

Podcast 13 – Why You Need a Blog, and 7 Steps to Creating Good Blogposts



One of the questions I get asked regularly is why do I need a blog on my trade business website?

It's a good question. So today we are going to answer it. And a couple of other questions too.

1. It helps drive traffic to your website

Let's think about the ways people find your website:

- They *could* type your business name right in to their browser, if they know your business name. But what about those who don't?
- You *could* pay for traffic by placing tons of paid ads in Google, can be quite expensive. And the second you run out of money, your traffic stops coming.
- You could even do some offline advertising promoting your website address. Put it on your vehicles, in the local paper, on a banner at your kids footy club, on a letterbox leaflet. You may get a few visits. But you'll never ever know which one of all these offline sources worked, because you can't track it.

So, how can you drive traffic? In short: blogging, social media, and search engines. Here's how it works.

Think about how many pages there are on your website. Probably not many, right? And think about how often you update those pages. Probably not that often, right? (How often can you really update your About Us page, you know?)

Well, blogging helps solve both of those problems.

Every time you write a blog post, it's one more indexed page on your website, which means it's one more opportunity for you to show up in search engines and drive traffic to your website in organic search. We'll get into more of the benefits of blogging on your SEO a bit later, but it's also one more cue to Google and other search engines that your website is active and they should be checking in frequently to see what new content has been added.

Blogging also helps you get discovered via social media. Every time you write a blog post, you're creating content that people can share on social networks -- Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, Pinterest -- which helps expose your business to a new audience that may not know you yet.

Blog content also helps keep your social media presence going -- instead of asking your social media manager to come up with brand new original content for social media (or creating that content yourself), your blog can serve as that repository of content. You're strengthening your social reach with blog content and driving new website visitors to your blog via your social channels.

So, the first benefit of blogging? **It helps drive new traffic to your website and works closely with search engines and social media to do that.**

2. It helps establish your authority as an expert in your field

The best business blogs answer common questions that your ideal prospects and customers have. If you're consistently creating content that's helpful for your target customers, it'll help establish you as an authority in their eyes.

Can you imagine the impact of sending a link to an educational blog post *you* wrote to clear things up for a confused customer?

"Establishing authority" is a fluffy metric -- certainly not as concrete as traffic and leads, but it's pretty powerful stuff.

- If prospects find answers to their common questions via blog posts written by you or people at your company, they're much more likely to trust what you have to say because you've provided helpful information.
- Prospects that have been reading your blog posts will typically be more educated on your place in the market, your industry, and what you have to offer. That makes for a far more productive sales conversation than one held between two relative strangers.

So let's take an example. We help several of our clients with content creation. We have a content creation, publishing and distribution service for people who don't have the time or confidence in their writing skills.

For one of our clients, a painting company, we work closely with them to create, publish and distribute a new blogpost every 2 weeks. Some of the posts provide helpful tips on painting, some discuss various examples of work they have done, some answer common questions and still others comment on painting decorating trends.

These posts are building the company's authority as experts in professional painting. Their posts get a lot of views and many are shared on social media. We also share excerpts of the posts on social media to drive traffic to the site.

3. It's good for SEO

Your **blog fuels SEO**. Search engines love valuable content and will reward you for it. The google search engine algorithm is apparently comprised of over 200 criteria, and the google search team guys keep changing the algorithm several times a week. So what this means, is their goal is to reward people searching on the internet with results that closely match their keyword search terms, and they want that info to be interesting, relevant and recent.

Google bots come to your site after it's first published or your webmaster submits it to google to have it indexed. The bot combs the site and indexes it for various words. Not every word – but words in special locations – like headings, alt tags, descriptions, meta tags etc. It will then come back a week later and look to see if any of the content has changed, and index the new stuff. If it comes back and there is no new stuff, it doesn't re-index. So then it might only come back a month later. From a search engine perspective, fresh content on your site means it is crawled more frequently, allowing your new content to become searchable more quickly. Fresh content is also indicative to Google of a more authoritative web site.

