers and Partners. We have a multitude of products and services to fill your every online marketing need.

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