BLOGGING SUCCESS
TIPS FOR CREATING CONTENT, GETTING TRAFFIC AND MONETIZING YOUR BLOG

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Introduction

Would you like to work from home and make money blogging?

Blogging Success is a busy woman’s guide to working at home as a successful monetized blogger. Knowing that women are short on time, but long on drive, Blogging Success is unlike other e-books, as its information is broken down into bite size tips that are easy to learn and easy to implement.

Divided into five main sections, Blogging Success talks about how to setup your blog (don’t worry you don’t need to be a techie to get started) ow to create awesome content, how to drive traffic to your blog, and real-life monetization strategies. To really get an inside scoop at how successful bloggers operate, I’ve gathered blogging advice from some very successful monetized female bloggers, who have shared their tips, inspiration and strategies to kickstart your blogging career.

What this e-book does not cover is tax implications or legal issues. Please consult with the appropriate professional for these concerns.

My Personal Story

Since the day my daughter was born, I’ve been a stay at home mom. But after 9 months of play dates, mommy and me classes and a dwindling bank account, I felt the urge to make some money and exercise my brain. I looked online for different work at home
opportunities, but the majority of my time was spent weeding through scams and sifting through various websites to find all of the information that I was looking for - I was left feeling exhausted and defeated.

I had always enjoyed writing and dabbled with the idea of writing the a comedic novel; however I never considered blogging as a career option. I continued looking online for the perfect work at home opportunity when it dawned on me, “I need to create a comprehensive resource where women can find all of the information they need to work at home” and hence The Work at Home Woman was born.

To fund this endeavor, I started working part-time at home for a small publishing company managing their social media campaigns. During this time I researched and created content for my blog. I hired a graphic designer to create a custom design for me and in March of 2009, I officially launched The Work at Home Woman.

I’ve been blogging for 7 years and I absolutely love it! It has given me freedom, flexibility and financial stability and has launched the business that I had only dreamt of. Besides the perks of being able to stay at home with my daughter, blogging has introduced me to opportunities and people that I would have never met else wise – and for that reason alone, building a blog business is worth its weight in gold!

**Blogging is Not a Get Rich Quick Sport**

When I got into blogging, I really had no idea what I was in for. I figured I’d do my research, write my content, obtain some traffic, and then monetize my blog with advertising and affiliate marketing. But what no one tells you is that blogging is not for the faint of heart, it takes a ton of patience, persistence and perseverance and even if you possess the three P’s, it’s estimated that you’ll only make $12,000 – $58,000 a year (according to payscale.com), and that’s for bloggers who have been blogging for 1-4 years.

I tell you this not to discourage you from becoming a monetized blogger, but to give you a realistic point of view point of what you can expect.

For myself, I fell into a career that I absolutely love and because I have a successful blog, it has launched the ground work for other opportunities that I otherwise would not have been privileged to.

So are you ready to get started?

**Section 1: Setting Up Your Blog**

One of the biggest concerns for me when I launched my blog was what platform to use. I knew I had to purchase a domain name and hosting, but how to bring them together
and make them work was a mystery to me. Because I was a new to tech world, I knew I wanted something easy, yet something that looked professional. However, the easy solutions that were already put together looked amateurish and unprofessional.

Because of this, I decided to hire a graphic designer to help me with the logistics of uploading WordPress to my host and to create a custom theme for me.

I had never worked with a graphic designer and knew nothing about how the design process was supposed to work. I ended up paying for all of her services upfront and sadly for me it was a costly mistake ($600 which did not include hosting costs or a domain purchase). After months of waiting for her to complete the work, she stopped communicating with me completely. Left with an incomplete blog, I had to find a web programmer to fix what she had left undone (another $150).

From start to finish it took four months to complete my blog. A process that I was initially told would take 6-8 weeks. Starting a moneymaking blog doesn’t have to be slow, expensive, or a hassle. In fact, if I had to do it all over again this is how I’d do it.

**Step 1: Setup Your Hosting Account**

When I set up my hosting account, there were so many steps involved. I had to decide between a Linux or Windows account, then there was the whole separate c-panel, and FTP, that I was totally lost. Save yourself a headache and use Bluehost. They have made the process so simple, anyone can do it, no tech experience needed. Besides being simple Bluehost offers 24-7 support via phone, email, and chat — which you’ll want should you ever encounter a problem. They’re also affordable ($3.95 to $6.95 a month, plus a free domain), which is a huge plus if you’re launching your blog on a shoestring budget.

For step 1 all you have to do is go to Bluehost.com and click on green “get started now” button – easy peasy.
Step 2: Select Which Hosting Plan You Want

With Bluehost, there are three hosting options to choose from, Basic for $3.95/month, Plus for $6.95/month, or Prime for $14.95/month. If you have the funds, I’d suggest going with the Plus Plan, because you get more unlimited features; and as your website grows you can switch to a more robust plan.

Step 3: Choose Your Domain Name

When you choose a domain name you’ll want to follow three simple rules:

1. Keep it simple. Refrain from words that are hard to spell or remember.
2. Use a dot.com – .com is what most people remember when typing in a web address.
3. Beware of words with multiple spellings: example: to, two, or too.
Once you’ve decided on a domain name type it into the search box and click next to see if it is available. You may need to brainstorm a few ideas to get the keywords and .com that you want, but don’t worry you’ll find one that works.

When you find your domain name, you’ll need to create your Bluehost account which includes name, address, phone number, and email address.

