



**PROMOTING
YOUR
BUSINESS
BLOG
PROFITABLY**

**A TWELVE-STEP PLAN AND WORKSHEET
FOR BUSY PROFESSIONALS**

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~Introduction~

If you are a self-employed professional who is trying to market your business online, you may be faced with a few dilemmas: how do you balance the ever increasing demands of Internet marketing without taking too much time away from your business? Where should you focus the time that you do have? How do you make your message stand out among your intended audience? Finally, how do you ensure that your content and its message converts to engaged fans and paying customers?

The truth is, many micro-business bloggers struggle with their Internet marketing, and I've found that they typically fall into one of three main camps:

1. Some try to market their products and services online without a clear plan of action. They just jump right in and try a bit of everything. In other words, they take the [smorgasbord approach to online marketing](#). Often, these professionals end up burning themselves out, get frustrated with the process, and lament all the wasted time and money they invested.
2. Then, there are those who remain on the sidelines. They are paralyzed and confused by all the complexity, and when it comes to marketing their products and services online, they make a half-hearted attempt at best.
3. Finally, there is a growing group of self-employed professionals who have some knowledge of online marketing and social media. They put in the time and the effort, and they try to keep up with the trends in Internet marketing. But at the end of the day, they have very little to show for all that they have invested into the process. Something just seems to be missing from the equation.

If you go through the steps in this guide, if you do your best to answer the questions that follow each section, and you do the work, you will avoid finding yourself in any of these three categories. Not only will you keep yourself from the most common pitfalls that many business bloggers make, you'll be in the best position to leverage your content for maximum exposure, leads, and sales. In other words, you'll be able to achieve a real, measurable ROI.

But before we get started, just a couple quick points...

Throughout this guide, I'm going to point you to some incredibly useful articles and other free resources from around the web. Though I'm not affiliated to any of these people or services, some of these resources will need opt-ins. I'll let you know which ones those are. But, keep in mind that I did not bring these resources here for show. Check them out! I promise you, you will not be disappointed.

Also, keep in mind that these twelve steps form a complete, cyclical process that builds on itself. The reality of Internet marketing and of running a business is that market trends, technology, and the platforms where everything happens are changing quicker than they ever have. As that change occurs, you need to make sure you have some process in place to re-evaluate and re-focus your resources. This means you should make it a point to start all the way from the beginning of this guide at least twice a year.

Step #1: Start With Your Customer

Do you know who your ideal customer is? Before you answer, head on over to Firepole Marketing and read this post on [customer profiles](#) (you should download the free pdf as well). Go ahead; I'll wait for you...

Successful business blogging starts here. Forget about keyword research, SEO, social media, or creating killer content. If you are not laser targeted on The Person you are trying to reach with your content, then you are going wind up wasting a lot of time. The more real and defined your customer profile is, the easier it will be to know what to write about as well as where and how to promote your content for quality exposure and engagement.

Step#2: Defining Your Value Proposition

You've got a business to run, right? So, why waste your time creating content that's not going to get you closer to your business goals? Once you are in touch with your ideal customer, the next step is deciding on the combination of unique skills, qualities, or products that you can offer to your ideal customer that few of your competitors can match. This combination is your core value proposition. You need to determine how to express this value in ways that your target audience will be most receptive to. It's the one message you will replay over and over again, allowing your targeted audience to form a clear perception of the value that you are offering.

Having a strong value proposition is a key element that will guide the content creation on your blog, and it will help to shape the calls-to-action placed within and around your content. To get a better idea about what value proposition is all about, check out [What is Your Value Proposition](#), by Peter Sandeen.

Step #3: Set Your Internet Marketing Goals

This sounds like a pretty general point, but it's not, and many business owners trying figure out content marketing get this wrong. You really need to have two sets of goals in mind as you develop your online marketing plan: your general [business blogging goals](#) as well as strategy-specific goals.

Your main blogging objectives might look something like, “to gain more clients,” or “to build awareness and interest in a new product or service.” You have to

be crystal clear about where your blogging and content marketing fits into the bigger picture of your business. This means you are certain about how your Internet marketing goals are helping you to achieve your business' mission and purpose.

