

Blogging With Videos Made Easy...

An Informative Guide to Getting Started Using
Blogs & Video, The Fun & Simple Way!

Poppie Dee... 2010

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Introduction

Congratulations! Welcome to the guide that is going to take your blogging to a whole new level.

Whether you just want to supplement your existing blog with video or you want to create a pure vlog, then this guide is going to tell you exactly how to do it.

It's true that videos are taking over the net, videos are a lot easier for us as you don't need to read them, they can convey much more information (if a picture can say a thousand words then a video can say much more!), they give much better meaning to your words with inflections and gestures, and they are a lot more fun to watch and to make!

The fact is that videos make much better content on your blog, and you can also use them with devastating effect to increase your revenue and build much stronger connections with your readers.

Plus you can do interviews which just don't have the same impact when you have to write them down and put someone's name against each paragraph to say who said what!

Of course another added bonus is that once you get into it then creating a video is much easier than writing! I can create a 5 minute video which would take thousands of words to duplicate as an article, and record and publish it in less than 30 minutes.

So first off we're going to cover how to choose what you want to blog about, you can blog on whatever you want but unless you consider the topic carefully then you might end up putting in a load of effort but not making any cash!

Then we're going to get into the nitty gritty about how to get your first video made and up and running on your blog (including what to put in your videos).

Promotion comes next and branding, so you can build up your traffic and viewers, then onto the most important part - making money from your blog and videos!

Finally I'll show you how to get Google to cough up endless content ideas for you so you never run out of things to say!

So join me now as we explore exactly how to build your first video blog and get your first loyal viewers.

What Should My Video Blog Be On?

Ok so you are all fired up and ready to create your first vlog (video blog) - but what should you do it on?

Well there are two main considerations you have to take into account, they are:

1. Content - can you talk about the subject and can you find enough content ideas?
2. Money - can you make money from that subject?

First off let's look at content. Most people try to aim at some small obscure niche like left-handed hamster owners or something, but think about it - how are you going to create lots of videos about that?

Sure the competition is much less, but you are going to run out of content after 2 weeks and then be left with a dying blog, if your blog is not growing it is dying!

So try to aim at the much larger niches like weight loss, gadgets etc so that you have a huge range of different things that you can speak about and so there is always stuff in the news and new information and products coming out that you can make videos about.

The next thing to think about is if you can actually talk about the subject, I mean Forex (currency trading) is a huge market and there is lots of potential for some great content - but can you really speak about that topic?

You have to be comfortable talking about the topic or you won't stand a chance of connecting with the viewers and getting them to actually buy anything. You don't need to be an expert on the subject, just comfortable with it or keen to learn about it (I am just about to enter a niche I know absolutely nothing about but I am going to learn about it as I go along so I can create videos that slowly talk about more advanced areas of the topic).

Once you have a shortlist of ideas then start to use Google and find sites and blogs in that niche and see what they talk about - how much content they have, and if you think you could create videos on the same sort of topics. That will help you to trim your list down to the easiest niches to go into as well as provide you with a list of sites that can give you content ideas later on.

Now onto money - can you actually make money from this blog? The key to this is whether people in your niche actually like to spend money. Some niches just aren't really 'commercial', they don't lend themselves to people spending money online. I don't know much about boats but I assume that even if people start their search for a boat online, then they are going to have

to then find the model they like offline and go see it before they buy it, so you can't try to get them to buy boats from adverts on your blog! (I might be wrong but that is just a guess).

The key to finding out if people spend money in your niche is to join up to some of the big affiliate networks like Clickbank.com, Pepperjam.com, CJ.com, LinkShare.com and ShareASale.com. In those networks you'll find not only some of the offers you can promote to people on your blog, but each network usually has a way for you to tell how well an offer or website is doing.

So you can find all the sites/offers in your niche and compare how well they are doing compared to ones in different niches, that will give you an idea of how much they are selling and therefore if people are buying or not.

That also helps you to identify which offers you want on your blog, you can see which ones will make you the most money and which seem to convert the best, and then come back later once your blog is up and running and grab the banners you need to promote it etc.

Another great litmus test for whether people are buying or not is the number of PPC ads that are running when you type in the main keywords into Google. I have seen some niches, like jokes and quotes, where there are no PPC ads at all - why is that? Because nobody has been able to make money from their ads!

The acronym PPC literally means 'pay per click' and someone is not going to keep paying for every click if those clicks are not resulting in any sales!

If you use those two guides then you should stop yourself making any huge mistakes and going into markets that are doomed before you even begin.

Now let's look at what you need to get started.

What Do I Need Before I Start?

You are going to need a few crucial things before you can even consider creating your video blog, they are:

1. A Wordpress blog
2. A Wordpress theme
3. Software to create or manipulate the videos
4. A webcam or digital camcorder
5. A microphone
6. A video player for your blog
7. FTP software (free)

1. Blog

This is easy enough, you can actually install Wordpress in a couple of clicks now using software in your hosting control panel - [check out this tutorial](#) for more information on how to do that.

