

## How to Find the Idea for your First Blog Post

No prerequisites.

A “blog” is a directory of unique articles that can be accessed by anyone on your website. They are powerful new-age marketing tools for businesses that want to expand their reach. Each article, called a blog “post”, is written by you or someone at your company. Posts usually not written in *formal* language; rather, they opt for a *conversational, non-corporate* tone. When used strategically, a blog can become a powerful asset for spreading the message of your business.

In this lesson, you will learn how to generate an idea for your first blog post.

### Benefits of blogging

Every blog post you write is another window into a search engine like Google. Blogging gives you a chance to differentiate yourself as a knowledgeable expert about your topic. It is a chance to build your company's brand and to reach out and make connections to your customers.

When you write a blog post, it will eventually (sometimes hours, sometimes days) be archived in a search engine. After it has been archived, it will appear in peoples’ search results when they search for the topics discussed in your blog post.

An example of this is:

1. Maria owns a managerial consulting company.
2. Maria notices that her clients often talk about their difficulty with public speaking.
3. Maria decides to write a series of blog posts on public speaking.
4. George, a business owner who has never heard of Maria, is speaking at a big conference in three months. He wants to polish his presentation skills before the conference.
5. George searches for “how to develop better public speaking skills” on Google, and Maria’s article appears in the search results.
6. George reads the article and is astounded by the quality of the Maria’s information. “*She really knows what she’s talking about!*” thinks George. He decides to investigate further.
7. George visits Maria’s *About* page on her website and sees the services she offers. It appears that Maria’s company offers several services that George can see *his company* needing in the future, so he decides to send her an email and begin building a relationship.

Maria's series of blog posts can bring her company multiple leads, and it will continue to bring them in the future if her information is timeless enough to continue referencing. Additionally, if the post is particularly good (i.e. a mix of *entertaining, informative, helpful, easy to read, and thought-provoking*), the readers will be more likely to share it with their friends and networks.

### **What to Write About**

The best topics for blog posts are the ones that your target customer is searching for on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis. Use your blog to intertwine your own advice into those topics and build trust.

If you don't know what your audience is searching for, just ask them. Talk to potential customers in an informal setting to reveal a goldmine of information. For instance, a management consultant might learn that their clients want better public speaking skills. Therefore, the consultant could post about public speaking tips. When others search for public speaking tips online, the consultant's article might come up. This helps the consultant build rapport between themselves and their potential customers.

Other examples of topic selection might be:

- Do you target a geeky audience? Write about code or the newest gadgets.
- Are you a restaurant? Write about interesting cooking tips or techniques.
- Do you repair guitars? Write reviews for popular models.
- Are you an interior designer? Showcase one of your designs or mockups each week.

Using this lesson's advice as a loose guideline, keep track of the various ideas that sound interesting to read and/or write about. Try to think of at least five ideas for articles each day. If one of them stands out to you, choose that one and move forward with writing your first post. It can be hard to generate ideas at first, but it becomes much easier over time.

And as always, when in doubt, ask the people who are buying from you. Tap into others' curiosity about your industry, and use your blog to offer tips and interesting stories that can benefit both them and your business.

### **FAQ**

*How long should my blog post be?*

A popular saying is that "a post should be as long as it *needs* to be". That is, if you can say *everything* you need to say in just two hundred words, your post does not need to be longer.

*Should I pitch my products within my blog posts?*

There is nothing wrong with trying to sell your products during your blog posts, but you should focus on helping your potential customers *before* helping your own bottom line.

Strangely enough, focusing entirely on *helping* potential customers often *increases* the bottom line of an online business.

*Should my ideas relate to my industry?*

Yes, this is ideal. However, if you operate a brick-and-mortar business and do not want to expand beyond your local market, you may have minor success talking about local events.

*Will people automatically come to my blog, or should I promote it?*

It can take months before people stumble across your blog. To speed this up, you can promote your blog posts via your social media pages, to your professional network, and to others in your industry.

*Should I write about popular news in my industry?*

The best types of blog posts are "evergreen content" - which means that an article will be *just as applicable* many years from now as it is today. For instance, a clothing store might write a post about "how to tie a bowtie" that continues to pull *just* as many visitors onto their site on year five as it did in year one, due to the "everlasting" nature of men learning to tie bowties. This being said, you are welcome to blog about popular news in your industry if you believe that your customers will be able to benefit from it.