With this in mind, you should also be setting smaller, more detailed goals along the way that will be attached to specific strategies and actions with measurable results. An example of this in action would be writing a guest post, designing a slide presentation, or creating a video in order to direct readers to a well-crafted landing page with an opt-in form. In this case, there would be two sub goals:

1. Creating content and a call-to-action that would encourage visitors to go to your landing page
2. Deciding on the right text, layout, and call-to-action on the landing page itself in order to increase your opt-in rate.

Step #4: Deciding What to Write About

If you are running part or all of your business online, one of the biggest challenges you'll face is figuring out what to write about. It's not enough these days to plaster your blog posts, articles, videos, presentations, and infographics, etc all over the web. You want content that is going to be interesting to your target audience, and ideally it should be useful or insightful enough that your readers will want to bookmark it, share it, comment on it, and link to it. More than that, you want content that will draw attention and interest to your calls-to-action. But, how do you keep coming up with fresh ideas that will increase engagement from your target audience and start them down a carefully crafted sales funnel?

The truth is, if you are reasonably smart, coming up with fresh, relevant, and ultimately profitable content ideas is not hard. It's not even that time consuming. You just need to know where and how to look for the clues that indicate which topics will resonate with your target market in the right way.

Here are eight surefire strategies for coming up with killer online content that any business owner can tap into:

1. What are other bloggers in your niche writing about? Find out what other authority bloggers are writing about and then write some variation of the topic on your site. There are many ways you can keep track of this.

- You can simply sign up to receive RSS updates or follow the social media profiles of authority niche bloggers
- You can take a look at blogging news aggregators, such as [AllTop](#) and [Bloggerscope](#).
- You can keep tabs on niche social bookmarking sites, such as [BizSugar](#)
- You can head on over to content curation sites, such as [Scoop.it](#), [List.LY](#), [Paper.li](#), and [Storify](#)

2. Look at the comments. One of the first things I do whenever I read about a topic that is trending or controversial on either a blog or a media site, is look at the comment section. If you read content from sites that have an engaged community you can really get a feel for common issues and themes among the readership. Often, this insight can be turned into blog content.

3. What are trending news items? Stay on top of new developments in your industry by setting up Google Alerts on relevant keywords, and if you want to get the real-time scoop on trending news items, you could use a social search engine, like [Topsy](#). Simply type in keywords related to your industry and the results should give you some inspiration.

4. What questions is your target audience asking? Make it a point to scan social media platforms and forums for relevant questions that get a lot of response and engagement. If you are on LinkedIn, for example, you may see that certain group items illicit more commenting and engagement from the members. On Twitter, you can do hashtag and keyword searches and specifically look for Tweets requesting an answer to their problem.

5. Ask your readers directly. There several methods for gleaning ideas from your readers. You can put up a Q&A type post on your site, and offer to answer readers' questions in the comment section. If you have an email subscriber list, you could also offer to answer any questions that your subscribers submit. You will begin to see certain themes in the kinds of questions that are being asked and it should help to spur content ideas. Just a caveat here: make sure that you do actually provide a valuable answer to their questions. Doing so will increase trust and engagement, and also help to establish your authority in the market especially if you give out the answer publicly.

6. Real life examples. Did you have a client project that went exceptionally well? What about an interesting anecdote while working with a particular customer? Many times your blog post inspiration will come from the day-to-day

issues that pop up in the course of doing your job. So, pay attention to what's happening to you, your customers, and your business along the way. The most seemingly mundane details could actually be content gold.

7. Put Google Custom Search on your website. If you are using Google internal site search on your site, you can use the Site Search Report to learn what your current visitors are searching for. You can access this report in your Analytics dashboard. Under “Content” choose “Site Search” and then “Search Terms.” The report shows you exactly what visitors typed into your custom search box, so you can see what they are looking for on your site in their own words. Why is this important? It shows you what kinds of questions your current visitors have, and this information can help you decide which topics will be popular among this targeted audience.

8. Pay attention to your site analytics. Along the same lines as the previous method, if you have Google Analytics installed on your blog already, the stats can be a good source of post ideas as well. All you need to do is create a list of those keywords or keyword phrases that bring the most traffic to your blog. By focusing on these high-traffic keywords of your blog, you can come up with more similar topics to keep readers interested and increase your blog's growth.

