

# BIGSHOT *blogging*



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## Chapter 1 – Before Starting Your Blog

Before starting your blog there are a few things that you must accomplish. The first thing is obviously choosing which niche you will blog in. For this task I recommend making a list of all the topics that you are passionate about. It's important to start a blog on a topic that you can provide valuable content to, so therefore, it's imperative to choose a subject that you are able to write about on a day to day basis. If you can't see yourself writing about it in a year, it's probably not wise to start a blog on that topic. Anything from celebrity gossip to fishing can be successful on the internet. They aren't lying when they say that there truly is a market for everything.

After making your list, circle the top three subject choices that you'd like to write about. The reason I want you to circle three instead of just choosing one right away is this... our next step involves researching that topic. If after you research the topic, you aren't so sure that it would do all that well... you can simply move on to the next one. How's that for simplicity?

### Niche Research

**The next step in creating our blog is researching our chosen niche.**

The easiest way to start this process is to do a Google search for keywords that might fit your niche. The more searches for the keywords, the bigger your target audience. A bigger target audience means that there is more than enough people that you may reach with your writing, thus more money making potential. I'll warn you early on though, this isn't always the case. A bigger target audience usually, but not always, means that you'll have more competition. That means that there may be a big piece of the pie for you, but you'll have to fight to obtain it. For a new blogger, this generally isn't a good idea. If you've blogged before and you think you are up to the challenge... go for it!

The next step would be going to blog resources like [Technorati](#), [Blog Catalog](#), [Spicy Pages](#), and [My Blog Log](#). These sites (among others) will show you how many blogs have registered through their site on a specific category. Dig around a little bit and you'll see what you are dealing with.



**When doing niche market research, you'll always want to know who your target audience is.**

For example, in the celebrity gossip niche, I would say with complete certainty that your market would be dominated with 16-30 year-olds from all over the world. If you were to write about Nascar though, I would say that the target audience would be a bit older 30-45 and predominately from the southern half of the United States. These are important factors to consider when choosing a niche. They are also important later on when we talk about monetizing your blog. So do the homework now, and you'll be glad you did later!

## Keyword Research

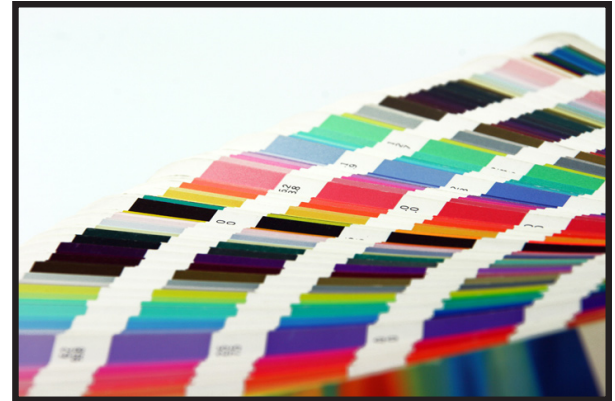
One more research step that I think would benefit everyone starting a new blog. Keyword research! I know this sounds complicated for a beginner, but I promise you the task isn't anywhere near as daunting as it seems. When I say keyword research, what I really mean is targeting around ten to fifteen keywords for your blog. You can do this by using the [Google Adwords](#) Keyword Tool, or the even better (but not free) Wordze tool. Either of these will allow you type in a word that describes your niche, and it will spit out multiple keywords. It will also show you how often these keywords are searched for in their respective search engines, Google and Yahoo. The reason you are researching keywords is because at some point you want to start building up some search engine traffic. In order to do that, you must rank on the first page for certain keywords.

Keyword selection runs the same route as researching a niche. A keyword with a lot of searches is good, because it means there is a huge potential for traffic... if you can get your blog listed on the front page. However, it may mean that you will have to work that much harder to obtain such a ranking. If you plan on being a blogger long-term, go ahead and get into the race for popular keywords. The longer you are around, the better you will start to rank for them.

If you are looking for keywords with less search volume, but that are easier to get high rankings for... that's okay too! These keywords won't bring as much organic (search engine) traffic to your site, but they will be easier to rank highly for. So even though they bring less traffic, they will definitely be easier to obtain. Going after popular keywords is a high-risk, high-reward strategy. If you get listed highly, the reward will be great. But it may take you quite a long time to do so (if ever). Either strategy will bring you some sort of traffic eventually.

**The thing about SEO is that it's a marathon, not a sprint.**

So whichever route you decide to go, it could turn out profitable for you.





## Writing Style

This part of selecting a blog is often overlooked, but as crucial to success as anything else in the early going. Writing style is your blogging voice. It's the way that you get messages across to your readers, and in turn it will decide how they react to that message.

I say that it's important to know what style of writing your niche will accept because all niche's expect different things of their writers. Will a smart-alecky 20-year-old be able to write a blog about the card game Bridge? I don't think so. Bridge is a game that is predominately played by older players. Most are even senior citizens and they won't take too kindly to a know-it-all, smart-aleck youngster.

On the other hand, if you are writing in a different niche - such as sports, or celebrity gossip ... these are genres that may take a little bit of attitude and enjoy it. So if you are a feisty writer, it's generally a bad idea to write in a tame market. It all goes back to doing your homework before selecting a niche to write in. If you do A+ research, you'll get A+ results. Trust me!

## Chapter 2 – Registering a Domain & Hosting

Ahh, and you thought it got easier as we went? Shame!

Creating a name for your blog is one of the most frustrating tasks on the face of the planet. It's not all that hard to come up with a clever name that is just perfect for your blog. What *is* hard, is when that name isn't available and it's time to go back to the drawing board. It seems that the stars are never aligned when it comes to you getting that perfect domain name.

It's even more frustrating when you type in the URL and realize that it's a MFA (made for adsense) or Spam site. Well, short of hiring a mobster to make them an offer they can't refuse (or if the mobster doesn't pan out, you can try Sedo), there are other options. That's right... time to brainstorm again!

But wait, I'm getting ahead of myself.

Let's go over some keys to picking a good domain name ...



## Research

Yep that's right, it's the ugly "R" word again. Research the keywords that you are going to be targeting on your site, and try to include one of those in your domain name. If you can't, no big deal... but it helps.

If you decide to blog about potatoes, which domain name do you think the search engines would rank higher?

<http://everythingpotatoes.com>

or

<http://spudwarfare.com>?

Well, that depends ... both of them cover a keyword in the "potato" niche, but one of them is likely to get searched for more. That's right, "potato" will always be a more popular search term than "spud".

So the key is to find the keywords that you will target, and try to include one of them.

## Here are some other keys to selecting a good domain name.

1. Try not to use hyphens if possible.
2. .com domains are always worth more than .net domains
3. Try not to use numbers.
4. Spell everything out, unless it's a well-known abbreviation, like NFL for example.

5. The shorter the better. Even though <http://imthekingoftheuniverseandirockhardcore.com> sounds like a simple name to remember to you, it's a bit long for the rest of us.
6. Keep spelling in mind. If your keyword is hard to spell, you are going to lose some people because they can't spell your URL.

These tips are all you need to make a great domain. Follow them closely and you'll pick a winner.

Having trouble? Why not try out a few domain name generators like [Nameboy.com](#), [Bustaname.com](#), or [Makewords.com](#)? These sites allow you to enter keywords and they'll do the rest. They'll find you hundreds of domains that may or may not be taken by Spammers. I love spammers!

## Registering Your Domain

So you've picked a winner! Now, it's time to register it. I recommend [GoDaddy](#) for all of your domain names, it's by far the simplest and most affordable way to go.

The first step is going to be typing in the domain to make sure that it's still available. Even though the name generator said it was, this may not always be the case. You see domain generators are a bit slow, or as I like to call them "special". They make for great inspiration tools, but they aren't completely accurate. Keep plugging, you'll get there!

Something else to consider when registering your domain. It's always wise to buy the .net and version of the domain as well (if it's available). This keeps the beloved spammers from registering the .net version and turning it into a MFA (made for Adsense) page. And we love when they do that... right? If you are having any problems setting up your account or registering your domain, watch this video and I'll walk you through it.

[You can find the video here](#)

## Setting Up Hosting

For my hosting needs I use [HostGator](#). A lot of new bloggers like to go with the smallest package to save a few bucks, but I like the “baby” package because I can set up multiple domains on one account. Trust me once you start making money on your first blog, your going to want to make another one. Setting up hosting is super easy, but just in case you get confused I’ve made a video to walk you through the process.

