



- **Unfulfilled blogger**—You blogged for a bit. Magic never struck.
- **Beginning blogger**—You blog, but don't really know what you're doing.
- **Regular blogger**—You'll pick up tips from a fellow blogger.
- **Expert blogger**—You could steal the good stuff for your blog.
- **None of the above**—You have nothing better to do, but to read about blogging.

## 21 benefits of blogging with purpose.

1. **Connect with customers**—A blog is a practical and powerful way to share useful, relevant information with customers.
2. **Connect with partners**—Blogging allows you to connect and team up with influencers and leaders who can be instrumental in building your business.
3. **Generate traffic**—A strategically planned blog, with carefully chosen keywords in play, will show up in search and drive traffic to your landing pages.
4. **Establish authority**—Your business blog is the hub of your content marketing efforts where you share your expertise.
5. **Win business**—60% of businesses who blog acquire more customers, says HubSpot. They offer a ton of statistical insights in their research.
6. **Inspire your social media**—If you're using social media effectively, you're sharing your blog posts regularly and taking advantage of the magical amplification of social networks.
7. **Increase reach**—Your blog will be shared and find new eyeballs daily.
8. **Grow your email database**—Your blog should inspire people to opt into your email newsletter list. Also, your email feeds traffic to your blog.
9. **Give your company a voice**—A blog is your pulpit, your publication, your journal—the place where you talk about whatever you choose, however you choose.
10. **Humanize your company**<sup>1</sup>—That voice needs personality. Great bloggers are genuine. Your personality comes into play, that is, if you aim to make real connections.
11. **Exchange ideas**—Blogs obliterate the wall that once stood between a company and its customers. You encourage interaction, comments and feedback. You create a conversation.

12. **Get (and stay) customer focused**—By blogging, you'll learn how to speak in your customers' terms, perpetually improve this vital skill and grow more in touch with your audience's wants and needs.
13. **Inspires content and productivity**—Blogging is hard work. You need processes. Commitment. Consistency. You'll need to step up—and you'll be rewarded for doing so.
14. **Increase focus**—A subtle addendum to the point above, blogging consistently forces you to define who you are trying to reach and why.
15. **Generate publicity**—As I mentioned, business bloggers establish authority. Stick with it and demonstrate you know your niche and you'll get asked for interviews frequently.
16. **Invite outsiders in**—While business bloggers should refrain from being relentlessly promotional, the blog is an appropriate forum for delivering insight into your company, its values, and people.
17. **Get strategic**—You'll get in the habit of closely examining the site's analytics and gather all kinds of insights about what does and doesn't appeal to your audience. Your marketing will get more strategic by day.
18. **Learn**—We'll get a bit warm and fuzzy now, but there's no denying you are going to learn a lot about yourself and the world around you. It comes with being a writer.
19. **Get inspired**—The research, the conversation, the experience... it's inspiring. Trust me on this: a switch gets turned on and it's impossible to turn off.
20. **Have fun**—Perhaps not everyone will agree blogging is fun, but I believe every great blogger gets into it and enjoys the ride.
21. **Make millions**—Maybe, maybe not. However, business blogging with purpose works. Every post is a long-term asset. Learn how to blog and you'll lower your marketing costs and increase sales.

Let's look at how to do it.

## 22 tips for blogging with purpose.

I have to give a shout out here to my man, mentor, friend, Marcus Sheridan, *a.k.a. The Sales Lion*. No one understands and teaches the practice of blogging quite like Marcus. I won't be replicating his great post, "50 Qualities of the Best Business Blogs in the World" here, but I did draw these ideas from it (and encourage you to check it out).

1. **Answer questions**—Listen closely to questions prospects and customers ask and answer every one of them in your posts.
2. **Teach, don't preach**—Avoid making your blog a heavy handed attempt to advertise your products. Adopt an educator's mentality and you'll win your reader's trust.
3. **Converse**—Ask questions of your readers, encourage feedback, counterpoints and criticism. Respond to comments as promptly as possible in an effort to exchange ideas.
4. **Create a blogging culture**—Invite everyone in your company and its constituents to contribute ideas and participate in the blog.
5. **Use images**—Take advantage of the appeal of photos, illustrations, charts and infographics to increase your stopping power and make the posts more attractive.
6. **Make it easy on the eyes**—Use short paragraphs, line breaks, white space, subheads and lists to make your posts look inviting.
7. **Be transparent**—Write with uncompromising integrity and don't be afraid to address real issues, problems, challenges, and yes, prices. Don't avoid the tough questions. Tackle them.
8. **Remove internal barriers**—There's no place in blogging for corporate red tape. Get permission in advance to write openly and honestly.
9. **Don't back down**—Some readers (or co-workers) don't love what you have to say? Say it anyway. It's not a popularity contest.
10. **Be consistent**—The number one reasons blogs fail is they are neglected. Set a schedule and stick to it. Make the time to post often. No excuses.
11. **Nix the fluff**—Your posts can be short or long. Just don't babble your way through them. Serve meat and go easy on the gravy.
12. **Recognize others**—Congratulate, write about and recognize customers, employees, partners, industry influencers and even competitors. Being generous will only help. You'll enjoy reciprocity.
13. **Optimize**—Research and use the keyword phrases that will increase your search engine rankings. Install plugins to assist you with SEO.
14. **Write passionately**—Make your passion pulse through your prose. Tap into your reader's emotions.
15. **Tell stories**—Learn how to become a master storyteller. Observe how the best bloggers unravel plots and develop characters.

16. **Include customers**—Drop the secrecy and anonymity. Cite real customers, real challenges and real solutions.
17. **Invest seriously**—Blogging only burns time and money when it's a low priority. Invest in the tools you need and put the best writers and designers on your blog.
18. **Market and sell**—Don't write ads and press releases disguised as blog posts, but do include a call to action and guide your readers along the path to discovering your solutions.
19. **Stay tuned**—Follow your industry daily and stay on top of what your peers are saying.
20. **Encourage sharing**—Don't forget to offer social media buttons to make it easy for readers to share and email your content.
21. **Promote your blog**—Promoting a post can (and probably should) take more time than writing it. Write teasers for your content and promote it across social networks and all potential touch points.
22. **Have fun**—Never be stiff, formal, or jam useless jargon into your posts. You have the stage. Relax. Be entertaining. Allow yourself to have fun with the writing

## **Business blogs are a major challenge.**

Blogs are the hardest channel for business to keep updated—and to really nail.

Passle, makers of a blogging shortcut service of sorts, recently studied 525 businesses and reviewed their performance across blogs, company news pages, Twitter and Facebook. Their study, "The State of Business Blogging 2013," reported:

- 75% of companies don't update their websites in any way.
- Only 20% have a blog and over one-third of them are inactive.
- 1 in 8 companies have an active blog.

Ouch. Please understand...

# **Business blogs should/can/will grow your business.**

- 57% of companies with a blog have acquired a customer from their blog.
- 61% of U.S. online consumers have made a purchase based on recommendations from a blog.
- Blogs attract repeat visitors who continue to come back to the website for fresh content.
- Blogging allows you to team up with people who already have an audience, which is an instantaneous way to attract readers.