

How to Bling Your Blog & Feed That Hog

WorkSheet 1: Take a Hog's Eye View...and hog up the BIGGER PICTURE...

The purpose of this step-by-step worksheet is to walk you through the parts and pieces for a highly successful approach to blogging.

These steps and exercises give you *a how-to look* at blogging for your business website, along with an understanding of what and why.

So, the main goal is to show you how to put the puzzle pieces together to save a bunch of time and aggravation in your blogging journey.

Why Blog?

Your blog needs a reason to be, to exist, *a purpose*. Often, this is framed within the strategy of a business, or maybe your blog represents a digital business. Still, you need direction, a **clear and concise focus and purpose for your blog**. Most businesses work hard to make sure the understanding of their direction is shared by all stakeholders, inside and outside of the company.

The expected outcome of this exercise includes the following:

1. Determine your blog's core purpose and direction
2. Create a written Statement of Purpose, Mission/Vision/Values, or Manifesto
3. Discover what makes you unique, different, or why you? (UVP/USP)

If you're starting from scratch and trying to decide on a topic for your blog so you can identify your core purpose and direction, and craft item #2 above, try starting with a list (of about 10 things) like this for your **first step**:

THINGS I LOVE TO DO: (passion items)

THINGS I'M GOOD AT: (skills items)

Example: waterski	writing

It's okay if your list starts out to be many pages of brainstorming! But, **the key second step is to draw lines to connect matches between what you love and what you're good at.**

Once you *find a perfect match of skills and passion*, then narrow your choices to no more than three. When you find your core topic, it means you're getting closer to having a successful blog.

ACTION STEP:

Whether you are down to **one core topic** or still weighing the best options, now is a good time to **validate your idea** to confirm there is a market where you can belong.

If there is a demand for your idea, you can wholeheartedly plan your blogging strategy to attract your perfect customers.

Your site structure and business objectives need to work in tandem so this step matters. Remember, a busier marketplace around your core topic means more possible buyers, so better sales potential.

How do you validate your core topic idea?

Market research to understand your customer (or prospective customer) is the first step to validating your business blogging ideas.

Social listening and digital eavesdropping to learn the customer's perspective, preferences and emotions are essential. Discover the digital channels where the people you want to reach are hanging out and weigh the options as part of your content marketing framework.

Conversations and questions lead to talking and developing eye-opening insights.

Competitive analysis is another useful tool to help you find your place in the market. Study competitors with attention to design, language, and especially, customer input.

Hint: Check out their websites! Look at their Twitter feed!

Look closely for any gap in what's being covered for one way to bring new value in your approach. See if there is an opportunity to be different from everyone else, who all look dramatically similar. Flip things to stand out! But, most importantly, look at the customer via your competitors to incorporate in your research for a deeper understanding of your target market.

If you can establish a **point of [differentiation](#)** from the insight you glean using the combined information gathered in the items above, you're ahead of the game.

Can you work within this standard formula to see if you are clear on your core topic and blog purpose?

I _____ for _____ so they can _____!

Example:

I create original content assets for businesses so they can engage and connect with people and establish their digital footprint!

Your turn:

Hint: we're going for simple, concise, and direct. Don't get snazzy, get understandable, say it straight up.

READ: [How to Make Your Website Invite and Delight](#)
[How to Kill it With Cornerstone Content and Why](#)

Basically, you are spelling out these **three keys** to introduce your blog. This is the frame to use for your user-friendly homepage. Here is what you should now be able to answer in describing your blog:

1. What YOU Do
2. WHO YOU Do it For
3. And WHY They Care (WIIFM/Benefits/Emotional Connection/Brighter Future You Offer, because you do it different/better, etc.)

NOTE: You should also make it clear as to what people need to do next, but we'll talk about that and all of this more deeply as we move forward, so stay tuned.

You Who?

By doing the above market, customer, social, and competitor research, you are gathering the data you need to create your **Audience Avatar** and better understand your market. Also called a [buyer persona](#), these kinds of customer studies are an integral component to accurately reaching the desired buyer.

Remember, you want to drill down deeper than the data to visualize *that one person* you are speaking to, the one person you will help with your valuable and credible blog content. Because you know your industry and core topic inside and out, and you understand your audience's needs and wants or nightmares and joys.

If you are relevant and appealing to an audience while initiating business results, you've found the sweet spot for your blogging, at the intersection of what you offer and what someone wants.

Hint: Maybe this isn't a hint, but a warning. Building credibility and authority for your blog takes time, as does making yourself relevant to an audience.