[You can find it here](#)

## Chapter 3 – Setting Up Your Blogging Platform

Sweet. All of that stuff is done. Ready to blog? Yeaaaaah, well you'll have to wait just a little bit longer. You need something to blog on maestro. I use [Wordpress](#) ... it's free, powerful, fully customizable, and it's pretty much ready to go right out of the box. But we won't use it right out of the box. We've got standards and we can't be seen in public with the default Wordpress Theme. Alright, back to work.

If you took my advice and used [GoDaddy](#) for your domain registration and [HostGator](#) for hosting you are about to be really glad that you did. You can install Wordpress with just a few simple clicks of the mouse!

In order to get that done, we'll have to log back into our [HostGator](#) account and scroll down to the bottom and double click on the Fantastico De Luxe icon. Once there click on install wordpress. It's going to ask you to name your database, and to give it a username and password. As always if you having trouble with any of this steps, I've made a video for you. [Check it out here.](#)

### Finding A Wordpress Theme

This is another tough task. There are a million of them out there, and all of them seem that they fall just short of the excellence that you require. Fear not friend! I am here to help. Something to consider when searching for a theme is a few qualities that you are looking for. Consider the features that you are looking for; that way when you spot them you'll know you are on to something. Something to consider though ... don't ever rule out a theme because you don't like the color.



It's a real easy fix that you can probably do yourself, or you can hire my web guru ... The Internet Genius. He's affordable, trustworthy, and best of all, he actually knows what he's doing when it comes to customizing these themes. He's actually created a fantastic theme himself called "[The Wordpress Dream Theme](#)." This is the only theme online that you can buy and then have fully customized by the designer for free. I use the theme at One Man's Goal, and I highly recommend it.

You can find Wordpress themes all over the net. You just have to type in "Wordpress Themes" into Google and you'll be met with a plethora of options. Or you can check out [this article](#) for more Wordpress theme options. I would certainly recommend the [Dream Theme](#) though. How could you go wrong with a theme that includes FREE installation, setup, and customization?



## Using A FTP Client

This is where I am going to lose some of you. Using an FTP client nearly scared the bejesus out of me at first, but once you have it down ... it's pretty simple.



The first thing we need to do is download an FTP Client. I use [Core FTP](#) because it's free, fully functional, and it's simple to use. You can download it by clicking on the link I've provided. There are a million different tutorials on how to do this, so I'm not going to spend a lot of time on it. But I will give you the basics, which is all you need to get started.

Your FTP Client is used to upload files from your computer, into your hosting account. It's a necessary evil, and the sooner you grasp the basics, the better off you'll be.

The first step is to install the client after you download it.

Next you click "new site" and create the site that you are going to upload to.

Alright, now we need to put in the required info into the fields. The first field will ask you to name your site. I usually just use the domain name - for example, One Man's Goal.

Now it asks for the Host/IP/URL, and all you have to put in here is the URL, minus the www or the http:// – so it looks like this onemansgoal.com

Next, you will enter the username and the password that you used when you set up the Wordpress database on HostGator.

After this we click “connect” and we’re done! It wasn’t that hard was it? It gets even easier now. The FTP Client will show two sides now. The left is your computer, and the right side holds your website files (from your hosting account).

So we downloaded [The Wordpress Dream Theme](#) and now we are ready to get it onto our site. All we have to do is unzip the file and place it on our desktop. From there, we click the “directory tree” button that looks like a bunch of blue folders. We select “desktop” and then we find the file that holds our new theme. Click on the folder (don’t open it), and then go to the other side of the FTP Client and click “wp-content” and then find the folder that says “themes”. Open that folder and then click the little blue arrow on the top left side of the client to transfer the theme to your hosting account.

You may notice that right next to the “themes” category when you open “wp-content” there is another folder that says plugins ... this is the folder that you’ll upload all of your plugins to using the same process. Pretty simple huh?

## Logging In To Your Blog

By now, HostGator probably has your Wordpress blog up and running. So to log in, you'll need to enter this address...

```
http://yourawesomedomain.com/wp-admin
```

By typing in this address it will take you to the login screen for your Wordpress blog. This gives you full access to the admin panel.

Now that you have access to the admin panel, you can do all sorts of things. But before you do, I want you to go to the "options" tab and then click "permalinks". The default permalinks are crap so I want you to change them. I want you to click "custom" and then enter this...

```
/%postname%/
```

This sets up your permalink structure to show your URL and then the name of your post.

So it would look like this...

```
http://yourawesomedomain.com/my-first-post
```

It's much easier on the eyes, and it's better for SEO (we'll cover that later). Some people like to include their categories in the post name as well. I don't recommend this because one day you may want to change your categories. And when you do, you'll have all kinds of links in Google that point to a 404 page (error).

That's not wise, so just start out with the postname.

## Chapter 4 – Must Have Plugins & Services

So it looks like we've got everything up and running. It's time to download some plugins and to sign up for a few services that you'll need later. Let's get to work!

### Plugins

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**Pillar content is like the foundation of a house. You can't build a house without the foundation, and you can't build a blog without pillar content.**

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Here are a few plugins that I recommend everyone download right off the bat. These plugins are must-have's in the blogging biz, and you shouldn't be without them.

#### [All-In-One SEO Pack](#)

This plugin gives you easy ways to optimize your blog for search engine success. No blog should be without it!

#### [Akismet](#)

Akismet is a handy little spam fighter. It keeps your comment section from being filled with spammers by blocking them. It has a section that allows you to go through what they've blocked and determine whether or not it really is spam. The best part about Akismet is that it learns as it goes. It becomes better at determining what is spam and what isn't based on what you tell it.

#### [Database Backup](#)

This plugin allows you to backup your Wordpress blog. I suggest doing this once a week. It will save you a lot of work should anything ever happen. This way you won't lose your content or comments.





## [Subscribe to Comments](#)

This plugin gives readers the option to subscribe to your comments. It allows them to see if anyone has replied to a comment that they left by giving them an email update when it happens.

## [Related Entries](#)

Internal linking is very important to the overall SEO of a blog. This plugin automatically posts links at the bottom of every blog posts that will lead readers to other articles that they may be interested in. It's a great way to keep people at your blog.

## [Robots.Txt](#)

Robots.Txt allows you to tell search engines which pages to index, and which ones to leave alone. This plugin pretty much does everything for you, so I won't jump to heavily into the technical side of things.

## [Feedburner Feedsmith](#)

The Feedsmith plugin takes allows your readers to subscribe to your Rss feed even if you may have the wrong address typed into your themes code. It forwards all Rss subscriptions to your feedburner account.

## [Do Follow](#)

Do Follow is completely up to you. This plugin takes away the "no-follow" attribute from your links. It allows the links on your page to be fully indexed by major search engines. I recommend it.

## [No WWW](#)

No WWW keeps you from getting double indexed. Double indexing happens when a search engine reads your site as two different sites because there are two addresses that can get you there. You can type in WWW or just yourawesomedomain.com and it will take you to the same place now. It essentially turns two domains into one. You need this!

## [Subscribe Remind](#)

Rss readers are one of the most important building blocks of a blog. You want as many as possible. So in order to obtain as many subscribers as possible, you are going to want this plugin. What this plugin does is puts a message at the bottom of every post reminding people to subscribe to your Rss feed if they haven't already. Must have!

## Services

### [Statcounter](#)

This is absolutely free, so you can't really do without it. Statcounter tracks your blogs traffic and where it came from. It is imperative that you are able to find out how much traffic you have, and where it is coming from. Sign up!

### [Google Analytics](#)

This is another free service that tracks your traffic and where it came from. The reason that I suggest both is simple. Google Analytics is much more powerful and in-depth, but Statcounter is instant. Analytics can take a few hours to update it's statistics, while Statcounter delivers them instantly. So you want Statcounter for instant stats, and Analytics to be able to really break them down.

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**I would recommend  
that you update your  
blog at least once daily.**

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Both of these services will require you to install a snippet of code into your blog. Don't worry, I'll walk you through it. The first thing you need to do is log into your blog. Click "Presentation" - "Theme Editor" — and then scroll own until you find the link that says "footer" or "footer.php". Open this and you'll notice that you have all of the code for the footer of your website. Go all the way to the bottom of that code, and you'll want to insert your code

anywhere above this...

```
</body>
```

```
</html>
```

Make sure you past the code above those two items.

### [FeedBurner](#)

FeedBurner is a free service that allows you to monitor and optimize your Rss feeds. Just sign-up and it's pretty much ready to go. Not much to it, but a definite must-have.

