How to Start a Profitable blogging business from Scratch

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Does starting a blog feel like one of the last things you would want to do today for a living?

I know, the blogging space feels saturated, and everyone nowadays is a blogger, and you don't want to join the bandwagon.

However, a large of percentage of bloggers are not profitable and that's why I'm intent on using the term "blogging business", because for you to succeed at blogging, you will need to invest in time, money, and the right information- just like you would in other businesses.

In this case, you will be more of a business owner, than a writer for your blog. You will focus more on creating the right type of content that draws traffic to your blog, optimizing it for SEO, and monetizing it the right way.

You will have a content strategy that will expose you to creating different types of content that, when combined, will help you rank on search engines, build your brand authority, and generate income for your business.

I don't profess that this is a *"6 Simple Steps Guide to Creating a Successful Blog"*, as others might put it.

Rather, this is going to be your startup and for you to pull it through accordingly and get profitable in the shortest amount of time- you will need to put in some work.

However, I promise you that, if you do this right, you will be able to create a successful blogging business and start realizing $2000-$10,000/ month income, within 90 days of implementing this.

The following are things that you need to take care of when starting your blogging business.

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1.   Answer Your "Why" Question

Just like in all businesses, you must respond to the "Why" question. Why do you want to start a blogging business?

Answering your "why" is crucial in helping you dig deeply into the reason you are starting your blogging journey, why you will want to stick to it, and what you want to achieve.

Answering the "why" question helps you to stay focused and will help you create goals to mark your progress.

2.   Considering a Niche

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This is by far, one of the most challenging steps that most people never cross. For those who cross it, a large percentage pick niches that are either too shallow to build authority on, or whose profitability potential is low.

A niche in blogging is a space in which your blog will revolve around, and you will be aiming to share information, and resources within that niche. For example, you could choose to blog in the niche of Pitbull puppies, where you will be discussing everything about Pitbull puppies.

The answer to your "why question" is a great place to start when considering a niche. Think of a common problem that most folks have, consider if you would want to talk about that topic for the next several years, and research on the profitability potential of that topic. If all boxes check, you can go a mile further and research the potential of offering extra services outside your blog in the same niche, e.g. consulting.

Key take-aways for finding a niche

- Know why you want to start a blogging business
- Identify a topic that you feel sufficiently knowledgeable and comfortable to talk about
- Identify the income potential and ways to generate money in that niche
- Research on the ability to provide offsite services that will add up to your overall income

3.   Do Some Competitor Research

After picking a niche that satisfies the criteria set above, the next step is to do keyword research. Look at other bloggers who are already in that space and the keywords they use for their content.

Note down some keywords you would like to rank for and see who is ranking for them and how they are doing it.

This will help you have a clue on how you will go about your content creation and keyword targeting.

4.   Set Up and Optimize Your Website

The next step after having sufficient knowledge on your niche will be to set up and optimize your website.

Here, you will work on a domain name, hosting, installing a WordPress theme, and important plugins for your website. All these terms are explained here, don't panic!

Domain Name

Considering that you are not just blogging passionately, but that you are starting a blogging business, it is important to pick your blog's domain name carefully.

The domain name is going to be the first way that people interact with your brand. Settle on a catchy domain name that resonates with your niche, and is usable for a long time.

A domain name is the unique address that identifies your website e.g. athenslittleangels.com, bostonwelders.net, etc.

You may have also come across web addresses like athenslittleangels.blogspot.com, bostonwelders.wordpress.com, etc. Those are sub-domains or addresses of websites hosted on free content management system (CMS) platforms like blogger or wordpress.com.

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While you can use free platforms to create your website, remember that the goal of your website is not to post content, but to create an income. It is necessary to buy a domain name that you own fully. The average cost of a domain name on ranges between $10 and $15 per year.

Hosting

Choosing the right web hosting plan is important in creating a successful blogging business. A great web hosting service helps your site to stay online always, with minimal downtimes that affect the usability of your site.

Most people make the mistake on going for cheap hosting services, but there are other important features you need to consider before your settle for a hosting plan. These include;

- Reliability – Choose a web hosting company with the highest server uptime score. This is key to keeping your site online round the clock as frequent server downtime can affect your business immensely.

- Scalability- A good web hosting company has flexible upgrade options to accommodate your business growth milestones.

- Customer support – Shop for a host with a reputable customer service in terms of responsiveness. It would be a great disservice if your host ignores your calls when you need their support most, like during an unusually long downtime.

BlueHost is a great personal recommendation for your domain name and hosting solutions. Sign up to get a free domain, free SSL, an easy 1 click WordPress Install, and excellent support to help you set up your WordPress site. They have plans that start as low as $2.95/ month and you also get a money back guarantee in case you are not happy with them. Use my link to unlock the best Bluehost domain name and hosting deal here.

Install WordPress

WordPress is the most popular Content Management System (CMS) and for good reasons.

First, it's beginner friendly, and allows easy installation of tons of themes and plugins which are customizable.

It also supports search engine optimization (SEO), and there are tons of tutorials, and support on how to create a WordPress website online.

To top it all, the software is free, and so are the plugins and themes. However, there are pro plugins (paid versions) which offer superior features. You can also buy premium themes or have one specially created for you. But the basic ones are equally awesome and there are varieties to choose from.

When settling for a WordPress theme, pick one that provides a great user experience without compromising on the site speed.

Checkout ThemeIsle for great and fully customizable premium WordPress themes for your website.

5.   Optimize Your Website for SEO and Conversions

SEO stands for search engine optimization. This involves practices that help your site's pages get ranked on a search engine's (Google, Bing, Yahoo, Baidu, etc) first page.