**Step 4: Pay for Your Hosting Package**

After you have your account created, you’ll be directed to a page where you need to select your hosting package. You can choose to pay for your hosting in a 12 month period, 24 month period, or a 36 month period — the longer the plan, the cheaper your price. Next, add your payment info and wait for an email confirmation of registration – this only takes a minute or two.

**Step 5: Install WordPress**

The awesome thing about Bluehost is they make installing WordPress a snap! No tech background needed. Once you’re registered with Bluehost, you’ll receive an email with your c-panel login credentials (Don’t worry, c-panel is short for control panel and once you log in it’s a couple of clicks to install WordPress).

Once you’re logged in you’ll get a popup screen that says, install WordPress or concrete5, just click on the green “Install WordPress” button. Next, it will ask you which domain you’d like to install WordPress on — choose your domain from the drop-down box and click on the green button, “Check Domain.” When the install starts, you’ll get a screen that says, “Ok, we’re setting up WORDPRESS for you!”
When the install is finished, you’ll get a status update: Installation Complete. On this page, you’ll also get your WordPress login credentials – use these to log in to your new blog, congrats! From beginning to end it takes about 15 – 20 minutes to register, pay, and install.

Step 6: Make it Pretty

Now, you may be wondering if it's difficult to navigate WordPress and I can tell you from experience it's not. If you can navigate around a Word Document — you’ll be just fine. When you log in to WordPress, there are some free design templates/themes (on the left-hand side under, appearance) that you can use to customize your site. However, if you’re willing to spend $35 – $199 you can get stylish, professional looking theme that will make you stand out from the crowd. You can either purchase a theme from the Marketplace (located on the left-hand sidebar in WordPress), or you can purchase a theme through Thesis or StudioPress (they have a much larger design selection than the Marketplace).

The process of customizing your blog will take some time (probably a few days), but it’s super easy and fun, and no professional designer is needed. In fact, when I did my site
redesign this year, I purchased a theme from StudioPress. I can’t tell you how much I love it, it’s so easy to modify, and it only took a few days to get everything into place.

Section 2: Creating Content

My blogging story is a little different from most. Before I launched The Work at Home Woman, I took 15 months to do research and write content. I also knew from the start that I wanted to monetize, so when I launched, I already had pages of content and advertising options in place.

However and whenever you decide to launch your blog is totally up to you. With this said, your content is going to be the bread and butter of your blog – without it you won’t have readers, traffic, or money coming in.

Individuals and search engines alike love new, unique and interesting content, and generally the more useful the content is, the more successful your blog will be. Along with creating killer content, you will need to publish blog posts on a regular basis.

So how do you create content that is going to convert passersby into loyal readers?

Here are some tips to get you started:

Share Your Point of View:

Yes, there may be thousands of blogs in your niche, but only you have lived your life, which gives you one of a kind experience that only you can share with your readers. By sharing your unique perspective with the world, you can gain trust, build alliances and align yourself with other like minded individuals.

Write Like You Talk:

When I first started blogging, I tried to write in a very professional tone. Granted, my blog is informational in nature and I wanted to been seen as a respected source – but this is not what blogging is all about. Blogging is a casual form of writing where it’s expected that you write like you talk. You want your blog to mirror your personality.

Define Your Niche:

You must have a clearly defined niche. Whether it’s cooking, organization, family or a children’s review blog, it needs to have a defined theme. Having a clearly defined niche lets your readers know what your blog is about and what to expect from it in the future. Secondly, it makes marketing your blog business easier by developing a strong brand. Lastly, you can make more money because you’ll be seen as a specialist in your field and it makes targeting potential advertisers and clients easier.
Need more helping figuring out your niche? This article has some great tips to help you figure it out.

Photos:

I’m sure you’ve heard the saying; "A picture is worth a thousand words.” What this refers to is the idea that a complex idea can be conveyed with just a single image. Photos can do the same thing for your blog posts – they can grab the reader’s attention, illicit emotions, feelings and thoughts, they can enhance your text and help build deeper connections.

Want to take awesome photos? Check out this article for tips!

Easy to Navigate:

They recently remodeled our local grocery store, and while they added some really cool new departments and features, they complicated the layout, which disrupted my shopping experience. Due to this new layout, I had to search high and low for certain items. And when I couldn’t find them, I gave up because it was just too much of a hassle. Don’t lose your readers by having a complicated, disorganized and cluttered layout. Make sure your headers are clearly labeled and that your posts, topics and other areas of interest are easy to find.

Story Telling:

Just because your blog is informational in nature, doesn’t mean that it has to be a bore. Infuse your posts with great storytelling techniques that captures your reader’s attention and keeps them on the edge of their seat. Intertwine your own personal stories into your posts to make them personal, exciting and dramatic.

Fresh New Ideas:

Don’t you just hate it when you go to a new movie and it’s the same old theme rehashed over and over again? Rehashed ideas and content does not make for bestselling books and top rated movies; it is fresh, new ideas – and the same holds true for your blog posts. Create content that is unique and stands out from the crowd. One of the best ways to do this is by writing about your own personal experiences and opinions. Don’t try to emulate others – be yourself and let your true colors shine through.

Clean and Simple:

Have you ever been to a blog and the sidebars are crowded with widgets and badges, the ads are flashing in your face and pop-up messages keep blocking your view of the content? I have and what generally happens is I leave the blog because I’m annoyed. Only list the essentials in your sidebar: A newsletter sign up, your main social networking buttons (Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, etc.) and a search function and a
reasonable amount of ads if you choose this method of monetization. Refrain from flash ads, music, and too many pop-ups. These are annoyances that turn readers away.