Just a few additional points to keep in mind:

- To have the best chance of standing out on social media and actually getting visitors to your site, it starts with your headlines. Your headlines have to be as strong as your content. If you need a little help in this area check out these two free reports (opt-in required). The first is [Headline Hacks](#) from Jon Morrow of Copyblogger, and the second is Peter Sandeen's [101 Headline Formulas](#).
- You shouldn't ignore Search Engine Optimization (SEO) when creating your content. You do need to have a basic understanding of how to create content that your targeted audience will be able to find via search. If you are new to SEO, or need a refresher, here are three great resources to check out:
 - [A Practical Guide To Finding Great SEO Keywords Using Google AdWords](#)
 - [3 Free SEO Tools for Identifying Target Keywords](#)
 - [The Advanced Guide to SEO; Chapter 6](#)
 - [An Introduction to SEO for Small Businesses](#)
 - [Netpeak Checker](#): A great free tool that allows you to analyze your

website on a wide range of parameters to determine it's health, authority, and level of search engine optimization.

- You should also give some thought to the kinds of calls-of-action (CTAs) you are making both within and around the content. Is the call-to-action connected in some way to the content? How likely is it that a reader of a particular post topic will follow through on that CTA? For more reading on creating and placing effective calls to action, read this great [ebook](#) by HubSpot (opt-in required).
- If you find a topic or blog post structure that converts or draws significant user engagement, then [do more of it](#).
- Above all, the more systematic you are about finding topic ideas and setting up an editorial schedule in advance, the better you will be at producing the kind of content that matters the most to your target audience and will lead to profitable conversions.

Step#5: Promoting Your Content Via Social Media

Social media is a vast sea where the currents are constantly changing, and your message can easily be drowned out in all the noise.

But you need to realize that you can't leave social media out of the marketing equation. SEO is fast becoming [SMO \(Social Media Optimization\)](#). If no one is sharing and engaging with you and your content, then no one is going to be able to find you and your content. Period.

Don't let it scare you away, though. Content marketing via social media does not [have to be overwhelming](#). For a rundown of some great social media optimization tips (and some others as well), head over to Traffic Generation Cafe. Ana Hoffman does a really good job detailing how to [promote your blog post with social media](#).

If you're dealing with limited time to give to your social media marketing, here's what you need to do. Make a spreadsheet with three columns. If you've gone through the steps above, and you have your customer profile down pat, then in the first column make a list of the social media platforms and other online communities where your ideal visitor spends the most time online, that is, those places where you will have the easiest time reaching this person. Leave the

middle column empty for now. Then, in the third column, write down any remaining major social media platforms that you can think of.

That first column represents those networks where you are going to focus the majority of your time. This is where you should actively work to engage your audience, build up a conversation around the content you are producing, and make connections. This is also where you will make the most effort converting visitors and followers into leads and sales. Pick anywhere from 1 to 3 of these networks, and move the rest over to the middle column.

Any networks in that second column should involve minimal engagement and activity- anywhere from half an hour a week to half an hour a month depending on your situation- while those in the third column should have a complete and optimized profile, but should receive automatic updates or can be updated manually by some freelancer for a few dollars a month.

Realize that the vast majority of your social media activity can (and should) be automated. You'll need to do this just to get your foot in the door. Luckily, this is pretty easy to achieve with the help of tools such as [Twitterfeed](#) (RSS feeds to social networks) and [Hootsuite](#) (a full featured social media dashboard) and many others. If you want an easy-to-use spreadsheet to keep track of all your social media marketing activity, then get this great [social media publishing template](#) at HubSpot (opt-in required).

Just a side note: Google+ is an [exception](#) to any other social network out there, and if it's not in your first column, then it needs to at least be in that second one (for now). If you want the best resource for learning how to master Google+, then check out Chris Lang's system for [using Google+ to grow your business](#).

Getting Your Readers to Share Your Content

If you are making an effort to produce quality content that speaks to your target audience, you should also make sure that you are making it easy for your readers to share your content within their networks. This means clearly displaying social sharing buttons and links around and sometimes within your content. It also means asking your readers directly. You can do this by building up an email subscriber list and sending out emails when you update your blog with new content. You can ask for social sharing within the email itself.

Step #6: Guest Blogging

Much has been written about the art and [changing trends](#) of writing guest posts for other sites. Though the SEO benefits may have diminished somewhat, guest blogging done right is still one of the best strategies out there for building your brand, your credibility, and your following.

