
Top 7 tips to writing an effective blog

Good blogging is good writing; here are 7 important tips to help you write better blogs and—also—improve the quality of all your web marketing and copywriting

By Roger C. Parker

Summary

- 1 Start with a topic you're passionate about
- 2 Concentrate on short, frequent postings
- 3 Let your authentic "voice" emerge
- 4 Always use correct grammar and syntax
- 5 Purposefully organize the content of your blog
- 6 Post a new entry at least once a week
- 7 Include your key contact information

If ever there was a perfect tool for the job hunter—or any marketer for that matter—blogging is it. Think of a blog as the 3D version of your resume or capabilities statement.

Blogs make it easy for you to provide *context* and *meaning* to the work experience and educational background you've so carefully word-smithed in your resume, showcased on your website, or delivered through your business on a day-to-day basis.

The online version of You, Inc.

Your blog is a *microsite* that permits you to *showcase your thinking and writing skills*.

Your blog is where influencers and decision makers can get to know you better, either because they found your blog through the search engines or clicked through to it from a link in your resume or cover letter.

So let's talk about how to blog well. Good blogging is good writing after all. What should you keep in mind when you start to blog? Here are seven rules for effective blogging:

1. Start with a topic you're passionate about

This is your theme, the thread that will run through your blog.

You better be passionate about it because you'll be chipping away at it for months. Yup, that's the bad news. It takes time to build your blog into something worth reading. It's the *accumulation of posts* (or entries) over a period of months—or longer—that will set you apart as a real blogger.

Ideally, your topic should be related to your job hunt or your business.

If you're searching for a position in sales, for example, you might develop a blog that focuses on "the close." All the different ways to get there; what works and what doesn't; examples or case studies based on your experiences, etc.

If you're searching for a position in museum marketing, your blog could contain tactful critiques of online and offline marketing by different museums around the country. When creating a blog like this, you might even interview different museum administrators for background information about the museum's challenges and opportunities. This technique

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New Bloggers
Jumpstart Kit**

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can open many doors for you, helping you establish relations with individuals you might otherwise never be able to connect with.

A well-written blog proves you can write and think clearly, concisely, and concretely

In both cases, your blogging goal is to create an obvious link between your competence and enthusiasm and your market's information needs.

2. Concentrate on short, more frequent entries in your blog

Now for the good news. You don't have to write a long essay each time you post to your blog.

On the contrary, a short paragraph or two is plenty—sometimes a sentence, alone, will suffice. Your goal is not to tell everything, but, rather, to show that you're knowledgeable about your topic. This can be accomplished by reading other blogs or news sources (online or offline) in your field and commenting on them.

In fact, a sentence or two with a link directing readers to a relevant article in the *WALL STREET JOURNAL*, or other respected periodical, is plenty. *The fact that you noticed the article and have an opinion about it is what counts.*

3. Let yourself go as a writer; let your authentic "voice" emerge

Good blogs have a *viewpoint and a voice*. They reveal something about the way the blogger thinks—as well as what he or she thinks about.

This is where it gets a bit tricky, however. You want to be honest and forthright in your writing. But, you *don't* want to cross the line by

saying things that are critical or inappropriate about your current employer or major players in your industry.

The best advice I have is to *use common sense!* Every time you post a new entry, remember that you are creating a public Web page, easily searchable by Google. A page that will likely remain accessible for years to come.

4. Use correct grammar and syntax—no misspellings allowed just like your resume or website

Which leads me to another tip: *if you're blogging your way to a new job, the quality of your writing really does matter.*

The ability to write is in woefully short supply. No matter what type of position—or new client—you're pursuing, a blog is a way to demonstrate that you can write and think clearly, concisely, and concretely.

The ability to write and think clearly, concisely, and concretely will put you head and shoulders above your competition. Oh, and—yes—you must use proper grammar and spelling no matter how informal the tone of your writing.

It's important to note that blogging tools often omit features like Microsoft Word's "always on" spell-checker that highlights spelling errors with a squiggly red line as errors are typed. As a result, you often have to run a separate spelling-checker after you have written your post.

With the new Mozilla Firefox browser, readers can scan the titles of your recent blog posts.

5. Purposefully organize the content of your blog

A blog provides you with an elegant and easy-to-use writing tool. It is also a mini *content management system*. Use it purposefully.

Think about the categories you want to cover over time. Are there keywords you should be using that recruiters or potential employers may be searching for?

Create a category for those keywords and key phrases. In addition, title each of your posts with care. Include as many specifics and keywords as possible.