### [Technorati](#)

Technorati is to blogs what Google is to web pages. Technorati is essentially a blog search engine. It ranks blogs by statistics, and it allows you to search for and add friends, find blog posts, and to see how popular you are compared to other blogs with a Technorati account.

Big Shot Blogging Tip – [101 More Wordpress Plugins](#)

## Chapter 5 – Producing Content

One of the greatest bloggers I've had a chance to interact with somewhat is Darren Rowse from [problogger.net](#). He is constantly pumping out great content and he usually updates more than once per day. How does he do it? He's passionate about his topic, his audience, and he's concerned with our advancement as bloggers. Content production should be the easiest part of building your blog. If you stuck to my guidelines in the earlier chapters and picked a niche topic that you already loved, it should be a breeze. But there are some difficult questions that bloggers face:

- *Where do I find content?*
- *How much content do I need to launch a blog?*
- *How often should I update?*

These are all hard questions to answer. You see, there isn't a single answer that will work for any blog in existence. However, there are a few guidelines. I'll show you what I mean. I'll answer all of these questions at the end of this chapter.



### Finding Content

This heading is a bit misleading. You see, you should never have to actively seek content. It's all around you. Turn your everyday experiences into juicy tidbits of information that your readers will devour. Try to carry a small notebook, or a voice recorder with you so that you can jot down ideas for a blog post wherever you are. The

easiest way to produce content is to make sure you don't forget it. Ideas for great blog posts enter my head several times daily. If I didn't have a way to jot them down, I'd definitely be hurting for ideas.

For those of you wondering about writers block, here is a quick fix. First of all, there is no such thing as writers block. Writers block is a self-imposed limitation for unfocused writers. Every writer has times when it seems that they can't write. This isn't anything more than a mental block. Clearing a mental block is just like clearing any physical hurdle. If you can't do it the first time, walk away, clear your head, and think of a way to jump over it.

If you are still concerned with ways to get rid of writers block, there are lots of things you can do. Take a walk, go work out, read a book, watch some tv, cook dinner, etc. etc. etc. — it's all about clearing the hurdle.

## **Sometimes the easiest way to clear that hurdle is to simply replace it with something else.**

If you can't find a way around it ... just ignore it until it goes away. Staring at the hurdle won't make it go away, just like staring at your computer screen doesn't make brilliant words type themselves. It's all about the skill every blogger should have, the ability to selectively forget things. Forget the hurdle. Go concentrate on dinner, and the hurdle might just get up and walk away all on it's own.

Although it sounds counter-productive, you'd be surprised at how effective this method is. Just don't forget to come back to the computer ... although the hurdle may be gone, you still have to walk through the area that it used to inhabit.

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**The first step in the  
commenting process  
is to find blogs in your  
niche to comment on.**

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## Pillar Content

I'm stealing this term from a blogger that I admire greatly, and have had the privilege of working with on several occasions. [Yaro Starak](#) may or may not have coined this term, but it definitely became a blogging "buzzword" after the release of his successful ebook— "[The Blog Profits Blueprint](#)". If you haven't downloaded it, I recommend you get it immediately. It's a free source of information, and it's very solid and to the point. It's a must-have.

Alright, so what is pillar content? Pillar content is like the foundation of a house. You can't build a house without a foundation, and you can't build a blog without pillar content. Pillar content are the posts that give your blog value, whether it be real or perceived. These posts are the ones that give your blog direction, and feed your readers heads with useful information. A pillar post varies depending on what niche you are in, but it always holds true to the same form... it gives your readers what they are looking for.

Here are a few niches and an example of what a pillar article would entail:

**Blogging**—How to install Wordpress on HostGator.

**Fitness**—Why you can't lose that stubborn belly fat.

**Sports**—Understanding statistics in Baseball

**Movies**—The 10 Greatest Action Movies of All Time

Internal linking is something that we'll get into much later, but these are articles that will be timeless classics for your blog. A great pillar post is something that you can refer back to (or link back to) several dozen times over the course of your blogging career. These post truly provide the foundation for what you are trying to

build.

## Questions Answered

### ***How much content do I need to launch a blog?***

This is definitely a no-win answer. If I told you the truth, you'd probably never even begin blogging in the first place. The truth is, that there is never enough content on a blog, which is what makes it unique from a website. It's constantly growing, and always evolving.

The simple answer? I wouldn't tell anyone about your blog until you have at least 25-50 posts. Why such a high number? It's simple really ... You don't want to start attracting new readers to your blog if there isn't enough content to keep them there. I chose the number 25 because generally, it's enough content to get readers to visit more than once.

If readers come to a new blog and they start reading through your content... you want enough of it there so that they can't read it all in one sitting. If they enjoy your content, this will force them to come back so that they can not only see your new posts, but your archived ones that they didn't have a chance to get to as well.

### ***How often should I update?***

The simple answer to this question is ALL THE FREAKIN TIME. That might scare some of you away but it's true. Blogging is just like anything else – you get out of it what you put into it. So if you are putting a little into it, then it's going to take you longer to build traffic, rank highly in the search engines, and to start producing income. However, the more you update, the faster this process begins moving. Search engines simply love blogs because of how often they are updated. Search engines actively seek out fresh and new content to fill the need of what searchers are searching for. Well, the more times you update, the more content they'll find,

and the more articles you'll have indexed in popular Search Engines... but I'm getting ahead of myself. We'll leave the search engine optimization talk, for later.

Also, this questions kind of depends on your niche. If you picked something like sports or celebrity gossip, you'll need to update multiple times daily. Celebrity gossip is something that people want to find all in one place. If they find a few stories on your blog, it's probably not enough to keep them from going to [PerezHilton.com](http://PerezHilton.com) for the rest of it. However, there are ways around this. Let's say that you were more of a commentator on what is going on in the celebrity world and less of a reporter, you could definitely swing one article a day. The same goes for any topic that has things happening daily.

Now, let's say that you chose something like bass fishing. Although I'm sure something happens every day in the world of fishing, it's not necessarily ground breaking enough to HAVE to cover it. So you could easily get by doing one post a week. Other topics that you could potentially post less frequently would be how-to type sites. Things like arts & crafts, card games, and cooking are subjects that would allow you some flexibility. If you don't have the time to post, make sure you aren't in a niche that will require it.

Having said all of this, I would recommend that you update your blog at least once daily. Why? It's simple really. If you aren't updating regularly, people will forget about you. You did the hard work by bringing people to your blog... why lose them because you aren't updating enough? If you absolutely cannot update once daily, you can still be profitable in this business, but there are a few rules that I want you to stick to and NEVER deviate.

If you aren't sure how often you can post, start small. Try one post a week, or three posts a week at first just to make sure you can handle that frequency. If you can, bump it up to four posts a week, and then five, and so on. If you can't, then slowly work downward.

The key is to stay at the frequency you can handle. Most new bloggers get so excited that they can't contain



their newfound enthusiasm when it comes to writing content. However, not unlike the after-effects of an energy drink ... they crash. They'll go a week, two weeks, a month without producing content. When this happens, they lose whatever audience they had, and they are forced to start over.

They become discouraged, and they think that blogging is for suckers. But blogging isn't the problem. It's their system. I'm going to help you modify your system so that you can give yourself the greatest chance of success.

Okay, I managed to slip off topic a bit, so let's get back to it.

**When posting, always remember that it's better to start with fewer posts a week and work your way up, than it is to try and post everyday and then work down.**

Anytime there is going to be a negative change in your posting frequency, try to make it as gradual as possible. Slowly work down from seven posts a week to six, then five, and so on.

Remember, the more you post the better. People, and search engines like to see regular updates. So post as often as you can. But don't overdo it. Give yourself some time to see how comfortable you are when it comes to posting. You can always adjust the frequency. We want to blog for money so that we don't have to work full time. So don't kill yourself with too much work, too early on.

## Chapter 6 – Driving Traffic

This is the one area of blogging that has everyone crying out for help. It seems that there isn't a way to wave a magic wand and watch as traffic starts to flow in. It takes time, effort, and diligence to attract enough traffic to start producing revenue.

### So Where Do I Begin?

Well the simple answer is by writing. Content produces traffic, plain and simple. But you have to know where to go to get at least a few people to view that terrific content, so that those few people can turn into a few hundred people, and then a few thousand, and so on. So this chapter is going to tell you how to get those first few hundred people. The rest is up to you!