But like any marketing strategy, you have to approach it systematically and thoughtfully in order to get the best results for your effort. Here is a rundown of the major steps you should be taking:

Set your goals. The very first thing you need to do is to decide what you want to accomplish with your guest posts. Choose these goals wisely because they will affect how you approach your guest blogging. Are you looking to build up your subscriber list? Do you want to promote a particular ebook, course, webinar, or guide? Are you looking for more clients? Are you aiming for more exposure? Is it some combination of these goals or something else entirely?

Create a strategy. Now that you know what you are trying to accomplish, you need to create strategies aligned with your available time and resources that will help you get there. There are several things you have to consider:

- What will be your guest blogging frequency? How often will you be able to write a guest post each month? You can opt for the slow and steady method where you post one exceptional article about once a month, you can try a fast and furious approach (i.e. publish as many guest posts as you can), or you can do something in the middle, with two to three published guest posts spread out throughout the month.
- What kinds of calls-to-action will you include around and, where possible, within the content?
- When readers of your guest post click on your link, where will it take them?

Finding Sites to Write for. These days it is getting harder to find quality sites to guest post on, and it is getting harder to even get noticed in the first place. If you only have the time and money to focus on a few guest posting opportunities, you may want to target those sites that will give you the biggest bang for your buck. They should fulfill most (if not all) of the following criteria:

- **Strong social sharing.** Aside from amplifying your work, social signals are becoming more important than ever in increasing your “authorship authority” - something Google takes into consideration when ranking the content on your own site.

- Awesome commenters. The more comments, the more opportunities you get to express your expertise and ideas (by responding to them). If the site has Commentluv, then you can also showcase other posts on your site.
- Strong brand. A guest post on an authority site is almost like getting an endorsement. Your brand is being associated with another strong brand that you can reference later on.
- Good traffic. You need this to maximize those referral visits.
- High page and domain ranking. You are getting a strong link from an authority site which will help your site's ranking.
- Allows a range of guest posters. You'll actually stand a chance of getting published even if you are not running a top-ranking blog or website.

Deciding what to write about. Ideally, you want to write about topics that are relevant to the readers of the site where you are guest posting, yet ties in to your own products, services, and/or field of expertise. It should also be connected to any offers or calls-to-action that you are making alongside the content.

That said, finding this happy medium is not always so easy. One tip offered by [Neil Patel](#) of QuickSprout is to try various brainstorming techniques, such as [mind mapping](#) and role playing.

Follow-up. Not many people focus on this step and it's a shame. If you write a killer guest post and you get a lot of engagement, don't let it end there. Take note of who comments on your posts and who goes to your site. Make an effort to reach out to these people by sending out a special message, offer, or request to connect. This will help to further increase engagement.

For more information on guest blogging, check out the following great resources:

- [The Guest Blogging Survival Guide](#)- by Kristi Hines (opt-in required)
- [How I Became the Freddy Kruger of Blogging](#)- by Danny Iny
- [The Ultimate Guide to Guest Blogging](#)- KISSmetrics
- [Guest Blogging Strategies](#)- This is a great video with a transcript from

Step #7: Strategic Commenting on Other Blogs

Knowing how to properly comment on other people's content is an art, and if you are pressed for time, then you will have a lot to gain by honing your skills in this area. Keep in mind that you may have a few goals over here:

- Gaining exposure. Consistently putting your avatar next to a quality comment will help to build brand awareness.
- Building relationships with the post author as well as the readers
- Generating traffic and interest in your company or blog.
- Expanding your online footprint. Consistent commenting with links back to your site (or +1's and likes) shows you are a real person, and that will ultimately help to make you look like an authority in your niche and may even help your site's ranking in search.

In order for you to actualize these goals, however, you need to be strategic with your commenting. So, I'm going to bring a few “commenting hacks” below, but keep in mind just about everyone and his grandmother and his three-year-old daughter know these same tips. You'll have the list; use them when and where you can.

But, if you want to know the BIGGEST commenting hack there is, it's this: be real. Leave a comment that not only adds to the conversation, but that shows there's a real person behind it and shows that you truly value both the content as well as those you are addressing. This will make much more of an impression. I've seen some really “great” comments that were as lifeless as a dead frog.

