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My Top 5 Things to NOT Do When Business Blogging

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I had a "wow" moment yesterday when I was reviewing my post history in our Compendium software and realized today's post will be our 900th. 900 blog posts in roughly 800 days (our blog has been running since June 4, 2008) – that works out to about one new post per day on employee engagement and team building strategies to help small businesses create a more productive workplace.

In addition to the writing I do here to (hopefully) make your work life easier, I also follow over 100 blogs in Google Reader, choosing some of the best stuff from them to share here as well as on Twitter. In all this time I've picked up on some important best practices when writing business blog posts – along with some things to avoid.

I want to focus today's post on the latter to help you draw in and better engage your readers, and – addressing what CEOs and others who hold the purse strings care about – get them to take a desired action that meets your goals or helps your bottom line.

Here's my top 5 list of things to NOT do when business blogging:

- 1. Truncate your RSS feed.** In layman's terms, this means setting up each new post so the reader only sees a bit of teaser text in their RSS feed (explained here if you don't know what this is), and must click through to your blog to read the full article. I'm on the same page as Techdirt CEO Mike Masnick as to why this is a bad business decision. I'm sorry, but I look at this the same way I do a pay wall: you're putting a barrier in front of me, and my gut reaction is to leave.
- 2. A "link dump" or "flashback" to an earlier week or month of posts.** I've seen a growing number of blogs do this, and although I do get *why* they do so (more targeted, quality links help with search engine optimization), it's really a disservice to the reader. A link dump says to me, "I've found this collection of articles, but I don't care enough about your time to put any kind of analysis or framework around them...and I'm sure you have an hour to kill reading all my links until you get to the last one." A flashback is even worse; usually it's a linked list of dates corresponding to posts – that tells me *nothing* about what I can expect to read by clicking through. You have to ask yourself if even your most engaged readers will go with you on your stroll down memory lane. I guarantee a huge percentage of them will not.
- 3. Use too much "inside" language.** There's a prominent blog I follow, which I won't name, where lately almost all of the posts are about the author's spouse – who is not relevant to the title (read: promise) of the blog. This author has written some greater material over the years, but lately I've been tempted to hit "Delete" next to that blog for this reason. The lesson? Keep your first-time readers in mind and don't veer too far off course from the promise to your readers stated or implied in your blog title. (Or, do it but then change your blog title/focus.)
- 4. Write too many posts per day.** Speaking of moves that are great for SEO but bad for the average RSS follower, don't publish so many posts per day that it becomes burdensome for your average reader to keep [Provigil online No prescription](#) up. How many posts/day are too many? My number is five. Tip: Survey your readers to learn the max that they're comfortable with, and don't go over it. (*Side note: A number of the blogs I've seen that publish what I consider to be way too many posts/day accomplish this volume by enlisting guest writers. If your goal is build relationships with these folks and to get great SEO at the expense of the average reader's time, then by all means keep doing what you're doing.*)
- 5. Write posts that are too long.** Frankly, this was not a concern of mine when I started writing here. But the more I've written with the reader's time in mind, and seen this come up again and again as a blogging best practice, I've tried not to do this. Right now, in my mind, this post is getting to be too long, and I'm at 734 words. That's about 100 words shy of the average, feature-length article on getting employees engaged in our quarterly newsletter. Too long for everyday consumption, so this list is ending...now.

What's on your list of pet peeves or things to avoid when blogging for business results?

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