### Issue a Press Release

The first thing I recommend for every new blogger is to draft a press release. That's right, offline marketing works in the online world too. A press release is the first step in driving traffic. You can submit your article to [FreePressRelease.com](http://FreePressRelease.com)

This one step isn't going to gain thousands of fans for you instantly, but it can produce a nice write-up or two in your local paper, or even some national outlets. I've received quite a bit of attention early on from issuing a press release.

I was interviewed by two of my local papers, and I got to meet some local bloggers that shared my passion, and ultimately my journey to blog full time. It's not the "magic" method that we are looking for, but it's all about building a solid footing. And this is the foundation of your traffic building efforts.

## Attach A Link To Your Site

Something that is often overlooked is the power of attaching your link to everything. When you send an email, your forum signature, and even your business card. Your link needs to be everywhere that you are. So start attaching it to everything. You'd be surprised at how often this translates into repeat visitors for your site. So don't forget!



## Comment, Comment, Comment

Commenting on other blogs is the greatest free way to attract new readers. It's preached by many and followed by few, but let me tell you ... it's good advice!

The first step in the commenting process is finding blogs in your niche to comment on. You need to scour blog communities such as Blog Catalog, My Blog Log, and Spicy Pages in order to find others that share the same passion you do for the subject that you are blogging about. It's super easy to use this method too. Just click on the links I've provided, and sign up for a free account at all three of them. It's fast, simple, and best of all, you won't pay a dime to find other bloggers with similar interests.

After you have found these blogs, it's time to start commenting on them. It's kind of like saying hello to your neighbor in the real world, only this hello is actually beneficial to you.

**The key to commenting on other blogs is to actually provide something to the conversation that is already going on at their blog.**

People comment on blogs because they genuinely like what the blogger is saying, or to disagree with what

they are saying. Make sure your comments provide something to the discussion, or you might find yourself in the spam filter. Here is an example of providing something to the conversation ...

Sally writes about global warming on her eco-friendly blog "Eco Blogging". She has 12 comments and most of them are providing something to the conversation. So now it's your turn. A lot of bloggers that are trying to get attention for their blogs will slip in, scan the article, and leave a comment that looks like this:

"Great post. I'll be sure to check back in regularly."

LAME!

Good job, you just made yourself look like a spammer. So what would be a better way to add to this conversation about global warming?

"Sally, this was a phenomenal post. Global warming is without a doubt the greatest threat of our time. If action isn't taken to reverse it's course, or at least slow down it's momentum, we could start seeing catastrophic results in our lifetimes.

After watching "An Inconvenient Truth" it really shook my view on this serious problem. If anyone hasn't seen it, I recommend renting it IMMEDIATELY!"

Now that's a comment that adds to the conversation.

But could we push further? Absolutely! We can also try to attract visitors to come check out our blog by posting a link to a similar article on the same subject.

It would go something like this...

Sally, this was a phenomenal post. Global warming is without a doubt the greatest threat of our time. If action isn't taken to reverse it's course, or at least slow down it's momentum, we could start seeing catastrophic results in our lifetimes.

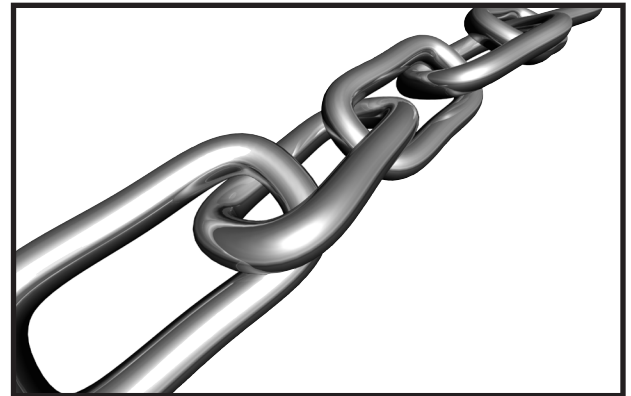
I recommend checking out this post [link to my blog]. It explains the short and long term threats due to global warming, and your readers might find it interesting.

Now this adds to the conversation, and it could quite possibly gain you a few visitors to your own blog. It served two purposes, just by taking the time to be respectful of someone else. It's disrespectful to try and comment on someone else's blog just to try and get their traffic. But if you provide something to the conversation, you won't ever have to STEAL their traffic, they will be more than happy to check out your site.

It also warrants a mention that the above tactics also work on forums. So don't just comment on blogs, hit up your favorite forums too!

We now know how to post comments that might earn us some traffic, but what if we could get one more benefit from this tactic? We can!

For every comment you post, you can also build an incoming link to your blog. I'll get into link building later, but wouldn't it be a nice bonus to get rewarded for something that we are doing anyway?



## The Do Follow Blog List

I don't want to go too far in depth on Google's policies, but I will tell you that there is one in particular that you can circumvent, just by knowing where to go. But first, let me explain why this is important. Google sends spiders to blogs just as it does any other site online. Spiders are a term for Google inspecting your site so that it's pages can be indexed on their search engine. These spiders pick up everything from links, to content, and everything in between. Well, the comment field is different. All comments are set to No Follow, by default. No follow is a simple tag that is inserted into a comment field that looks like this:

```
<a href="http://onemansgoal.com" rel="no follow">One Man's Goal</a>
```

The no follow tag tells the Google spiders not to index the link that you just left in the comment field. It doesn't sound like a big deal, but I promise you it is. Google does this to prevent spam sites from rising up the search engine rankings, but it actually keeps blogs from rising, just as it does the spam sites.

So you may be wondering why it's such a big deal if your link isn't followed. It's simple really, to build a good Google PageRank, or to rise to the top of search engines for specific terms ... one of the factors is incoming links. If you can't build links to your site by commenting, it forces you to do it in other ways, and it could take quite a bit longer. So instead of punishing everyone, there is a way to get around this Google ploy to prevent spam.

And it's called Do Follow. You can find a list of blogs that have removed the No Follow tags from their comment fields at <http://onemansgoal.com/do-follow-blogs>. When you comment on these blogs, not only are you getting traffic from people that see your link, you are also building links for your blog, because these blogs actually TELL Google that it's ok to follow your links. This is a win-win. You need the links, and you are commenting anyway, so why not kill two birds with one stone?

## Social Bookmarking

Social bookmarking traffic is the traffic that sites like [Digg](#), [StumbleUpon](#), and [Reddit](#) generate. All you have to do is submit your best posts to them, and hope that others “vote” your article up the ranks. The more “votes” you get, the more pageviews it will translate into.

This is by far the most useful traffic building method for BULK traffic. The traffic won’t be as good as the kind that you generate from commenting, but there will be lots more of it. And let me clarify, when I say that it won’t be as good as the traffic you generate from commenting, I mean tthat social bookmarking traffic doesn’t usually stick around as long, and only a small percentage of it will ever view your site again.

But it’s better than nothing right? And SOME of this traffic will “stick”. They’ll come back on their own so that they can check out your latest articles, and updates.

One method I recommend fully for utilizing the power of social bookmarking traffic is [Social Bookmarking Demon](#). This software actually automates 90% of the process of submitting articles for you to major social bookmarking sites. It’s a must-have if you are a serious blogger. It pays for itself 100 times over every month.

## Pay For It

If you don’t have the time to utilize these free methods of traffic building, you could always pay for it. By paying for it, I mean buying advertisements on other blogs, or using PPC (pay per click) traffic methods like Adwords. Let’s go into a little bit of detail about utilizing some of these methods.

## Adwords

**Google Adwords** is the buyers side of Adsense. It allows you to post an ad by using keywords that you select, and then sends users to your site if they click the ad. Your ad will be shown on relevant blogs, and every time someone searches on Google for a keyword that matches the ones that you have selected. You may notice that on Google, when you search for something you'll notice a couple of links at the top that are highlighted in yellow, and a group of links on the right that say "Sponsored Links". These are advertisers that use Google Adwords, and the text ad that you see, is the ad that they created to deliver traffic to their site. This is called PPC advertising, or Pay-Per-Click advertising.

PPC means that even though your ad may be shown 1,000's of times a day, you only have to pay when people actually click it. It really revolutionized advertising when this type was released. By allowing clients to only pay when the ad delivers people to their site, it is obviously the most efficient form of advertising, when it comes to spending money.

## Advertising On Blogs

You can also advertise on blogs, but here you are paying a flat monthly or weekly fee to have your ad displayed. You'll create an image ad, or a text ad and the blog owner will display it in the agreed upon spot on their blog. This is a great technique for branding your website because it starts to make the name of your site more visible.