Beyond this you need to have a real understanding of your target audience as well as the site on which you are leaving the comment:

- Leave useful comments on [CommentLuv](#) enabled blogs that have a readership you want to tap into. Where possible look for posts that are closely related to the topic of your own content. If your post titles are compelling, you can drive a decent amount of traffic back to your site.
- If you know the blog's posting schedule, you can try to be one of the first to comment.
- If there are numerous comments already on a post, then scan the

comments and see where you can enter into the conversation by replying to another commenter or jumping in on a thread that's already been started. Embedded discussions stand out more- especially if you are going back and forth with the blog owner. If you can, make multiple comments at various points along the comment list.

- Keep in mind that the best place to put these threaded comments are at the top or the very bottom. But again I wouldn't force it (because it becomes pretty obvious what you are trying to do).
- When you want to start your own thread or to join one already in progress, call people out by name.

Step #8: Getting Involved in Content Curation

The Internet is being flooded with content from second to second, and being able to keep up with countless RSS Feeds, Tweets, Google+ updates and Facebook shares heading your way is practically impossible. Enter content curation. Content curation has been gaining in popularity especially over the past couple of years as a way to sift out the best content and then share it with your followers across other networks. Not only will strategic content curation help to establish your [authority](#) on a particular subject and help to give you fresh blog post ideas, but it will also help you to build relationships with other influencers in your niche (more on that below) and draw attention to you and your own content.

Today, there are several popular platforms specifically designed for content curation including [Scoop.it](#), [List.LY](#), [Paper.li](#), and [Storify](#).

For some tips on how to successfully curate content, take a look at these posts:

- [Social Media Curation Guide](#)
- [Content Curation: The Ultimate Guide](#)
- [Use Content Curation to Drive More Traffic](#)
- [7 Easy Ways to Curate Content and Drive Traffic](#) (for content curation on your own blog)

Step #9: Networking with Other Bloggers

One of the quickest ways to expand your reach and build an authoritative brand at the same time is to connect with other influential bloggers and online influencers. Ideally, you are looking for people who have a readership that you are specifically trying to target, which means they don't necessarily need to be in

the same niche as you. Not only will such alliances allow you to tap into their traffic and social media influence, but it will help to establish you as an authority by association.

Cultivating relationships is a process that takes time and consistency. There are several ways you can go about doing this. Here is a brief rundown of your options:

- If you are trying to build a relationship with a few influential bloggers, find out which social media platforms they are most active on and where you can comfortably and naturally enter in the conversation. Don't forget, there are real people behind those blogs, and often they will share things about themselves. Listen, share in return when and where you can, and be as consistent as you can. The same rules of relationship building in the “offline world” apply online, too.
- Be active on [Triberr](#). Triberr is a blog amplification platform. The key to success on Triberr is being a part of targeted tribes with active participants and a strong reach. You will also have an easier time if you have already built up a following on the major social media channels. If you are just starting out then pick a few tribes in your general niche. Make it a point to actively share other people's content at least three times a week and comment on their posts. If you are consistent, then you'll have a decent chance of getting accepted into the tribe.
- Form a blogging alliance with other bloggers in your general niche. Even if your peers aren't so influential by themselves, as a group you can share each other's content, make comments on each other's blogs, make recommendations, and guest post for each other. It's like an informal Triberr.
- If you want to get the attention of a popular blogger, then work on sending traffic and/or sales that person's way. You could do this by linking to the blogger's content from your own blog, sharing posts and updates and making an effort to get some retweets, likes or +1's by others on whatever you've shared. Just make sure you let the bloggers know that you have shared their content- either via social media or with a direct email. Depending on how busy or otherwise available the blog owner is, you are bound to get noticed after a while.
- Try to connect with the blogger offline. If you happen to be in the same

physical location of an influential blogger or if you will be attending the same event, you can make an effort to reach out this person... in person. As great as social media is, there is still nothing like a face-to-face meeting.

Step #10: Using Different Mediums

Once you've hit the publish button on a blog post, and you've promoted it across various social media channels, don't walk away just yet. By simply putting the same content in a different format- say a video, slide presentation, or pdf- you can gain even more traffic and exposure with only a little additional effort. Content re-purposing is a well-know tactic that online marketers have been doing for a few years now to increase backlinks and bring in targeted visitors to their sites and landing pages.

For starters, consider this great traffic hack from Ana Hoffman: [convert your blog post to a pdf](#) file and upload it to document sharing sites such as SlideShare and Scribd. You could also choose a an eye-catching photo and upload it onto Pinterest or record an [optimized five minute Youtube video](#) where you explain or illustrate some point made within the post. If you have a bit more time and are creative, you could turn the post into a PowerPoint presentation and learn how to properly [optimize it on SlideShare](#). Finally, you can turn your old content into an ebook which you can use to get email subscribers or even sell.