Humor:

Everyone loves a good laugh and nobody knows this better than Heather Armstrong. Blogging over at Dooce.com, Heather is well known for her funny, self-deprecating, black humor. Named as one of the most influential women in media by Forbes, Heather shares amusing stories of her day-to-day life with two kids and their family dogs; always brutally honest and real, Heather has a real knack for injecting humor into the ordinary and mundane. Not many people have this natural knack for humor, so if you do, capitalize on it.

Let Your True Personality Shine Through:

Nobody likes a fake – be yourself and let your unique and charismatic personality come through. Let people see the real you – people should be able to meet you in person and online and get the same feel. Be open - share your likes, dislikes, opinions, favorites and so on.

Awesome Titles:

It’s been said that you should spend more time creating your title than writing your content. This is because your title needs to grab your reader’s attention within a matter of seconds. If you can’t grab their attention, it doesn’t matter how good your content is, without a catchy headline you won’t be able to reel them in.

Here are a few ways you can come up with some awesome titles:

Use Lists - People love lists –they are easy to read, they look neat, they organize information in a logical format and best of all, lists tend to go viral. If you look on BuzzFeed or Reddit, you’ll see that the top headlines are often written in this format.

How to Articles - People like to be guided; it gives them reassurance. Try writing a “How to” or a “Complete Guide” post; these types of posts tend to make for popular reading.

Pique Their Curiosity - Make your readers want to know more by targeting their curiosity or letting them in on a secret. People like to feel like they are getting exclusive information.

Hot Gossip - Just take a look at all the gossip magazines in the grocery store aisle check-out or one of the many the celebrity gossip blogs; people love juicy, sensational, gossipy type news. Try incorporating this style of headline into your blog title to pique your reader’s interest.
Shorten the Length - According to an article by Kissmetrics, the ideal length for a headline is six words. Usability research shows that people not only scan text, but headlines as well—and they tend to take in only the first and last three words. Cut out any unnecessary words in your title.

Guest Blogging:

This really goes two ways, submitting guest posts to other blogs in your niche and accepting guest articles on your blog. When you accept guest posts on your blog, it helps to diversify your content and attracts new readers who already follow your contributors. Another way for you to boost your expertise, gain traffic and back links is to submit guest posts to other blogs within your niche. Besides getting to have a short bio and your blog’s URL listed, most bloggers promote their content on Twitter and Facebook, which introduces you to a whole new audience.

Not sure how to reach out to other bloggers? Check out this article for pitching your post tips.

Know Your Audience:

This was a tough one for me because I didn’t know if I was speaking to new, aspiring or veteran business owners. But with a few reader polls, some trial and error and studying my analytics, I learned who my audience was and what they needed. By knowing who you are speaking to, you can better judge what angle to write from. For instance, say you have a cooking blog and your audience is intermediate to advanced, you don’t want to write a blog post about how to boil an egg.

Write More:

Even though I’ve always enjoyed writing, when I first started blogging I had some difficulty getting my thoughts together. From figuring out my voice to what topics to write on, it was a challenge. But over time, the more and more I wrote, the easier it became, and now I’m able to hammer a post in no time. Write more and keep forging ahead, I promise the more you write, the easier and better your writing will become.

Keep a List:

As I said above, when I first started blogging I had some difficulty figuring out topics to write on. But from the start I kept an ongoing list with me that contained new blog post ideas. I’d be out shopping and I’d have a good customer service experience, which would in turn into a new blog post. This happens all of the time; little experiences in your day can be awesome new material for a blog post.

So keep that list handy and go out and live life; this is where your best content will come from.
Section 3: Getting Traffic

Getting traffic to your blog is a lot of work – don’t let anyone tell you different. But with a lot of patience and persistence it will happen.

Here are a bunch of methods I’ve tried; some worked, others not so well. The thing about marketing your blog is to find a few methods that you enjoy and to consistently do them. You’ll also need to experiment. A method that works for one blogger, may not work for another.

Today, my top drivers of traffic are Google (SEO), Pinterest, and Facebook.

In the methods below — I’ve noted which items are a must for your blogging success.

Word of Mouth:

Start with who you know. Tell friends, family and colleagues about your new blog and ask them to spread the news to others who would be interested in your topic. Not only do these people want to see you succeed, but the support and encouragement that you will receive from them is priceless.

This is a must do task when your first launch your blog.

Search Engine Submission:

Basic link building starts with submitting your blog to the major search engine directories: Google, DMOZ, Yahoo! and Bing. By submitting your blog to the search engines, you ensure that your pages and posts are indexed, and that your blog’s overall traffic is boosted.

This is a must do task when your first launch your blog.

Sitemap:

Make sure the search engines can crawl your blog effectively by adding an XML Sitemap to your site. An XML Sitemap is a file that lists all of your blog’s URLs and alerts the search engines about new URLs so that they can be crawled and indexed into the search engine’s database. If you are using WordPress as your blogging platform, you can install the Yoast SEO plugin which will automatically install the XML Sitemap to your blog.

This is a must do task when your first launch your blog.

Site Analytics:
Google Analytics tells you where exactly your web traffic is coming from. It shows you how many page views your blog receives, how many visitors visit your site on a daily basis and what pages are the most popular. Site analysis is especially important because it lets you know where your marketing efforts are paying off, and it can save you a lot of time and money in the long run. This is also information that you’ll need if you plan to work with advertisers, sponsors, and ad networks.

This is a must do task when your first launch your blog.

Spread the Love:

Make it a point to comment on similar topic/niche blogs. At the end of your comment, you will be able to leave your name and blog’s URL. Look for Do-Follow Blogs where the no-follow attribute has been removed. No-follow attributes are attached to hyperlinks to ensure that the specified link does not achieve any value within the search engine rankings. This is also a great way to meet other bloggers and start building a tribe.