So, if someone searches on fixing blocked drains – Google will display results which match those keywords. If you've got a blogpost on this topic, which has been optimised correctly with these keywords, you will have a good chance of showing up on the first page of Google results in your local area. It won't happen overnight – it may take awhile. But if Google also sees that this post on blocked drains is also popular – has had a number of visits, has been shared etc, then it will start to move up the search results as a good and relevant article.

Another way to think about it is to put yourself in the shoes of your potential customers.

The first thing most people do if they're looking to solve a problem is to search for the answer on Google. They'll either search on fixing blocked drains or some variation of that, or they'll search on plumber and their suburb or area. So then they're confronted with pages and pages of results, and most people never go past page 1. So they start checking out the results to see which company they might call.

Some companies don't have websites. They'll probably be ignored. People want to know a bit about companies before they call them - so they'll check out a few websites. There will be some that feature pictures of their vans and talk about how long they've been in business and a list of services. These are really just online brochures.

And then there might just be one or two plumbers websites that actually have helpful information on them. As a customer – I would be wanting to know how much they know about blocked drains. If I was to ring them up – I'd probably ask questions like, how do I know if I have a blocked drain?

What causes blocked drains? Can I fix it myself or is it something a plumber has to do? How much will it cost, how long will it take.

If one of the sites I looked at addressed a lot of these questions in a blogpost – and had images and perhaps a couple of stories etc – then I would then feel a lot more confident in that company's ability to fix my blocked drains. I would also trust them a bit more than someone who doesn't provide much info.

Your website does is your online voice – your online sales person, answering questions, providing useful information and building rapport – when you're not there to do it in person. And frequent helpful blogposts are the way to do this.

So the next question is – what to put in blogposts?

There's many many topics you could be creating blogposts on. Here's a few suggestions.

Answers to your top 10 customer questions – that's 10 blogposts

How to posts – step by step guide on how to do something.

Of course in many trades - like electrical – you cannot do this for certain tasks which require a qualified electrician to undertake, however you could pick topics that people can do. Like – how to choose outdoor lighting – a guide to the various light types and where to use them. How to posts are probably the most popular post of all.

List Posts – these are lists of things.

For a list post to be successful, it should be logically organized. You can organize chronologically, or from most to least popular, or alphabetically or step-by-step. List ideas could be

9 things you need to consider before landscaping your back garden

7 ways to save energy in your home

5 things to ask a builder to see if he has the right type of experience for your renovation

Newsjacking Post – this is where you comment on an issue which is popular in the media right now.

For example on 28 September there was an article published on <https://sourceable.net/can-construction-keep-up-with-australian-weather-extremes/#> and this article talks about the increase in homes destroyed by bushfire and changes to the Australian Standards for construction in bushfire zones. The writer of the article looks at it from a perspective of using PVC double glazed windows – and the fact that they do comply with the new standard. As a plumber – you might want to comment on the new standard from your perspective – what you recommend people in high bushfire areas should be doing. As a

There's lots more ideas for blogposts – but these three should keep you going for awhile.

So the next question is – how to structure a post

Step 1 – identify your reader persona. Who are you writing for? How old are they, where do they live, what do they know and not know about your industry, what are their biggest fears?

Step 2 – Identify your key takeaway. What is the one key message you want people to have burned into their brain once they finish reading your post?

Step 3 – brainstorm a few titles. This is super important. Good bloggers will create 20 or more titles before they'll choose the one they think has the most clickable potential. Remember – when your posts is on a page of google search results – you want the title to leap out and grab attention so people click on it and come to your post. Not to anyone elses. For example. The title Blocked Drains is pretty boring. But Blocked Drains: 5 Common Causes and How to Fix – is going to attract attention.

Step 4 – Create an Outline: The typical how-to blog post consists of:

- **An introduction:** Sets the stage for what you plan to teach your readers how to do.
- **A body:** Explains every step involved in learning how to do that thing.
- **A conclusion:** Wraps up your post with a brief statement that's reflective of what your readers just learned.