Step #11: Measuring and Analyzing the Results

After putting in so much thought and work into the process, you don't want to forget to set up some methods to measure your results. The metrics you will want to track are going to be based on the goals you defined at the very beginning of this process. This means you will be looking at things like activity around contextual calls to action, social media engagement, and traffic analytics.

There are many ways to get this information; it really depends on what you're tracking and where. For example, here's a great post that shows you how to [use Google Analytics to measure your landing page performance](#) and here's a post by Ileana Smith on three ways to [track video traffic](#). You could also go the paid service route with platforms such as [Visual Website Optimizer](#).

Just make sure that you are setting aside a little time each week to keep tabs on the metrics that matter. Doing so will not only help you to track your performance, but it will expose you to rising trends and new opportunities to

create content gold in the future.

Step #12: Understanding Conversion Optimization

The topic of conversion optimization has really taken off over the past couple of years- especially as greater emphasis is being placed on gaining the attention of your target market and building an audience of engaged followers. In a nutshell, conversion optimization is the method of fine tuning landing pages and other calls-to-action with the goal of converting more visitors into subscribers and customers. It's about making informed decisions and testing your hypothesis to make your landing pages perform better. If you are using your website to generate leads and sales, then you should have at least a basic understanding of how you can optimize the messages, experience, and opportunities you are presenting to your visitors.

The following four resources taken together will give you a complete rundown of what conversion optimization is and how you can best apply it to the landing pages and calls-to-action scattered throughout your blog and other content.

- [The Conversion Optimization Rule Book](#)
- [What You Have to Know About Conversion Optimization](#)
- [Landing Page Checklist](#) (opt-in required)
- [100 Conversion Optimization Case Studies](#)

In closing...

I know all the steps mentioned above seem like a lot of work. It is... initially. Realize that you need to invest some time, energy, and money to get the best setup for yourself and your business. There is no way around it. But, once you have put in the initial work and you have a process in place, it becomes so much easier, more enjoyable, and much more profitable.

Promoting Your Business Blog Profitably

~A Worksheet for Busy Professionals~



The following is a twelve-step worksheet for professional business bloggers. You can use it to develop your very own online content marketing plan- one that suits your particular set of skills and available resources. This worksheet follows the steps detailed above. If you take the time to go through each step and do the work, you should see a significant increase in traffic and reader engagement that will help bring your business to a new, more profitable level.

Step #1: Start With Your Ideal Customer

Do you know who your ideal customer is? The more defined your customer profile is, the easier it will be to know what to write about as well as where and how to promote your content.

Answer the following questions:

1. Describe this person (ex: age, gender, level of education, career, passions, etc.)

2. What is valuable to this person?

3. What keeps this person up at night?

4. How does this person spend time online and where?

Step#2: Defining Your Value Proposition

Having a strong value proposition is a key element that will guide the content creation on your blog, and it will help to shape the calls-to-action placed within and around your content.

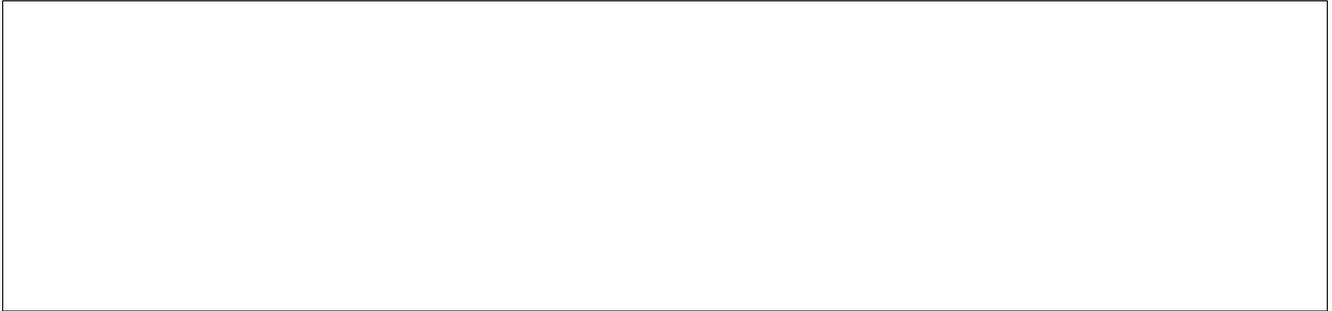
Answer the following questions:

1. What skills, experience, services, and product features you can offer to your customers or readers?

2. Which of these things are most important to your target audience?

3. Which of them are not offered by many of your competitors?

4. What proof can you offer your target audience that you can deliver on these things (i.e. testimonials, quality assurance guarantees, certifications, etc)?