Facebook:

You’re probably already one of the 1.71 billion active users keeping up with family and friends via Facebook. For those of you who are unfamiliar with Facebook, it is the Web’s largest and most popular social network where people can share daily status updates, photos and personal information. On Facebook you can create a Business Page or Group specifically for your blog that allows you to share your content and connect with readers. Make sure to include a Facebook icon on your blog’s home page so others know they can connect with you on Facebook.

This is a must do task when your first launch your blog.

Twitter:

If you’re not already tweeting, you’ll need to set up a free Twitter account. Twitter is a fast-paced, micro-blogging platform where you can promote your blog to a wide range of individuals. Just like Facebook, you’ll want to include a Twitter icon on your blog’s home page so it is easy for others to connect with you.

LinkedIn:

Known as the professional social network, LinkedIn has grown to over 450 million professional users who are exchanging information, ideas and opportunities. More reserved than Facebook or Twitter, LinkedIn is a great place to connect with old co-workers, college mates, colleagues and friends. I’ve been able to join my college’s alumni group, which has introduced me to a ton of local individuals. Depending on how you’re using LinkedIn, you may or may not want to include a LinkedIn icon to your blog.
You can also add your Twitter feed to LinkedIn, but because LinkedIn is not as fast moving as Twitter, you may want to filter what tweets are shared. Simply go to your LinkedIn’s Twitter settings and check on the “share only tweets that contain #in”. Then when you send out tweets and that you would like included on LinkedIn just use the hashtag #in.

**Google Plus:**

Not as popular as Facebook or Twitter, Google Plus still boasts 300 million monthly active users. While, I personally don’t receive very much traffic from Google Plus, I do notice that my Google Plus updates often get indexed into Google’s search engine results. For this reason alone, it’s worth using this social platform for its SEO power.

**Triberr:**

*Triberr* is third party platform that allows you to expand your content’s reach, by sharing your blog’s RSS feed with your “Tribe” via Twitter. Here’s how it works. You must either be invited into a Tribe, or you may search for a Tribe and submit an application for approval. Once you’ve been accepted into a Tribe, you will tweet out the Tribe Member’s RSS feeds via Twitter (Triberr automates the whole process for you) and vice versa.

**Pinterest:**

*Pinterest* is a visual-based social network and search engine that allows you to share your blog content through images. Once your image is shared, others can click on the image to view the information or they can repin the image to one of their boards. Over the past few years Pinterest has become a major source of traffic for a LOT of bloggers, including myself.

If you’d like to tap into the power of Pinterest, [check out this article](#).

**Participate in Forums:**

Find some popular forums in your category and reply to questions and conversations. Remember to add value to the conversation; you don’t want to be kicked out for spamming. In many communities, it is appropriate to leave a link back to your website or blog within your signature at the end of a response — double check each community’s guidelines before posting.

Remember, add value – it’s a conversation, not an advertisement.

**Alexa:**

*Alexa* is a free online traffic and analytic search tool that provides information about the Web and how it is used. If you want to drive more traffic to your blog, you can download
the Alexa toolbar for free; it will track the sites that you frequent and record them into their database and then recommend your site to other toolbar users when relevant.

**Blogging Communities:**

Add your blog to Blog Catalog and Mom Bloggers Club. Not only does this allow you to add your RSS feed and place an active link to your blog, it easily allows you to connect with other like-minded bloggers in the same field.

**Press Release:**

Send out a press release when you first launch your blog or reach a special milestone. Not only will you receive traffic from the online press release sites that you use – but your story could be picked up a local media outlet or better yet, a national media outlet. This is a great way to gain some extra exposure and create a buzz around your blog.

**SEO:**

Search Engine Optimization is the process of using technical components, such as an XML Sitemap, strategically-placed keywords, and high-quality inbound links to improve your blog’s overall ranking in the search engines and thus attract more organic traffic. But the foundation for any SEO strategy is writing AMAZING content and knowing your target audience.

**Craigslist:**

For those of you who are not familiar with Craigslist, it is a free online classified listing site and it is HUGE! List your new website, blog or business on there under general community. The process only takes a few minutes and it does generate a small but significant amount of traffic.

**Bookmarking Sites:**

Add your blog’s best pages and blog posts to social book-marking sites like Digg and StumbleUpon. Users can rate posts. Top-rated posts get featured the front page of these popular sites. If your post is featured, you’ll get more exposure and traffic.

**Alltop:**

Known as the online magazine rack for blogs, Alltop allows you to submit your blog’s RSS feed to a specific category. Bloggers, marketers and readers can use Alltop as their one-stop-shop for the best blogging content on the Web. Another perk to having your blog listed is that Marketing Guru Guy Kawasaki tweets out the top stories from Alltop on his Twitter account. Oh, did I mention that Guy has over 1.49 million followers on Twitter?!
Poll Your Readers:

The best way to find out what your readers really want - is to ask them. Often times we think we know what people want, but as it turns out, we’re way off key. There are a variety of ways that you can do this from Facebook polls to using a free service like Survey Monkey. Takes just a few minutes to set up and the information that you’ll obtain is invaluable.

Add Your Content to Niche Networks:

Much like social bookmarking sites, niche networks allow you to build a profile and share your niche related content. I submit The Work at Home Woman’s content to Biz Sugar and it brings in a fair amount of traffic for me. There may or may not be a network that supports your niche, but here are a few to get you started.