If you're quoting an expert or brand name company in your blog entry, include the name in your title. Your blog entry may show up in search engine results alongside the Web site for a Fortune 500 company.

6. Post a new entry at least once a week—preferably two or three times a week

You need to write frequently in order to keep your blog fresh! The more you post, the more content you are creating.

Since each new post or entry is its own Web page, each new post increases the chances that search engines will find your blog.

Frequency and consistency are keys to success. Every time your client or prospect visits your blog or RSS feed, they want to see something new, rather than something they remember seeing on their last visit.

One way to force yourself to write more often is to use your blog as a place to park an interesting tidbit of info or a useful URL.

When you run across something you'd like to write about, open up your blog and create a

Blogs can promote your expertise on a daily basis.

Web Content, Design, & Promotion

Web marketing tips, including ideas and resources for improved web copywriting, design, and promoting, for results-oriented business consultants, business owners, and marketing professionals. By Roger C. Parker, Certified Guerrilla Marketing Coach and author of *The Streetwise Guide to Relationship Marketing on the Internet*.

Did you see what Business Week said about blogs and your marketing?

Should a blog be part of your Guerrilla Marketing arsenal?

Business Week has featured blogs on the cover of its May 2, 2005 issue.

The headline says it all: "Blogs will change your business." The article goes on to conclude: "You cannot afford to close your eyes to them because they're simply the most explosive outbreak in the information world since the internet itself. And they're going to shake up just about every business."

The field is still open, so if you haven't investigated blogs, now is the time! The field is still enough to establish a marketing presence.

Free Roger C. Parker introductory blog resources: (download now!)

- 2-page [Profiting from a Blog](#)
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- 2-page [Customizing Your Blog Template](#)

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Beyond e-Mail; Blogs, RSS and Subscription Website Success

As Spam Filters and stuffed inboxes take their toll, blogs continue to offer web marketers compelling benefits. Blogs and RSS feeds can often get the through when e-mail fails.

In my recent article for the [Subscription Website Electronic Publishers Association](#), I discuss some of the compelling benefits that blogs and RSS offer membership and subscription websites.

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The best blogs contain short, frequent posts

draft entry. Give it a provisional title. You can come back later when you've got 20 minutes to spare and can write up a coherent paragraph.

7. Include your key contact information on your blog

You'd be amazed at how many bloggers forget to do this! Never forget that your blog may turn up in a recruiter's or potential employer's Google search, or a prospect who has just discovered you and wants to act now!

By building your contact information into your blog template, you make it easy for them to pick up the phone and call or send an email.

Additionally, it's proper etiquette to indicate where you currently work. And also perfectly acceptable to add a phrase such as "the views expressed are my own."

BONUS TIP

Have fun when you blog! Whether you're blogging your way to a new job—or to new customers—you may find that blogging is truly a satisfying creative outlet.

Over time you might find yourself enjoying clarifying complex subjects or exploring subjects you didn't know you were so interested in. "Writing to learn" is an accepted way to boost your creativity.

Roger C. Parker blogs
www.rcpmarketing.info
www.rcpevents.info
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Keep chipping away with each blog entry. Who knows? Your blog might turn into a book!

You, blogs, and your business

So, who should become comfortable writing a blog? Employers, employees, or professionals running their own business?

It's becoming increasingly obvious that blogs are the "next big thing" to change personal and business marketing.

As BUSINESS WEEK headlined its May 2, 2005, cover story on blogs, "Blogs will change your business!" The authors continued:

Go ahead and bellyache about blogs. But you cannot afford to close your eyes to them, because they're simply the most explosive outbreak in the information world since the Internet itself. And they're going to shake up just about every business...blogs are a phenomenon that you cannot ignore, postpone, or delegate...blogs are not a business elective. They're a prerequisite."

To learn more

Start by Testing Your Blog Marketing IQ at Roger C. Parker's www.newentrepreneur.com. You'll receive a detailed Scorecard Analysis.

Then, check the resources below, and to the left. You'll find a variety of free articles, special reports, interviews, tip sheets and other resources to help you get started.

Or, e-mail Roger C. Parker or call 603-742-9673 for information about how I can help you choose the right blog strategy and topics.

"Thanks and credit to Debbie Weil, publisher of www.BlogWriteForCEOs.com and award-winning WordBizReport.com."



Roger C. Parker Profit Builder

• \$32,000,000 author

35 books, 37 languages

1.6 million copies sold

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recommended

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• Design educator

• Training, workshops

• Marketing coach

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