So taking our blocked drain example – your intro could discuss signs of a blocked drain, your body could discuss the 5 common causes and provide guidance on how to fix and in the conclusion you could state that fixing a blocked drain requires thorough investigation before the right method of unblocking can be determined. Using chemicals won't fix something lodged in the pipe. You suggest that you come out with your camera and investigate properly etc.

Step 5 - **Revisit your working title** and see if you can make it more accurate, specific, sexy, concise, and SEO-optimized.

Step 6: Copy and paste your blog post copy firstly into a text editor like Microsoft Notepad or TextEdit on a Mac.

Now that you've gone through the exercise of outlining and writing your blog post, you want to prepare it for publishing. Pasting into one of these programs strips out all the weird formatting that Microsoft word sometimes adds (that you can't see) and sometimes causes things to go a bit skewiff. Then copy the plain text into your new blogpost..

Then use the built in styling on your site and make your post more eyecatching and scannable with headings, bold text for key points, hyperlinks and images where applicable.

Step 7: Edit, Edit, Edit! Everyone can use a second set of eyes to look over their post before putting it out into the world, so have a friend or colleague look it over. Another thing that will help? The Ultimate Editing Checklist.

[DOWNLOAD THE ULTIMATE EDITING CHECKLIST](#)

Step 8: Choose an Image. Every blog post should have an image. At Tradie Success we include at least one photo or image in every post we write so that when the blog post is shared to social media channels, it's accompanied by a thumbnail image to entice a clickthrough.

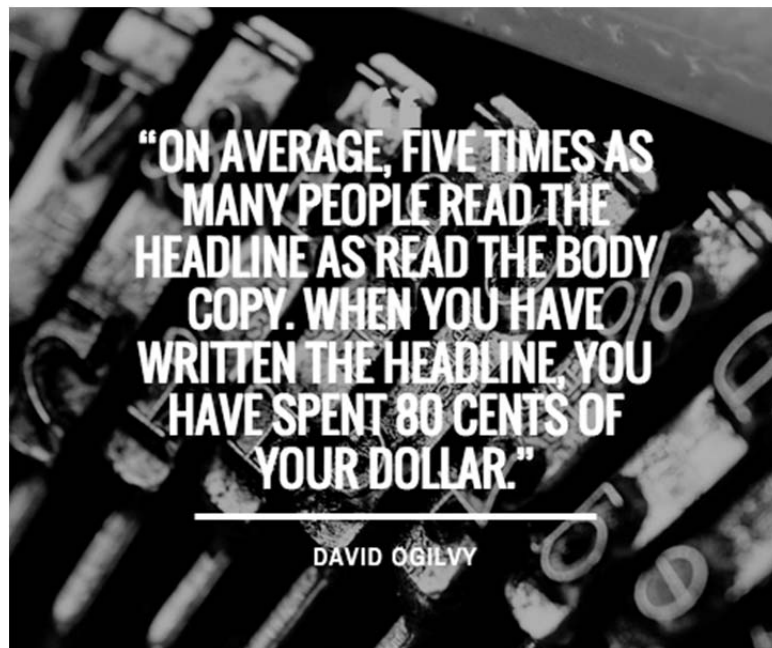
Step 9: Optimize Your Post for Search. If you've spent all this time writing a great blog post, you'll want to make sure it can be easily discovered in search engines.

The nitty gritty details on how to optimise your posts correctly and where to distribute them is covered in our online program TradieMarketingSecrets.com

Well I hope by now you've realised just how important it is to add regular blogposts to your website.

So go on – have a go. You have so much knowledge in your head – get it out there. Share it and show people that you really are an expert in your trade.

Here's a great quote to get you inspired:



Need Marketing Help?

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Give us a call on 1300 554 495 or shoot us an email via the contact page on tradiesuccess.com.au and we'll give you all the details and show you examples of what we're doing for others.

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