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to provide proof or evidence in response to the question above.

Step #3: Set Your Internet Marketing Goals

How are your Internet marketing goals helping you to achieve your business' mission and purpose? How will you be measuring the effectiveness of your online marketing strategies and campaigns?

Answer the following questions:

1. What is the mission and purpose of your business?

2. How will Internet marketing help you to fulfill your mission statement?

3. List three major online marketing strategies and how you plan on measuring the response.

Step #4: Deciding What to Write About

When it comes to deciding what topics to write about, you want content that is going to be interesting or useful to your target audience, enough that readers will want to bookmark it, share it, comment on it, and link to it. But, you also have to make sure that potential visitors can find your content in the first place.

Answer the following questions:

1. What three to five topics do you want to be known for among your target audience?

2. What keyword phrases will you be creating content around?

3. List five sources of inspiration for blog post ideas.

Step#5: Promoting Your Content Via Social Media

If no one is sharing and engaging with you and your content, then no one is going to be able to find you and your content. Fill out the spreadsheet below. In the first column make a list of the social media networks and other online communities (such as blogs, forums, etc.) where your ideal visitor spends the most time online. Pick 1 to 3 of these platforms and move the rest to the middle column. Then, in the third column, write down any remaining major social media platforms.

Note: The time estimates are the total time spent on all platforms in the column

Active Engagement (2 to 5 hours a week total)	Minimal Engagement (1 to 3 hours a week total)	Automated (1 to 2 hours a month)

Now, answer the following questions:

1. Make a list of your online profiles. Are they optimized and accurate?

2. List three ways to optimize a status update on each of your most active networks.

3. How do you plan on updating your status on the platforms in the third column?

Step #6: Guest Blogging

Guest blogging done well is one of the best strategies out there for building your brand, your credibility, and your following. But like any marketing strategy, you have to approach it systematically and thoughtfully in order to get the best results for your effort.

Answer the following questions:

1. What do you hope to accomplish with your guest blogging?

2. How often do you plan on writing guest posts?

3. What general calls-to-action will you be making around your content?

4. Make a list of relevant, quality blogs that accept guest posts.

Step #7 Strategic Commenting on Other Blogs

Knowing how to properly comment on other people's content is an art. But when it's done right, you'll have the ability to strengthen your brand, build relationships with other bloggers, generate traffic and interest in your business, and expand your online footprint.

Answer the questions below:

1. Make a list of blogs in your niche that have active communities around them and several comments per post. Which 5 to 10 will you focus on?

2. What are your main goals when commenting on these blogs?

3. What strategies will you use to ensure that those goals are fulfilled?

Step #8 Getting Involved in Content Curation

Content curation means sifting out the best or most important content on the web within a particular niche and then sharing it with your followers across networks. Not only will strategic content curation help to establish your authority on a particular subject and help to give you fresh blog post ideas, but it will also help you to build relationships with other influencers in your niche.

Answer the questions below:

1. Which content curation platforms will you be using?

2. From which sources will the content be curated?

3. How do you plan on reaching your target audience with your curated content?

Step #9 Networking with Other Bloggers

One of the quickest ways to expand your reach and build an authoritative brand at the same time is to build relationships with other influential bloggers and online influencers. Such alliances will help you to bring targeted traffic to your site or landing page and help establish you as an authority in your field.

Answer the following questions:

1. Make a list of the top blogs and bloggers in your niche. Which blogs accept guest posts, which blogs have active communities, which bloggers would you like to build a relationship with?

2. Pick 1 to 5 blogs that have a community you'd like to be known in. Set a schedule of commenting on posts, connecting with other readers off of the site, and where applicable offering a guest post pitch.

3. Pick 1 to 5 bloggers that you would like to connect to. What steps can you take to build a relationship with these people?

