How to blog on your website so you rank in Google and get new clients

Publishing a small business blog on your website has many benefits. These include:

- Improved visibility in Google when people search your businesses products and services using relevant keywords – i.e. "Geelong plumber" or "baby photographer Geelong".
- It is an excellent and FREE marketing tool for your business. Adding fresh content regularly helps market your businesses products and services.
- Allows you to promote the different aspects of your business and what you offer clients: Industry news, recent projects, staff profiles, staff qualifications, seasonal information, upcoming events and useful tips. It gives you an opportunity to say who you are and what you do – not just what you sell.

Blogs are not limited to text only and can include images and video. The more variety the better.

We have put together some tips to get you on the right track for writing your blog:

1. Content

What to write? Think of your blog as *teaching* your clients/readers about your business, what you do, why you do it, how you do it, where you do it… Give them useful information – people LOVE tips and tricks and they feel like they are getting something extra from you without the charge. Think quality not quantity. Quality content is more likely to get shared on social media by your readers/viewers!

2. Strategy

Create a blogging plan – ideally for a 12 month period. Creating a blog plan will assist you in preparing the right content and covering the right topics at the right time. Do you sell a product or service that is always popular at a certain time of year – e.g. Mother's Day, Valentine's Day, Christmas? In order to rank on Google for a product or service before particular dates, you need to post about it at least 6 – 8 weeks before. A plan will help you achieve this.

3. Style

Write as you speak, it is not a test in being a gifted writer. People are unlikely to read a heavy slab of text so be mindful of how you format it. The best posts have layers so use numbered lists, bullet points or sub headings. You could also do a question and answer post which is another way to add interest.

- For example, if you are a cake maker and made a cake for a wedding, instead of writing two or three paragraphs – break it down into something more interesting. You could have sub headings such as "Style", "Flavour", "Theme" and write a couple of sentences about each key aspect. This makes it so much more reader-friendly. It's a fact that people skim to the parts that are important to them – make it easy for them to do this!

4. Format

This encompasses two main points – how to 'clean' your text and how to format a post by using headings.

- **Clean your text:** Avoid copying and pasting from a Word document (or anywhere) as this text will have different coding and can really throw the formatting of your blog post out. Try to always type into the post from the outset. If you really want to copy text into the post (from anywhere) the quickest and easiest way to clean it is to paste it into Notepad (if you have a PC) or Text Edit (if you have a Mac), and then copy and paste it from Notepad/Text Edit into the post. This gets rid of most of the bad coding – effectively 'cleaning' your text.

- **Headings & sub-headings:** In WordPress the 'Title' *is* your heading. You don't have to do anything extra other than type your title into the box and you have your main heading (which should be keyword focused yet unique). However it's useful to format the main body of text. One main sub-heading would be a 'H2' format whilst shorter or more frequent sub-headings to break up text into segments would be a 'H3' format. Make sure the rest of the text is 'paragraph' format. *Please note: If you are using Soho CMS, you will need to make your main title/heading a 'H1' format. The rest applies as normal.*

5. Length

Blogs do not have to be lengthy, three short and sharp paragraphs are fine. Or as above, five helpful tips in a numbered list will be more advantageous than a long-winded, unbroken slab of text.

6. Consistency

GOOP recommends *once a month.* Make it around the same time each month as Google bots will identify consistency and it will help your ranking. There is little value in posting five posts in a day and then none for five months. Consistency is key.

7. Keywords

Look at the list of keywords that were agreed on for your site. Use *one* of these per blog along with the geographic location. Use this phrase *only once* in the post and only *once in the heading* - overuse of words will work against you.

- For example, if your keyword is "Geelong baby photography" your heading could be "Baby Jack in our Geelong studio for Cake Smash photography". Make your heading about the post not just the keyword. Your headings need to be unique so fit the keywords in afterwards.

- You might also find it helpful to write a blog post first and then fit the keywords in second so it reads naturally and isn't centred on those keywords. Quality content first, keywords second.

- Make sure you alternate which keywords you blog about – don't always use the same ones or it will become too repetitive. This will ensure you rank well for all your keywords.

8. Other words

You can also use words you know are specifically related to your industry or a product that is exclusive to your business. This will also help your site to be found on Google – i.e. "hot water installation Geelong", "solar panel maintenance Geelong" or "Torquay hot water service repairs". This one is about using your common sense and knowledge of your industry.

9. Links

Link the specific phrase you are writing about to the relevant page of your website. It is important to link this phrase to a page that will give you more information about that topic – you want to direct your clients (and Google) to a relevant destination. If you have mentioned another word or phrase relevant to your website pages, link that back to your page. *Only link your main phrase once*. Two links per blog is ideal.

- For example, "Plumbing Geelong" may link to your services page. "Geelong solar panel maintenance" could link to a subpage with information about solar panel maintenance/installation options.

10. Proof

Make sure you re-read what you've written, checking for spelling mistakes and extra spaces. Once the post is published, view your website normally. Occasionally it may look different from the 'back end' of your website. Remember if it doesn't look right, you can go back in and edit it.

Note:
You have the ability to add and edit posts. Editing posts allows you to add an extra image or video or fix spelling mistakes, etc. You don't have the ability to delete posts because *we want them to archive*. Once you add a blog post, its SEO value stays forever. This is incredibly important for your ranking in Google. Over time, as you add strategic blog posts your rankings will either remain strong or continue to improve. Deleting blog posts may reduce your ranking and therefore is not recommended.