Another way to advertise on blogs is by paying for a blog review, or a sponsored review. This means that you are paying a certain amount for the blogger to write a post that tells others what a wonderful site yours is. It's a pretty effective way of generating traffic, and it is usually pretty inexpensive. Obviously the bigger the blog, the more traffic you are going to get from the review, but it's also going to cost you more.



## Stumble Campaign

The popular social bookmarking site [StumbleUpon](#) allows users to pay to have their sites shown more often on StumbleUpon. StumbleUpon works by allowing users to click “stumble” and be delivered to a random page on the internet. You choose the topics that you are interested in, and they will send you to pages that might meet your interests.

A Stumble campaign uses the same technology, but this time you are paying for people to view your site. The rates are incredibly reasonable (5 cents a visit), and they have plans set up for just about any budget.

The best part about a Stumble campaign is it’s potential to send more visitors than what you have paid for. Just because you pay for 100 visitors on StumbleUpon, doesn’t mean that 100 is all that you will get. When users vote for your webpage by clicking the “thumbs up” (meaning they like it), then it starts to send more and more visitors to your page, even after you’ve reached the amount of visitors you’ve paid for. This is because StumbleUpon is always seeking pages that people vote up, because they view that page as something that others may like. So it really is a great way to advertise, and it gets you the most bang for your buck.

## Chapter 7 – Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

The focus of this chapter will be gaining visibility in popular search engines like Google, Yahoo, and MSN. The sooner you are able to increase your visibility in the search engines, the sooner your traffic will start to grow on it's own. Being able to rank highly for certain terms will send traffic to your blog, and it's completely hands-free. You didn't have to do anything but write the article, and it will send you traffic all on it's own. This is the most passive way to generate hits for your website or blog. Content really is king!

### What is SEO?

Search engine optimization or SEO, is the process of moving your sites further up the food chain in the search engines. Blogs that are ranked on the first page of search engines are much more visible to people that are doing the searches. So if you rank well for a few search terms, it stands to reason that you'll be seeing more and more traffic. It's not an overnight process, and it can take months or even years, but it's well worth it if you are blogging for the long haul.

#### The Key Elements of Search Engine Optimization

1. Your Domain Name
2. Link Building
3. Keyword Targeting
4. Anchor Text
5. Keyword Density



## 6. Internal/External Linking

### Your Domain Name

The age of your domain name is something that will greatly affect your search engine rankings. Older domain names are seen as “trusted” domains, and they will almost always rank higher for targeted keywords. It’s not always the case, relevance comes into play here too, but it is a factor.

Some people say that your keyword should be in your domain name. While it certainly helps, it’s not really necessary. Some sites have very good luck in ranking high for terms that aren’t included in their domain name. Take [Problogger.net](#) for example. He ranks on the first page of Google for the term “Make Money Online”, and you won’t see that anywhere in his domain name.

### Link Building

This is by far the most important strategy for increasing your search engine visibility. The more incoming links you have on a particular topic, the higher you rank in the search engines. Plain and simple, it really is that easy. Of course there are other factors involved, but this is simply the best way to build your blog for long term search engine success.

As we’ve discussed in previous chapters, there are a million ways to build incoming links. You can build a lot of incoming links doing things that you should be doing anyway. Commenting is the main one. If you comment on Do Follow blogs, you’ll get an incoming link for every comment that you leave.

I use two different tools to automatic the link buidling process. The first is [Bookmarking Demon](#), bookmarking demon allows to you registers and “tag” your websites at 100’s of social bookmarking sites such as faves and delicious. It registers you to all the sites and allows you to give 100’s of links in minutes.

The second is article submission. If you write an article you can submit it to an article site site ezine.com and get 3 anchored links back per article. While that is cool let me tell you want is even better, submitting to 210 directories with one click that is what article submission software can do for you. I use [Article Submitter](#).

But there are other link building methods that we have yet to talk about. We’ll discuss those now.

## ***Blog Carnivals***

Sounds fun right?

Blog Carnivals are a great way to generate traffic and incoming links to your site. It’s a pretty simple concept, yet it works wonders in building traffic.

Here is the basic idea. One blog decides to host a blog carnival for a specific topic. Let’s say affiliate marketing is the topic of choice. The owner of the blog hosting the carnival is looking for posts that are 100% related to affiliate marketing. Once they find enough posts, they will “host” the carnival by creating a blog post that is full of nothing but links, and sometime excerpts taken from these posts. This gives that blogs readers a chance to check out other blogs that write about a similar topic. It’s a great way to discover new blogs, and for you to build some traffic and links out of it!

So to find these carnivals you would go to a site like [BlogCarnival.com](#) and search for topics that relate to your blog. Once you find them, you would submit a link to the person who is holding the carnival. If this person decides to use your article, then you would get a link on their blog, and it will generally get you some

extra hits to your site. Fantastic right? For something that takes so little time, it's really a bad move not to take advantage of blog carnivals.

## Article Marketing

For article marketing, I use [article submission software](#). I write an article about "how to make money online". Then I put the article in my article submission software and it will submit my article to 210 different article directories. At the bottom I add an "about the author" section, and you need to take advantage of it. I include three links in every article that go back to my website. Here is how my about the author section looks:

Marc Galeazzi is a professional Blogger, Consultant, and Full-Time Internet Entrepreneur. He is the mastermind behind the popular blog – OneMansGoal.Com and his purpose is to help you succeed in your online endeavors, and help you to [make money online](#).



As you can see, that short blurb contains two links to my blog One Man's Goal. The first one is in the form of the actual URL, and the second uses the anchor text – Make Money Online. We'll get into the importance of anchor text in a minute, but as you can see, these two links are going to help me tremendously.

Building links with article submission works because these sites exist to provide content for other sites. So every time someone copy and pastes your article into their blog or website, it should have an incoming link to your blog. So everytime someone uses this article (and it will be used a lot), I'll get two more incoming

links. It's a great link building strategy, but just like anything else that has to do with SEO... it takes time

## ***Buying Links***

You can buy text links from other blogs to increase your number of incoming links. This is generally done by enlisting a service like TextLinkAds.Com to find relevant blogs and to make sure that your link gets placed there.

Text Link Ads allows you to search other blogs in their marketplace, and sort the results by number of pages, pagerank, links sold, and link popularity. For a beginner, it's wise to buy the cheapest links possible, as these will give you the most bang for your buck. I use this service personally, and I am thrilled with the results that I've achieved in a short amount of time.

There isn't a better service out there for purchasing links than Text Link Ads. But if you prefer, you can go out and find the blogs that you would like to advertise on manually. I prefer text link ads, because everything is in one place, and I don't have to deal with blogs that remove my link, or add the "no follow" tag to it. Text Link Ads handles this for you, and if an advertiser does something like this. They won't get paid, and your money will be refunded. So if you are interested in purchasing links, give Text Link Ads a try, and if you sign up right now... [\*\*you can get \\$100 in free links!!\*\*](#)

Buying text links is one of the greatest ways to increase search engine visibility, and perhaps your Google PageRank. You see, for each link you purchase in someones sidebar, as long as that sidebar link is visible on every page of the blog, you are actually getting one new link for every blog post they make. Google ranks all pages independently, so the homepage is one, the most current article is two, the about me page is three, and so on. So one link could actually turn into hundreds, or even thousands!

## ***Directory Submission***

Directories are services that allow you to post your link and a description of your website on their webpage. These are largely ineffective, and super time consuming. Some of these directories charge you for their services, and some are free, but either way, it's not a very efficient process.

You can however, pay for services to submit your links for you, but a word to the wise, make sure you are dealing with a reputable source. Some of these guys are real scammers. I stay away from directories, but I've known others that have achieved great results with Directory Submission.

## **Link Exchanges**

These are called "reciprocal links" and they aren't very valuable for SEO purposes, but every little bit helps. Link exchanges take place when you email other bloggers and ask if they could display your link on their page, and in turn you'll do the same. These links aren't very valuable, but it's a good way to start building links. Just check in regularly to make sure that your links are still displayed on the other persons blog. Some people remove them without letting you know!

## **Keyword Targeting**

Before you go adding links to your portfolio, make sure you know what keywords you would like to rank for. With One Man's Goal, I chose Make Money Online, which is an extremely competitive keyword, and it's going to take me a lot of time to rank well for it. But you don't have to pick such a competitive keyword to start out with. The first keywords I chose, when I started out were "Monetize Your Blog", and I was able to rank #1 on Google for that term after only a couple of months.