4. Are there any less well-known bloggers in your industry who you can form a blogging alliance with?

Step #10 Using Different Mediums

By putting the content you create for your blog in a different format, such as a video, slide presentation, or pdf, you can gain even more traffic and exposure with minimal effort. It's a well-know tactic that online marketers have been doing for a few years now to increase backlinks and bring in targeted visitors to their sites and landing pages.

Answer the following questions:

1. Which mediums will your target audience respond to?

2. List three specific strategies you can use to optimize the content on each of these mediums?

3. How will you measure the effectiveness of each of these platforms?

Step #11 Measuring and Analyzing the Results

The metrics you will want to track are going to be based on the goals you defined at the very beginning of this worksheet. This includes things like activity around contextual calls to action, social media engagement, and traffic analytics.

Answer the following questions:

1. What sources of metric and analytic information do you have at your disposal?

2. Do you have clear and realistic performance goals? What are they?

3. How much time can you set aside per week to consider and analyze the results?

Step #12: Understanding Conversion Optimization

Conversion optimization is the method of fine tuning landing pages and other calls-to-action with the goal of converting more visitors into subscribers and customers.

Answer the following questions:

1. What are the most important points of conversion on your website?

2. What tools will you be using to measure conversion rates and do standard A/B testing?

3. What hypotheses do you have about the factors that influence conversion among your target audience?

~Resource List~

The Basics

[Customer Profile Template- Finding Your One Person-](#) Firepole Marketing

[What is Your Value Proposition?-](#) Peter Sandeen

[Does Your Blog Have a Mission Statement?-](#) Probblogger.net

Content CTA's

[Headline Hacks-](#) Jon Morrow

[101 Headline Formulas that Capture Attention and Get Your Message Read-](#) Peter Sandeen

[Introduction to Effective Calls-to-Action-](#) Hubspot.com

SEO

[A Practical Guide To Finding Great SEO Keywords Using Google AdWords-](#)

Todaymade.com

[3 Free SEO Tools for Identifying Target Keywords-](#) Searchenginejournal.com

[The Advanced Guide to SEO: Chapter 6–](#) QuickSprout.com

[An Introduction to SEO for Small Businesses-](#) Freshbooks.com/blog

[Netpeak Checker](#)

Guest Posting

[A Quick and Dirty Guide to Your First Guest Post-](#) Niel Patel

[FreeMind-](#) Mind mapping software

[The Guest Blogging Survival Guide-](#) Kristi Hines

[How I Became the Freddy Kruger of Blogging-](#) Danny Iny

[The Ultimate Guide to Guest Blogging-](#) KISSmetrics

[Guest Blogging Strategies-](#) Moz.com

Social Media

[How I Turned a Guest Post into 3 Million Visitors and Over 150,000 Social Media Shares-](#)

Probblogger.net

[3445 Words on How to Promote Ish Out of Your Blog Posts-](#) Trafficgenerationcafe.com

[Social Media Publishing Schedule-](#) Hubspot.com

[Google+ for Business-](#) Chris Lang

[What if Author Rank Never Happens?-](#) Coppyblogger.com

[How to Convert Blog Posts to pdfs-](#) Anna Hoffman

[Traffic From YouTube is Like Gold- 8 Tips to Get a Piece of the Action-](#) Basicblogtips.com

[How to Get More Views on YouTube Using Analytics-](#) Basicblogtips.com

[Slideshare Traffic Case Study: From 0 to 243,000 Views in 30 Days-](#)

Trafficgenerationcafe.com

Content Curation

[Social Media Curation Guide](#)- Moz.com

[Content Curation: The Ultimate Guide](#)- Contentstrategyhub.com

[Use Content Curation to Drive More Traffic](#)- Tripleseo.com

[7 Easy Ways to Curate Content and Drive Traffic](#)- Heidicohen.com

Analytics and Optimization

[Using Analytics to Measure Your Landing Page Performance](#)- Unbounce.com

[The Conversion Optimization Rule Book](#)

[What You Have to Know About Conversion Optimization](#)

[Landing Page Checklist \(opt-in required\)](#)

[100 Conversion Optimization Case Studies](#)

In Closing

I hope you have enjoyed this guide to promoting your business blog. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me via [email](#) or send a reply to any of the emails you receive from my mailing list.

Be sure to keep an eye out for upcoming free guides and resources that I will be offering in the future. You can also connect with me on [Twitter](#) and [Google+](#) to keep up with the latest news important to micro-business owners.