On search engines, people hardly turn to page two, three, and so forth to dig for the information they are looking for. Whenever someone enters a search query, they click on the results that appear on the first page.

Performing search engine optimization on your website rewards your efforts by getting your pages on the first page.

However, before you optimize your content for SEO, its important that you start by optimizing your website.

On your WordPress dashboard, ensure that you optimize the following

- General settings: Add the title of your site, and your tagline
    - Reading Settings: Ensure that your home page is displayed and allow search engines to see your website
    - Permalink settings: Optimize the url structure of your blog is optimized (recommended structure is blog.com/%postname%).

Below are key pointers to help you optimize your website for SEO and conversions.

·   Understand Your Customer

First, you need to understand your target market.

- Who they are

- How old they are

- What their lifestyle is like

- What they struggle with

Once you have listed their characteristics, then are you able to create content they resonate with.

This step is important in that you will have a good shot at brainstorming on the search terms they are likely to use to find what they want. It will also simplify your keyword research efforts.

· Create Your Site Navigation/ Sitemap

Your website should have several pages that are displayed on the top-level navigation. These are static pages, and unlike blog posts, they are meant to make it easy for readers to navigate your site. These pages include Home, Contact, About, Services.

Start by writing out your sitemap on paper so that you can cover everything you need on your site.

· Keyword Research

Keyword research is the practice of finding popular phrases that people use to search for a particular subject.

Overall, keyword research helps in your marketing strategy as you're able to weave words that will get you discovered by potential customers, into your content.

With a clear understanding of who your customer is, you can visualize the search phrases they use to find similar products/services.

When you enter these phrases on keyword research tools they populate useful statistics that you can then use to inform your content strategy. E.g. a detailed list of alternative phrases and their popularity.

Using tools like Google Suggest, SEMrush and Google Keyword Planner will help you come up with quality

search phrases to enrich your content for easier discovery on search engines.

Head and long-tail keywords – It's important to use a mixture of both head and long-tail keywords to maximize your discoverability. Basically, head keywords are short phrases of one to three words, while long-tail keywords are long phrases that are more descriptive hence contain more words.

Head keywords are more popular/ have a high search volume. Nonetheless, ranking high for them is not easy because there are many other web pages using them.

Long-tail keywords are more specific, but their search volume is quite low. Mixing the two in your content will broaden your ranking chances.

· Plan Your Blog Posts

Upon identifying keywords successfully, create a list of blog topics that you would like to write about. Use keywords research tools to see the search volume, keyword difficulty level, competition, and the top 10 results.

The data you see helps you in determining if you can cover the topic, rank on page 1 of search engines, and get traffic to your website.

· Install Google Analytics

Google Analytics is a great tool that helps you track your site visitors, and their behavior on your business blog.

Go to analytics.google.com and create a New Property with your blog property. Ensure that you use the HTTPS version of your site url. Here is a detailed article showing you how to install Google Analytics.

· Set Up Google Search Console

This is a Google service that allows you to monitor how your website appears on Google,

Ensure that you set up your account with the HTTPS version of your website as the primary url. Here's a step by step process on how to set up your Google Search Console.

·   Create High-quality content

To maintain high ranking, the content on your site must be engaging and valuable. Otherwise, if users keep leaving immediately, they land on your website, search engines will assume your content doesn't match up to the visitors' expectations. This can reduce your ranking drastically.

·   Creating a Sales Funnel

Again, remember your goal is to convert your website visitors to customers. So, your website should have the right tools to capture leads, nurture a long-term relationship with them, and take them through a carefully thought-out sales process, to conversion.

In essence, optimizing the website for SEO and conversions requires loads of strategies, which should all culminate into growing your customer list.

·   Publish Regularly

Now that we have covered the basics of website optimization, let's talk about content. For all purposes, content is the lifeline of your website.

It's what you use to educate the search engine what your website is all about. This is also the magnet you use to draw customers in, introduce them to your brand, win their trust, and get them opening their wallets.

When it comes to online marketing, content is everything. Learning to create strategic content is a sure-fire way of succeeding in your blogging business.

There are different types of content that you can use to engage your audience. E.g. blog posts, videos, testimonials, press releases, webinars, etc.

Work on creating different types of content as people have varied preferences on the type of content that they appreciate.

While some people prefer reading blogs, others like watching videos and webinars. Publishing press releases and testimonials will also help you reach more people, especially, those that need more social proof

to trust your brand.

Creating a Landing Page for Your Blog

Landing pages are pages on your website where your marketing efforts culminate. They're the most important parts of your sales funnel, and if designed well, can incredibly increase your conversion rates.

In marketing terms, a landing page is a standalone page on your website which contains a (valuable) free offer that you give visitors in exchange for their personal contact.

The offer could be an e-book, free trial, webinar, demo, free report, free checklist, discount promo code, newsletter subscription, etc.

The purpose of a landing page is to either get your audience to convert immediately or gain their permission to pursue them aggressively.

Whenever a visitor provides you with their email address willingly, it's a good sign that they love what you're giving them in return. This implies that they wouldn't mind receiving similar resources from you in future.

It's also an indication that with some level of persuasion, they can buy your products/services.

Conclusion

Overall, making your website useful to your audience by providing them with valuable content consistently will grow your conversion rates naturally. It will require lots of effort especially at the initial optimization stage, but once you master the basics, it should get much easier. Regardless, the results of doing content marketing right are worth every effort that goes into the process.

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ABOUT SAM

Hey,

My name is Samuel Mutahi, the founder of HomeIncomeGenius (HIG), and veteran freelance content writer.

I live and breathe online entrepreneurship and creating work-from-home income opportunities.

I'm on a mission… to help you **FIND YOUR FREEDOM** through <u>creating profitable blogging businesses</u>.

Welcome to our space!