- **Biz Sugar** – Small Business News and Tips
- **Care2** – Health, Green Living, Human and Animal Rights and Non-Profits
- **Design Bump** – Design and Freelance

Easy to Share:

Nothing is worse when you read an awesome blog post and you want to share it with your followers on Twitter – but then they don’t have any methods for you to share the content. Most likely you’ll forget about sharing it because you’ll have to copy and paste the title and shrink the link. Make your content easy to share by adding some social networking share buttons. WordPress has numerous plugins to facilitate this. I’m currently using Social Warfare.

This is a must do task when your first launch your blog.

StumbleUpon:

Is one of those sites that can make your traffic skyrocket in just a day. So there are basically two ways you can get people to “Stumble” your content. First, make sure that you have the StumbleUpon share button located somewhere on your post – so that individuals can Stumble and share it.

Follow the Trends:

Being one of the first individuals to write about a hot topic or the latest trend will give you lots of free organic traffic from the search engines. There are a few places you can go to track the trends, Google Trends, Springwise and Alexa Hot Topics. Scope these out daily to see what’s going on within your niche and when you catch something new and exciting – get writing. The key is to be one of the first people to write about the topic.
Free Advertising:

When I first started blogging, there were a lot of websites that would post a link to your blog for free. Over the years, this trend has disappeared. But there is still one reputable website that will allow you to post your mom-owned business in her directory for FREE and that’s, Market Mommy.

Newsletter:

I’ve already talked about the importance of having a social media presence, but social media platforms are constantly changing. One day you may get a ton of traffic from Facebook, and the next day they change their algorithm, and you only get a few visitors a day. This is why it is so important to build an email list. When you build a list, you own it, and you have full control over it. Email newsletters keep your readers in the loop; they generate traffic to your blog and they can increase your sales and income.

Setting up a newsletter (email marketing account) is easy – just choose one of the many email marketing providers out there and add a sign-up widget to your blog.

Over the years, I switched email marketing providers three times. I currently use ConvertKit, which is a more advanced email marketing platform. If you’re working on a shoestring budget, try looking at SendInBlue, they offer 9,000 free emails per month.

For more information on email marketing — check out this post.

This is a must do task when your first launch your blog.

Respond to Your Readers:

Make your readers feel special by responding to them via comments. Take it a step further and thank your new readers for leaving a comment via email. Every time I have done this, the reader has been touched by the gesture and they tend to come back the next day and leave another comment. This is a great way to create loyal fans that will spread the word about your blog.

This is an ongoing must do task for your blog.

Internal Linking:

I first learned about this in Holly Klaassen’s, 50 SEO Secrets for Mom Entrepreneurs (which is no longer for sale). Here’s how it works – whenever you receive an inbound link from another website or blog – the search engines give you some points. The more points you have, the more in you are seen an expert in your field and the more organic traffic you’ll receive from the search engines. The same holds true for when you link a
keyword in your post to another post on your blog – the search engines gives you some points making your blog rank higher in the ratings.

This is an ongoing must do task for your blog.

Email Signature:

On average I send out 25 – 50 emails per day; in any given week that’s 125 – 250 emails. Some of these people I know well and others I am meeting for the first time. The point is that having an effectively crafted email signature can help you promote your business, expand your network circle and increase your sales. So if you haven’t spent some time thinking about your email signature, now is the time to do so – this is free advertising space that reaches far and wide!

Publish on a Regular Basis:

To keep readers coming back for more, you’ll need to publish new content on a regular basis. As it would be, nobody can seem to agree on how often you should publish new content, but here’s my experience. I’ve tried publishing more, and it does bring in more traffic. But what really helps is having content that is AWESOME! So now, I publish 3 - 4 articles a week, but they are longer and higher quality. Play around with it and see what works best for you and your audience.

Instagram, SnapChat, YouTube, Tumblr, Vine, and Periscope:

I’m lumping these together because, unless you have a full-time marketing team, you can’t effectively market your blog on every single platform out there. With social media, you need to pick out a few of your favorite channels, create a plan, and then execute it. Certain niches work better with certain platforms — like fashion and food bloggers on Instagram. Think about your niche, how you’d like to monetize, and strategically pick the platforms that make the most sense for your goals.

HARO:

Help a Reporter Out (HARO) – is a place where reporters can connect with sources for quotes and features to their stories. How it works is you’ll periodically receive emails with media queries. Reporters, journalist and bloggers will list their specific criteria and if you meet them, you can email them back with your expertise.

Quoted from the HARO site, “Everyone’s an expert at something. Sharing your expertise may land you that big media opportunity you’ve been looking for”. HARO is free to use and can be a great way for you to score some valuable and free PR.

Blog of the Week:
Sign up for Social Moms Blog of the Week Feature, best of all it’s free. Social Moms is a highly active social network of moms and each week in their newsletter they feature a blog of the week. With over 150,000+ members, this is a lot of free exposure for your blog. I was lucky enough to be featured back in 2009 and it gave me a nice spike in my traffic for a couple of days. Megan, the CEO of Social Moms, also tweets out the blog of the week on her Twitter account of 579,000+ followers!

**Be Helpful:**

Chris Brogan, one of my favorite bloggers, is well known for being helpful. In fact he has built a whole business around it. And the best thing is that Chris is the real deal; he practices what he preaches. From making introductions and referrals to promoting others, Chris has mastered the art of doing business as a humanizer. So, each and every day find some way to be helpful to others – send out a re-tweet on Twitter (RT), leave a comment a blog post or link to someone else’s blog – your kindness and generosity will paid back ten-fold.