But since then, I've dropped in the Google rankings, since I'm not building links using those keywords. I've chosen a more competitive keyword, that will deliver me more traffic when I'm able to rank well for it. It's an

on-going process.

To target keywords the most simple thing you can do is type a phrase into Google and see how many results exist for that keyword or keyphrase. The fewer the results, the easier it will be for you to rank for that phrase or keyword. It's truly a gamble when you go after popular keywords, so if you are new to blogging or SEO, I recommend starting off with keywords that aren't as popular. The competitive keywords will bring you more traffic, but they'll be much harder to rank well for.

Here is just one example:

### ***Monetize Your Blog***

541,000 Results on Google

### ***Make Money Online***

20,000,000 Results on Google

As you can see, Make Money Online is much more competitive than Monetize Your Blog. But if I can rank well for it eventually, it will deliver much more traffic than the latter.

## **Anchor Text**

Anchor text is the text that shows up in your link. For example:

One Man's Goal

Make Money Online





Both of these links will take you to the same place. However, since I am targeting Make Money Online in my search engine efforts, the bottom one is much more valuable to me. The more links you can build with the proper anchor text for your keyword, the faster you'll move up the search engine rankings.

When I go out and buy links (like we discussed earlier), I want to make sure that the sites that I am buying the links from use the proper anchor text. I don't want One Man's Goal, showing up in their sidebar, I want it to say Make Money Online. This anchor text is the valuable part of your link. For example, if you were building a celebrity gossip blog and you wanted to rank well for search term "celebrity gossip", you would want your anchor text to say Celebrity Gossip.

Simple right?

## Keyword Density

Another thing that search engines look at when ranking sites is keyword density. The more a blog uses the keyword their targeting, the more relevant the search engine thinks that it is to that topic. So therefore, search engines will start to take notice and move your sites up the rankings.

I don't suggest writing for search engines. Our goal is to build a blog from the ground up into an income producing machine that will only get better with age. If you start writing for search engines by repeatedly using your keywords out of context, then it makes for a poor user experience. Your readers don't want to read that garbage, and they may quit visiting your site completely.

**The safest way to move up in search engine rankings,  
while keeping your reader in mind is to just concentrate on  
building links using your keywords as anchor text.**

Writing for a search engine may get you results, but it's not going to make you a very popular blog in the long run.

Always think long term!

## Internal Linking

Lets start with internal linking because it's quite simple. For every link that you put in a blog post that links back to a previous article, you are gaining a back link. Remember, every time this happens, Google ranks the page independently. So even though it's from a different blog, it's still an incoming link. There are more than just SEO benefits here though. For example, each link you provide within a post that directs readers to a previous post, increases your chances of keeping that visitor long term. The more of your outstanding content that they read, the more they fall in love with your blog. You want people clicking around, and you want them staying on your site as long as possible. Link to your old posts!

Just remember, Google likes to see relevant links. So if you are a Sports Blog and you are linking to a Ballet blog on a regular basis, these links won't hold as much weight.

## Chapter 8 – Building A Community

One of the most important aspects for the long-term success of your blog all relies on your ability to build a community. Building a community, means building a loyal following of readers that are there reading, and commenting day in and day out. It's not an easy task, but it can decrease the amount of time it takes to have a successful blog in half.

**Building a blog actually has very little  
to do with the blog itself.**

As you've seen from previous chapters, most of your work as a blogger will be done outside of your blog. Although content is your number one priority, building a community is a close second.

### Engage Your Readers

Building a community is done by engaging your readers. If they wanted a faceless, nameless, no personality sort of reading enjoyment, they'd pick up a magazine or a newspaper. That's not what they want, they want you!

Part of your job as a blogger is answering comments and emails, and you need to take my advice and do this often. If you aren't answering emails or comments, you are missing out on the community aspect of blogging. If you miss out too long, you may be missing out permanently. Don't just answer emails that contain questions, take the time to send a personal thank you to everyone who wishes you well, or pays you a compliment. As your blog grows in size it will be next to impossible to manage this task, but starting off, you need to do it.

You need to be replying to every comment on your blog. If someone takes the time to comment, you need to visit their blog and return the favor. You should also be replying to comments on your own blog. If someone says great post, make sure and take the time to leave a comment saying “thank you”. This is often overlooked, but you’d be surprised at the results that it creates. I got my reputation early on as a friendly guy by doing just this. There wasn’t some secret technique, I just applied kindness to everything that I did as a blogger. I still wish I could reply to every comment that is left, but there simply isn’t enough time in the day, although I try.

## Get Them Involved

A lot of bloggers get discouraged early on by the lack of comments that are left on their posts. There are some real simple tips that I can give you here that will increase the frequency of comments. Comments may not mean much to some, but it’s a lonely feeling when you’ve poured your heart into a post and have no results in the comment field to show for it. It’s like giving a speech to a light fixture... it simply doesn’t feel right.

The easiest way to get your readers involved is by asking good questions. Any time that I’m looking for a lot of comments, I’ll ask a question at the end, such as... has this worked for you? Or something similar. You can also bait users into commenting. It’s as simple as writing a controversial post. If there is a topic that is hotly debated in your niche, you can usually bait users into speaking their mind by taking one side of the argument rather than remaining in the middle. Try this, it works!

Link baiting articles usually work well too. For example, an article that is valuable to the masses is usually a good place to fill up the comment field. On One Man’s Goal I wrote a post titled – [101 Wordpress Plugins You May Not Have Known About](#). To this day I receive comments and links from that post, and it was over two months ago that I wrote it.

If all else fails, try your hand at humor. Another post I wrote at One Man's Goal was titled – [9 Reasons Why I'm Cooler Than John Chow](#). It got a lot of attention, a lot of comments, and quite a few links. It wasn't a hard article to write, but it certainly turned into a great piece of comment bait.

Try these methods, you'll be pleasantly surprised with the results.

In closing, if you aren't building a community early on, you are certainly missing out.

**Readers want something that they can get  
behind, and be involved with.  
It's all about giving them a place to voice  
their opinions.**



## Chapter 9 – Monetization

Ahh, the chapter we've all been waiting for. The one that is going to show you how to make money with your new best friend – your blog.

In case you were wondering why monetization didn't come up before now, it's because I feel that it's the least important aspect of building your blog.

**Money is nice, but if you try to make a lot of money before you have set up a solid foundation, your blog will surely crumble.**

This isn't to say that I believe in waiting to monetize a site, quite the contrary. Some bloggers will tell you that you need to wait until you have an audience and blah blah blah. I don't agree, I like to monetize from day one. The bloggers that say wait, have valid points. If you monetize from day one, you really aren't going to make a lot of money early on ... there simply aren't enough people viewing your blog to make money from.

Monetization methods take traffic, so until you've built your traffic, you are monetizing a non-existent audience.

Let's talk about some popular monetization methods.

## Adsense/PPC

PPC (pay-per-click) Advertising means that you put up ads on your site, you deliver traffic to your page, and you get paid every time someone clicks on one of the ads.

I had to start here. Every blog starts with [Adsense](#). If you don't have an Adsense account, you can sign up for free by clicking here. If you do have an Adsense account, you would be well advised to learn all you can about maximizing the amount of money you can make from it.

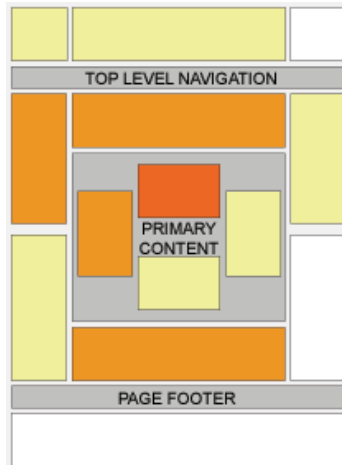
**Here are some tips to make sure that you optimize your Adsense earnings.**

### 1. Learn to blend your ads.

- Learn to use colors effectively. The idea is to make the ads appear to be a natural part of your site. Don't be the guy/girl that uses the lime green text on an orange background because he thinks that it "catches the eye". It Does! It catches the eye long enough to feel nausea coming on.
- Never use the "border" option! If you use a border, are you really blending your ads? It's kind of like building a prison for your ads using a 2px line as bars. Using a banner just screams "Here are my ads. Don't look at them!"
- Don't ever segregate ads. Don't put them in their own section of the page. Don't have 9 affiliate buttons followed by an Adsense banner. How effective is it for advertising if you throw all of your ads in one section of your sidebar? Why have them at all? This advertising strategy (or lack thereof) causes what's referred to as "link-blindness". If people can easily spot your ads as soon as they find your site, they learn to avoid them. And never... ever... put them all by themselves at the bottom of the page. FACT: Most readers never make it to the bottom of your page!