**Make Connections:**

Blogging over at Successful-Blog.com, Liz Strauss is known for her natural ability for being authentic and making connections. Liz is all about people, cultivating relationships and developing meaningful connections, and you can see this through everything she does; whether it’s her conferences, her tweets on Twitter, or her recognition of other Successful & Outstanding Bloggers. Get out there and connect with people.

**Participate in Interviews:**

This is a great way to distinguish yourself as an expert in your field, as well as promote your blog/business by providing answers to frequently asked questions. Most often, you will get to include an active link back to your blog and various social networks. See below for a list of sites that regularly feature mom entrepreneurs and bloggers. Remember to include interview features on your Press Page – potential advertisers like to see how influential you are.

Head on over to this link for over 20+ websites that interview women business owners/bloggers.

**Section 4: Making Money**

There is a lot of debate on when you should first try to monetize your blog (immediately or wait to build up traffic). For myself I immediately put it out there that my blog was open for business. I did some research on ad pricing and offerings, and then put together my ad page and waited. It took 2 months before anyone actually purchased ad space, but here is how it happened:
I ended up contacting Kelcey Kintner of the Mama Bird Diaries to see if she would be interested in participating in an interview for The Work at Home Woman. She accepted the invitation and after publishing the interview, she was kind enough to include a link to the interview on her blog. One of her regular readers, a direct sales consultant, followed the link and ended up purchasing advertising space on my blog for many months.

Here are some tips to get your started monetizing your blog.

**Multiple Steams of Income:**

Before we get into the various ways that you can make money with your blog, you need to know that you’re going to have to use more than one method of monetization. I thought that I could make enough money just from selling ads – well, if you don’t have millions of page views a month, you’re not going to be able to charge big dollars for your ad space.

So think outside the box when it comes to monetizing your blog.

**Direct Ad Sales:**

This is probably the first monetization technique that comes to mind – unfortunately, securing advertisers is not as easy as 1-2-3. For potential companies to even consider advertising on your blog, you will need to have the right target audience and LOTS and LOTS of traffic!

So before you even try to get companies to advertise on your blog, you need to create focused, quality content that will attract readers, but you will also need to post regularly so that readers continue to visit your site. To start tracking the number of visitors that you are receiving, you will want to install some sort of site analytics on your blog.

Once you have some decent numbers, you will want to clearly indicate that you accept advertising on your blog; you will also need to have a design that allows you to place ads. On your advertising page you will want to let potential advertisers know why they should advertise on your site. Do you have an award winning blog, good stats and testimonials from previous advertisers? What does your audience look like? This is all information that potential advertisers will want to know. You will also want to include information about the ads; do they rotate, where are they located and what size ads do you accept.

Now that you have all of the basics in place, it’s time to find potential advertisers. One easy way to do this is to do a Google search for keywords that relate to your blog and target niche. Once you have found some companies that you would like to work with, send them an introductory email with your direct advertising marketing package. With this step, make sure that you have thoroughly done your research, find a contact name and understand the company’s products, services and mission, and make sure it aligns...
with your own. Make sure you send a follow-up email to ensure that your message has been received.

Another way to find potential advertisers is to search for companies who are already advertising on sites that are similar to yours. You can also do a Google search for your specific keywords and click on the sponsored links on the right hand side on the search results – these are companies who are paying Google for pay-per-click (PPC) advertising and there is a good chance they will want to advertise with you too. Sound like a lot of work? It can be. Maybe you just don't have the time to search for advertisers. Well there is good news – selling your own ads is not the only way to generate income from advertising on your blog; you can also decide to work with an ad network.

**Note:** When providing advertising, Google requires publishers (bloggers) to place the no follow attribute on paid links (both text and images). Failure to comply with Google’s rules could get your site banned from Google search results, which would kill your traffic and your business.

For more information on paid links, [see this article.](#)

**Ad Networks:**

Because ad networks are doing all of the leg work in securing sponsors, your cut of the pie will be much smaller than if you were selling the ads directly yourself. However, because ad networks have name recognition and strength in numbers, they tend to work with larger companies who would have been out of reach for the independent blogger trying to secure them as a sponsor. I’ve worked with a handful of ad networks and my experience is that you have to have a good amount of traffic for it to pay off big. I’m currently using AdThrive on my blog and I’m really happy with them.

[Here’s a list of blog networks you can work with.](#)

**Giveaways:**

When I first started blogging, I saw giveaways as a way to increase traffic to the site, but over time it became a viable way to make money too. Due to the large amount of work that goes into running and promoting a giveaway – I have no problem charging for them. With this said, you must provide value when you charge.

**Note:** When running a giveaway, you must adhere to certain legal guidelines, such as choosing your winner randomly (I use random.org). Wendy Piersall does an excellent job of covering giveaways in depth in her book, [Mom Blogging for Dummies.](#)

**Affiliate Marketing:**
Is a way that companies can promote and advertise their services and products through a mutually beneficial partnership with a Publisher (Blogger). As a blogger, you can make money by promoting products and services on your blog. Say for instance you have a blog on fashion trends, as a fashion blogger you can place banner ads, write blog posts, reviews and/or send out newsletter promos for fashion related products and services free of charge. In return you will earn a commission on every product that is sold through your affiliate link. (Start building your newsletter list – this tends to be the most lucrative way to promote affiliate offers).

For more information on affiliate marketing — [check out this post!](#)

**Sell Informational Products:**

Depending on your niche, writing an informational e-book, hosting a live webinar, telecourse, sending out a paid newsletter subscription or selling audio or video recordings may be an excellent way for you to cash in. So how do you know whether or not selling informational products is right for you? If you’re often asked about a certain subject over and over again – that’s a good clue. If you’re always asked, “can I pick your brain?” that’s another good clue. Research what’s already out there and see how you can add your unique perspective and expertise in the digital informational realm.

Interested in this method of monetization? [See how this blogger](#) was able to create an e-book in 30-days!

**Sell Your Wares:**

Maybe your thing is making jewelry or knitting scarves – either way, having a blog is an excellent way to make some additional money and market your blog at the same time. Jewelry designer [Lisa Leonard](#) has done a great job of combining her jewelry business with her blog – here she is able to talk candidly about her family, her business, new designs and link to her shop.

**Consulting and Coaching:**

Depending on your niche, experience and expertise, you may be able to add consulting or coaching services to your blog. Consultants analyze a problem or concern and then advise a client on a how to solve the problem and implement a solution. Coaches, on the other hand, dig deeper to help individuals identify a goal and then work with them to achieve a specific outcome. If you’ve been blogging for a couple of years, your expertise in a certain subject may be enough to launch this sort of gig. However, if you’re new to blogging but have previous corporate experience, this may be substantial to launch a consulting or coaching business.

**Paid Job Board:**
Many freelance, career and niche related blogs add a job board to their site for additional income. Tops blogs like Mashable and ProBlogger have job boards. There is even a WordPress plugin called WP Job Board just for this sort of thing. Companies will pay good money for listing their job opportunity on your niche related blog.

**Public Speaking Gigs:**

I’ve never been a public speaker myself; in fact, I’m a nervous Nelly when it comes to speaking in front of groups. But because I’m in the public eye now and I’m an expert in the area of working from home, I’ve been asked to speak at events, conferences and seminars. If you’re comfortable with public speaking and have a knack for the limelight, hone in on this skill because it could be your meal ticket.

**Note:** Expect your first speaking gigs to be unpaid – however it will be a good experience for you and it will provide you additional exposure.

**Professional Representation:**

Represent brands and companies at social media events. Create custom packages for companies that could include blog posts, advertising, live tweeting, photo opportunities, handing out promotional materials, using that company’s products at the event and much more. Often times, bloggers will make deals with companies for the cost of the conference ticket, airfare, hotel and expenses – but depending on how influential you are you may be able to charge a fee or become a brand ambassador.

**Social Media Manager:**

Social media is on the rise and if you can leverage its power to build trust and engage customers, you will be in big demand. Both large and small businesses alike are looking for help in this area – so if you’re passion is being social, this may be the perfect add on for your blog. Besides having a background in advertising, marketing or business, the best testimonial you can have is the experience of building up your own online community and network – which you should be doing anyway.

**Direct Sales:**

We’ve all heard of Avon and Tupperware, but did you know that there are literally thousands of direct sales companies? Find one that offers products that you feel passionate about and get selling. Use your blog to highlight new items, sales and promotions from the direct sales company that you’re involved with. I’ve even seen many bloggers who advertise their own direct sale ads on their blog and recruit new consultants.

Check out this list for all the different products you can sell from home.

**Membership Site:**
Many bloggers add private membership communities to their site, offering a more intimate opportunity for readers to come together to collaborate, learn and network in a safe haven. Depending on the perks, resources and educational tools that your private membership site offers, you may be able to charge a recurring month fee.

See how this blogger earns $300K a year with a membership site!

Offer Writing Services:

There’s no better place to showcase your writing talents than your blog. If you love writing and you’d like to make money from it — add a service page to your blog offering your writing services for pay.

Check out this six-figure bloggers story!

Treat Your Blog Like a Business:

If you plan on making money from your blog, you need to treat it like a business. What this means is that you need to read business books, attend networking events and educate yourself on best business practices. You will need to learn about marketing, bookkeeping, legal and tax issues. But most importantly, you must act like a professional, giving good customer service, being reliable, responsible and always acting with integrity. If you don’t add this business aspect to your monetized blogging career, you won’t make it.

The Long Haul:

As I said in the before, blogging is not a get-rich-quick sport; you’re going to need to tough it out for the long run. Believe me, there will be days when you want to throw in the towel because your stats are low, or because you don’t have any income coming in — but work through it and beat the statics (most bloggers quit within the first 2-3 months). This alone will make you stand out in the blogosphere.

For even more ways to make money with your blog — check out this post!

Section 5: Blogging Success Stories

Laura Wittmann - I’m an Organizing Junkie

Tell us a little bit about your blogging journey.

I started my while on maternity leave, purely to document and share this crazy addiction I have with all things organizing related. When the company I worked for shut down, leaving me without work to return to, I decided I wanted to stay home with my kids.
However, in order to make that work, I needed to find a way to supplement my husband’s income. My goal then, and still is to this day in fact, was to find a way to cover the cost of my monthly grocery bill. When I realized my blog had the potential to earn me an income and allow me the opportunity to be a work at home mom, I jumped in feet first to make it happen. It didn’t happen overnight and the learning curve has been steep but I am so thankful and blessed to be paid for doing what I love while still being home with my little guy (who really isn’t so little anymore!).

**What is your secret for writing killer content?**

One of the secrets to my success I believe is that the person you “meet” online is the same person you’ll “meet” offline and I think that comes through in my writing. I write as if I’m chatting with one of my best girlfriends and I don’t pretend to be someone I’m not. Keep in mind that I don’t call myself a writer (yes even after writing a book!), I’m just someone passionate about encouraging other women in their own organizational journey and I like to have fun while doing it. Organizing definitely doesn’t have to be boring! I like to say I post pictures and write around them. I strive to keep my posts simple and as clutter free as possible while providing value of some kind in every post.