## 2. Put your ads in high profile areas.

- Use the Google “heatmap” (pictured below) to help you determine where the best spots are to place Adsense code. The best area is right above content. The orange areas are hot zones, the yellow is mild, and the white is ice cold. This will vary blog-by-blog but it’s a good general indication of what works.



- I see a lot, and I mean A LOT of sites thinking they can hide their ads in the bottom left corner of the page and still make good money from Adsense. When it comes to ads, either do it... or don't. Don't go hiding ads in the bottom corner and then complaining that Adsense sucks and you aren't making any money.



### 3. Track your ads performance.

- A lot of people either forget about this one, or don't realize it exists. You can track your ads performance by creating a channel for it. If you need a tutorial on how to create an AdSense channel, check out this video at [Tubetorial.com](http://Tubetorial.com) for more info.
- I have channels for every different location, style, and color type ad that I have experimented with. For example, I can check right now and see what is more effective, a 160×600 sidebar banner, or a 125×125 button. You need to know this stuff!

### 4. Use the competitive ad filter.

- Did you know that some AdSense clicks are worth as little as \$0.01? Use the competitive ad filter to stop this!
- The competitive ad filter was created to protect your blog from spam advertisers and MFA (made for AdSense) sites. You have all seen this, I guarantee it. They are the sites that you visit on accident when looking for another site. They might look like a search engine with some ads all around about a specific subject such as baseball, blogging, vacationing, jobs, etc. These are all MFA sites. They bid low and get clicks to their site for as little as a penny!
- By using the filter, you can block these sites from advertising on your blog. In your AdSense control panel simply click on the "Competitive Ad Filter" tab and enter the URL you wish to block. It's that easy. Most of the time you'll be able to tell it's a MFA site by the content in the ad. If it seems like a list of some sort, more often than not, it's an MFA site.

## 5. Use section targeting.

- This is one that I didn't even know existed until a few days ago. Adsense targets keywords in your text and matches them with an ad. For example, you may notice if you blog about golf, you'll have golf related ads. The key to getting targeted ads on Adsense is writing keyword rich content. This means that you need to think of a word or phrase you would use if you were searching for this article on Google. Try to use that keyword or phrase as much as possible, without becoming too repetitive and Google will pick that up and match it to relevant ads.
- You can also use this bit of code on posts in which you only want to target a certain part of. For example, you are talking about golf... but there is a quick story about your car having a flat on the way to the golf course. Without using this code, Google might target your site with golf related ads, or it might decide that you need ads about getting new tires. You can stop this by using these section targeting ads.

Talk about your flat tire here...

```
<!-- google_ad_section_start -->
```

Put your keyword rich content here.

```
<!-- google_ad_section_end -->
```

- Using `<!--google_ad_section_start-->` at the beginning of the section you want to target and `<!--google_ad_section_end-->` at the end of the targeted section will ensure that Google delivers relevant ads to your site. If you are using



Wordpress software, simply type out your entry - click on the “code” tab - and add these tags to the section you want to target. Easy!

Above all else I recommend experimenting. What works for other site might not necessarily work for yours. Try different ad sizes, shapes, and colors. Put them in your post, above your post, in the sidebar. Just try new things until you find what works for you. But remember... track your experiments so that you'll know what works!

## Affiliate Marketing

Although every blog starts with Adsense, affiliate marketing is really the way to build internet riches. Affiliate marketing is the process of showing an ad, or talking about a product, and then giving your readers a way to buy it.

This is usually accomplished by using a link, or a banner image to send users to a place where they can buy the product. In the process of sending them there, it tracks where they came from so that you get the commission for referring others to the sale. Some commissions can be quite high, and others are lower, but easier to sell.

**The key to generating revenue from affiliate promotions is getting your readers to trust you.**

You don't want to promote products that won't yield your readers results, or else next time they won't trust you when you say that a product is good.

When promoting affiliate products, it's usually a law of numbers. If you can deliver X number of people to

the affiliate sales page, you'll get X number of sales. But this isn't always the case, and there is one super easy method that could improve your results by 100% or more. And that is cloaking your affiliate links. Affiliate links are usually big, long, and ugly. They usually contain a series of letters or numbers that make absolutely no sense whatsoever but are used to track where people are coming from. Although these links are ugly for a reason, they don't have to be ugly at all.

A normal affiliate link looks like this:

`http://clickbank.com/referral=id/3928383zzie3sncoslwoenxiooc  
m`

Well instead, you can make your links look like this:

`http://onemansgoal.com/affiliateproduct`

Doing this serves two purposes, it cleans up your links, and it keeps people from being able to tell that it's an affiliate link as easily. I tried this method, and my results were amazing. My affiliate sales increased by 150% in one month!

If you want to cloak your affiliate links, but aren't sure how, there is a product you can buy that will do it for you, the [Easy Link Manager](#). For \$27, this product is a bargain, and I use it on EVERY affiliate link that I publish on my blog. It's a godsend. Once you have this product, you are ready to move on and find some great affiliate programs. But what should you look for?

I get bombarded with questions daily about which affiliate programs work the best. This is a question that I

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**You have to test  
and tweak in order  
to get your desired  
results, and it all starts  
with analyzing your  
statistics.**

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can't answer very well because it's very site dependent. The affiliate programs that work well here, might not work at all for you.

What I want to do here is give you a general idea of what you should be looking for when it comes to choosing affiliate programs:



- 1. Site Relevant Programs**—You aren't going to be able to sell a whole lot of ringtones on a site that is related to fitness. You have to find affiliate programs that are relevant to what you are writing about. People come back to your site because they are interested in your topic. If you have relevant affiliate programs, it stands to reason that readers might be more inclined to check them out and perhaps make a purchase.
- 2. Overall Performance**—You can go to places like [LinkShare](#), [Commission Junction](#), [Pay Dot Com](#) (my personal favorite, mostly internet related products), or [Clickbank](#) and look for relevant affiliate programs. All three sites have tons and tons of programs that might fit your site and they are all sorted by performance. I'm going to show you how to tell if they are high performers in an article next week.
- 3. Recursive Income**—Finding affiliate programs that pay you recursively are internet gold. These are the programs that usually charge a monthly fee, and pay you a percentage of that every time your referral renews. For example, I have a few referrals to [Goal University](#) and I get paid **40%** of the monthly fee for everyone that renews. This works out to be some really sweet passive income for promoting a product that I believe in anyway.
- 4. Percentage of Sale**—You want affiliate programs that actually reward you for your time and effort. I

wouldn't advertise an affiliate program if they paid less than 35% just because there are so many out there. The only exception to this rule is the easy sell. If something is really high converting (sells a lot), and doesn't pay 35%, I would definitely still consider it. It might only pay 10%, but it's possible that it sells 4 or 5 times faster than the program that pays 35%, so therefore, it's more profitable.

**5. Trusted Brands or Products**—If you can sell something that people are already familiar with, you are more likely to have success. This isn't always true, but brand recognition plays a big part in affiliate marketing. For example, if I was to decide between choosing "Colgate" toothpaste, or "Brand X" toothpaste, which do you think I'd sell more of?

Every site is different, but most sites make more than 70% of their income from affiliate programs. With this high of a percentage of your income at stake, you should do all you can to become an effective affiliate marketer.

## Paid Posts

Paid posts were covered in Chapter 6, so I won't spend much time on them. Bloggers are sometimes willing to pay good money to have their blogs reviewed on a popular site. Some bloggers get \$200-\$400 just for writing a review on other blogs! This is definitely something that can bring you in some extra revenue

Another form of paid posts is using a service like [Pay Per Post](#). These services find advertisers that are looking for bloggers to write about their products. Some of them even pay quite well, so it's definitely worth looking in to.

## Direct Advertising

Generally your blog is going to take a few months before you'll ever be able to attract outside advertisers. But to get you started a bit faster, you can use a service like [Text Link Ads](#) to find others that are willing to advertise on your blog. I highly recommend this service, because it's what opened the doors for others to advertise on my site, even before it was appealing to the big bucks advertisers.

### ***How do I get people to advertise on my blog?***

Advertisers like high statistic, but something that cant' be overlooked is your posting frequency. When you post more, their ad will show on more pages and they generally find that valuable.