**What is your secret for increasing traffic to your site?**

Hosting a popular weekly link-up every Monday for the last four years has definitely helped with the growth of my site. I appreciate the women who visit and participate in Menu Plan Monday each week holding me accountable along with creating a wonderful sense of community.

**What has been your most successful monetization technique?**

Definitely diversification! In other words I utilize a variety of methods for producing income and it has served me well. From working with an ad network, affiliates, private advertising, freelancing to writing a book, I have put them all into practice in some way or another over the last few years. However the one decision that has been very rewarding for me, although scary at the time, was to make the switch from working with an ad network to selling my own ads. That’s been a great decision for me and one I haven’t regretted!

**Heather Hernandez - Freebies 4 Mom**

**Tell us a little bit about your blogging journey.**

As an engineer turned stay-at-home mom, I was trying to stretch our family's budget by learning how to save money from the internet. The freebies I found were too good not to share with my friends, so I started emailing them out every week. My friends told their friends and soon I had to move my weekly email to a blog so I could share with more people. I love the freedom of being self-employed as a blogger and I've finally found my dream job.
What is your secret for writing killer content?

I am my own best filter for content. I write about the freebies, coupons and deals that I personally like with the hope that many of my readers will also like them. There’s no reason to overextend myself and try to capture every freebie, coupon and deal when only a small percentage of them will be popular among my readers.

What is your secret for increasing traffic to your site?

Facebook. People love to share things on Facebook and many will check that before they check their email. When your blog is on Facebook you’ll gain new fans quickly from your existing fans sharing with their friends.

What has been your most successful monetization technique?

Diversifying the types of ads and affiliate programs has helped me be successful. I invest more time into the ones that perform well, but never rely on any one type of ad or affiliate program for income. Monetization methods are rapidly changing so bloggers have to continuously try new things and adapt their strategies.

Nicole Feliciano - Momtrends

Tell us a little bit about your blogging journey.

Prior to launching Momtrends, I worked at Ralph Lauren as a fashion executive. 70-hour weeks and last minute meetings were not going to fly with a young family. I started out freelancing for other sites (Babble.com, TimeOutNYKids, etc.) and discovered the world of quality online content was booming. Moms were online and hungry to keep up with the latest trends and fashions. And so I decided to create my own fashion and style resource for moms—a blog for hip moms who didn’t want to leave their style in the delivery room.

What is your secret for writing killer content?

Get the scoop. In general, I don’t write from press releases. I race around the city attending events and trade shows so I can experience trends first hand. I also assign reviews to my crack staff of writers. Looking at a glossy picture isn’t enough for Momtrends. We want to know how items perform under real-world stress--be it a stroller or a pair of platform wedges for mom.

What is your secret for increasing traffic to your site?

Listening to the feedback of my readers and pouring over analytics to see what is working, writing headlines that are engaging and SEO-friendly and staying true to my voice.
What has been your most successful monetization technique?

Taking Momtrends offline. Our monthly event series for NYC editors/bloggers has been wildly successful. We give the editors great content and story ideas and the brands amazing connections.

Heather Reinhard - Theta Mom®

Tell us a little bit about your blogging journey.

I was a full-time teacher for many years before I made the decision to stay home with my kids. After the birth of my second child, I soon began to work from home but it wasn’t long before I experienced lots of self-doubt and loneliness as a WAHM. Although I was still working hard and contributing to the family income, I still felt caught between two different worlds; somewhere between the steadfast career that I left behind and the “new” woman trying to find herself with the role of mother added to her resume. I knew there had to be other women experiencing the same things that I was going through which is the moment I began my blog. I always loved to write which is one of the major reasons of why I started my blog. I knew I wanted to connect with other women that were experiencing the same things that I was going through, but I also wanted to write - I mean, just write. This has been a passion of mine since as long as I can remember, so I wanted to get to the core of motherhood and talk openly about the good as well as the bad, serving as a sounding board or outlet to discuss our struggles. Let’s face it, motherhood isn’t easy. I’ve covered many topics on my blog that have started some amazing discussions.

What is your secret for writing killer content?

Killer content must be derived from inspiration. For me, an inspirational source appears in a variety of ways; sometimes, it’s simply living in the moment that generates a great idea for a post or an experience that I recall that I know will translate well to other mothers reading. Sometimes, I’ll just be inspired by a comment left by a reader on my own blog that can spur into a fantastic post. The bottom line is that the writing be honest and authentic - something that the entire readership can relate to. Some of my best posts have been the ones in which raw emotion was shared and the response I receive from a post like that is invaluable.

What is your secret for increasing traffic to your site?

The best way to bring traffic to your own site is to make yourself available and build a reputable online presence. This includes being an active participant within all platforms of social media, consistently networking with others and engaging in conversation. It also means being a supportive member of the blogging community whether it’s through a tweet, an update, a comment or an email. You need to develop a strong online presence in order to maintain a successful blog.
What has been your most successful monetization technique?

I think the key to a successful blog is really knowing who YOU are and translating this to your audience. Especially if you work (or want to work) with brands, your audience needs to have a high level of trust when you are making endorsements. This holds true for an online presence on your own site as well as throughout social media. Social media is a wonderful platform for bloggers to make those connections with their audience, but monetization only happens to bloggers who maintain professionalism and integrity throughout the social media space.

Want more actionable steps that will help increase your blog traffic and make you more money?

Be sure to grab this FREE e-book from Elite Blog Academy, 7 Surefire Ways to Boost Your Blog Income Overnight.

Thank you!

Thank you for downloading this free e-book. I hope that it helps you tremendously on your blogging journey. Blogging has been such a blessing in my life, and I hope that it can do the same for you.