The key to getting people to advertise on your site is to talk up the good things, and try to leave out any bad. For example, if you have a poor Alexa ranking, but it's getting better – Tell them that your Alexa ranking is climbing at a rate of X% a week, rather than telling them your current ranking which may not be all that good. Focus on the positives when you approach a potential advertiser, and more often than not, you'll be pleasantly surprised.

If you simply can't get anyone interested in advertising, you might think about allowing them to advertise on your site free for a trial period. Thirty days is usually enough for an advertiser to decide if your blog is worth the monthly advertising dollar. Also, when you do start charging these advertisers, it's important that you start off with small numbers. For example, no one in their right minds is going to pay \$500 for a banner ad on a blog that gets 50 visitors a day. So start off with a \$5 banner ad, and work your prices up every few months as your traffic increases. But don't get greedy, and don't raise the prices too fast... you'll send advertisers running for the hills.

## Chapter 10 – Analyzing Your Stats

By now you should have [Statcounter](#) and [Google Analytics](#) installed on your page. If you were like me when I was a brand new blogger, checking your stats every 38 seconds is your new official hobby. Don't worry, it's pretty natural to want to see how your blog is doing on a regular basis, but as time goes by, you'll start to realize that your day to day stats don't matter all that much, you are looking for long term growth, and not just quick spikes. I now check my stats once a day, and analyze them in depth about once a week.

### Analyzing Your Statistics

First, there are a few terms that we should all be familiar with before we continue.

- **Pageviews** – This is the statistic that shows you how many total pages were viewed on your site for that specific period.
- **Unique Visitors** – This is pretty self explanatory. It's how many people viewed your site for that specific day. One visitor visiting your site 3 times, will still show up as one visitor (depending on which Stat service you use).
- **Return Visitors** – Self explanatory
- **Referring Traffic** – This shows you where your traffic is coming from. You always want to keep an eye on which sites are sending you traffic. If you comment on a specific blog and it sends you a lot of traffic, you need to comment there more often.
- **Average Time on Site** – This is another valuable statistic. If the number is too low, you need to figure



out ways to get readers to view more than one article at a time. The related post plugin for Wordpress is a good start.

- **Bounce Rate** – This is a statistic that shows what percentage of your readers leave after viewing just the homepage. The visitors that don't click any links, and just leave will show up here. The lower the better, but you would ideally be under 50% here. Generally if you get a lot of social bookmarking traffic, the bounce rate will be pretty high.
- **Visitor Path** – Visitor path shows where users are going once they get to your site. You can track their every movement as soon as they land on the homepage. This is quite useful to track visitors movements. You want to know where they are going so that you can build on that, and give them more places just like it.
- **Keywords** – This shows you how readers are finding your site when you show up in the search engines. It'll show what the visitors searched for to wind up on your site, and it will even show you historical data of what keywords people are finding your site with. For example, you'll see that 34 people found your site by searching for "greasy hamburgers".

There are many more statistics that you can analyze, but these are the ones that I focus on.

**I want to see where my traffic is coming from, how long they are staying, and where they are going once they are on my site.**

These tools are very important for determining how to tweak your site here and there so that you can better leverage all of your traffic.

For example, if you see that your bounce rate is extremely high, you might want to play around with your homepage so that it's more visually appealing.

If visitors aren't clicking around, you have to figure out why, and in turn, how to get them to start finding other parts of your blog. Ideally, every visitor would visit 20 pages, and then click on your AdSense ads, and then go of to find themselves a wonderful affiliate product on your page to sign up for.

But this isn't how it works, you have to test and tweak in order to get your desired results, and it all starts with analyzing your statistics.

## Chapter 11 – RSS Subscribers

After you have a solid foundation, you should start to seek out areas that need improvement. One of the areas that could always use improvement would be getting more RSS subscribers. Writing good content is the only method that will produce long-term RSS subscribers, but there are many things that you can do right now to jumpstart your RSS numbers.

### **RSS is an acronym for the phrase “Really Simple Syndication”**

A lot of bloggers don't realize how very valuable this statistic is. One of the pieces of a great blog's foundation is it's number of RSS subscribers. Any good blogger will tell you that this stat is just as important as your Alexa, Technorati and overall traffic ratings when it comes to really building your blog. Here are some reasons why it is important to build a strong RSS reader base.

- RSS readers are four times more likely to read your blog EVERYDAY than a non RSS subscriber.
- Total RSS subscriptions is one of the statistics that advertisers look at when they determine how much an ad on your site is worth.
- Your total number of RSS supscriptions help determine the value of your site should you ever choose to sell it.
- People that subscribe to your RSS feed are also more likely to email your story to friends!

These are just a few of the reasons why this statistic is important.

### ***But if someone subscribes to my RSS feed doesn't that mean that they aren't visiting my actual blog? Doesn't this cost me money?***

Not necessarily! A huge misconception is that RSS subscribers cost you money because they aren't actually visiting your site when they read your posts. I'll share a few ways to combat this!

- Insert internal links into your posts. This forces readers to visit your site when they click on them. It's a great way to generate some traffic out of an RSS reader. When you link to an internal page that is relevant to your topic, most of the time the reader will want to read the post that you link to.
- If you have sponsors for your site, or use an affiliate program, place the link or banner within your article. It'll still show up in an RSS reader.
- Join the Feedburner Ad network. Currently they are only accepting sites that they approve. Factors are - Your number of subscribers, post frequency, how long feedburner has managed your RSS account, and a few others. If you want to find out more you can email them here...  
[publishers@feedburner.com](mailto:publishers@feedburner.com)
- Google Adsense currently doesn't show up in an RSS feed. However, they are working to develop a PPC advertising method for RSS feeds. Stay tuned for that one!

## *Sounds great! How do I get more RSS subscribers?*

- 1. Write quality content**—This seems to be a recurring trend in every tip I give out. However, this one little tidbit controls your fate as a blogger. Make sure and adhere to it!
- 2. Promote your feed**—Make sure that people know how convenient it is to subscribe to your feed. You can use a plug-in called “[subscribe remind](#)” to insert a link at the bottom of every post (like I do) that asks your readers to subscribe. Two clicks and they are done!
- 3. Offer Full Feed RSS**—The difference between full feed RSS and partial feed RSS is huge! Full Feed RSS is just that... it allows your readers to see the entire post from their RSS reader. A partial feed RSS is either a snippet of an article (a teaser) or a part of the article and then the “Read More” link which takes them to your page to read the rest.

This may sound like a good idea (you get RSS readers and pageviews) but let me assure you that it’s not! RSS readers are a fickle bunch, and it’s just as easy to cancel a subscription as it is to start one. Most will cancel if your feed isn’t a full feed. Make sure that you offer full feed RSS by downloading this plugin called “[Full Text Feed](#)”. Using this plug-in will allow your readers to read the full feed without having to deal with Wordpress putting a “read more” link into the feed.

- 4. Offer Exclusive Posts To Your RSS Readers**—Most people didn’t even know that this was possible, but it is. You can create a post that doesn’t even appear on your blog, but is available for your RSS readers. To do this, you must use [this plugin](#).

## Chapter 12 – Closing Thoughts

Blogging is a very sustainable income model if you follow the fundamental guidelines for success. It's not unlike any other business model if you realize that you get out of it exactly what you put in.

Blogging isn't for the person that is looking for a quick buck online. If this is your goal you should look into other methods. Blogging can net you a lot of money, but it takes time to build a solid foundation before you ever get to reap the rewards of your efforts.

**However, in my experience as a blogger, the money is nice, but the journey may indeed be the most rewarding part.**

I've had a lot of fun in my short life as a blogger, I've met great people, and I've been able to see a great deal of success in a short period of time. But let me assure you — none of this came easily. I worked for every Adsense click, every affiliate dollar, and every pageview. Nothing comes easy in the world of blogging, but it definitely makes it more rewarding in the end.

I haven't come anywhere near the end of my journey, but I thought I would let you all in on the steps it took to get me this far. I've come pretty far in a short amount of time, and as I said from the beginning of my journey, I wanted to create a roadmap for everyone else.

**The key to success online isn't reinventing the wheel. It's finding someone that's successful at something, and replicating their path.**

So let's think of this as "The Roadmap" part 1.

Make sure to visit One Man's Goal regularly for updates to my journey. It's packed with tips, tricks, and strategies to make sure you are getting the most out of your online experience!

~Marc Galeazzi

[OneMansGoal.Com](http://OneMansGoal.Com)