2. Theme

Installing the theme is a bit more involved, you download the theme, then you unzip it and upload it to your server using an ftp program, and finally activate it from inside your Wordpress theme. [This tutorial](#) will tell you more about how to do that and you can either pay to have a custom theme designed, pay for a premium theme, or download a free theme (they let you have them for free as long as you keep a link at the bottom to their site).

You want your site to look professional so make sure you pick a good theme, or go to Elance.com and pay someone to create a custom one for you (that will cost a couple of hundred dollars). The quality of free themes has come on in leaps and bounds recently though and if you check out sites like:

TopWPThemes.com

FreeWPThemes.net

and Themes.Rock-Kitty.net

then you should be able to find some great ones. Don't get one that is too 'busy' as you want people to focus on your content and your adverts rather than multiple sidebars with flicker photos on etc. Try to get a fairly wide one and if you have your own made then ask for it to be

1000 pixels wide, you will need the width to properly display your videos (you can easily change themes later on if you need to so don't worry too much about this).

3. Software

There are loads of different software applications that you can use to manipulate video and get your posts ready to be viewed, some of the top ones are:

- Windows Movie Maker
- iMovie
- Avid Media Composer
- Roxio Video Wave

Plus you can get both free software and free trials of paid software from places like Download.com and cnet.com - make sure you look at the user reviews first though to see how other people got on with them.

However my personal favourite and the only one that I would personally recommend is Camtasia. Yes this is thought of primarily as a piece of screen capture software, but in fact it is a powerful video editor and includes lots of useful features that you can definitely use on your video blog.

Sure the others might have more transition effects and fanciness, that is ok, but Camtasia gives you the ability to edit your videos, output them in a ton of different formats, PLUS record the screen.

This means you can record your videos from a webcam with it AND you can import clips from a camera AND you can record PowerPoint presentations or software/websites you are using etc as well. You can even blend them together either by importing different clips into one project, or by using the latest feature where you can have a feed from a webcam in the same screen as what you are recording, so you will be in the corner talking to someone while your PowerPoint presentation or whatever is going on in the rest of the screen.

I use it for all my stuff and haven't found anything I wanted it to do that it can't yet! You can get a 30 day trial of it to start with but then you have to pay, it is around \$299 \$USD to get the latest version.

Of course if you don't want to shell out on that but you do get a webcam or digital camcorder then most of them will give you some sort of editing software with them and you can get other cheaper screen recording software to start you off.

4. Camera

Of course the main thing you need is some kind of video camera! The easiest route is to go for a webcam, it plugs straight into your computer and should come with the software to record it too (or use Camtasia or similar to record the video).

But you are restricted then to only being able to record near your computer, if you want to record anything outside or move round your house etc, then you need a digital camcorder, and then if you want to record yourself in those other places and not be holding it out in front of you, then you need a tripod as well.

It depends on what niche you are in and what plans you have for the blog as to which you will need, some niches quite happily lend themselves to just being you sat in front of the camera, others would be near impossible to do that with.

Watch out if you buy a cheap webcam as you can get some where the quality is truly awful, and that does not look professional on your blog!

One easy option is to get The Flip places like Amazon. This is a very compact and cheap little digital camcorder that gives good quality video and has a flip out usb connection so you can record either 1 or 2 hours of video on it (two different sizes to choose from) then transfer it straight to your computer. I have heard rave reviews about it so that might be a good option.

5. Microphone

This is only really applicable if you buy a cheap webcam which won't come with a microphone, in that case you need to buy a separate one and then try to get the recording software to record both the video and audio inputs. It is much easier to just pay a bit more and get a decent microphone built into the webcam, or a digital camcorder will automatically come with one.

6. A Video Player for Your Blog

Videos that you upload need something to play them, you can get a wide variety of Wordpress plugins which will take care of that for you, most are totally free, but they can be fiddly, so there are two other options:

Camtasia allows you to automatically embed your video into html, then you just grab some of the code, paste it into your blog and then it uses the Camtasia player and it works perfectly. Or you can upload it to YouTube (or a similar site) and then use their embed code to place it into your blog (there is a 10 minute time limit on YouTube but you might be able to get a Director

account to bypass that if you apply for one and tell them it is for your blog and you'll be putting high quality videos you make yourself onto YouTube not junk!).

Any of those three methods will work, but using plugins can be tricky, I used an mp3 plugin on a blog and couldn't get it to work, so if you get Camtasia then use that code, otherwise use YouTube.

7. FTP Software

This is software to transfer files to your server, you will need this to upload your videos as they can be large files. I am sure you can do it through the Wordpress control panel, but I always find it much easier and more reliable to use an FTP program to do it so you can upload multiple files and watch the progress while not tying up internet explorer.

You can get a great piece of software called [Filezilla](#) which is totally free and does pretty much everything that paid pieces of software do. Grab yourself a copy of that and that is perfect for what you need.

Ok that is it - once you have all that then you now ready to start creating your first video!

Creating Your First Video

Right - now let's look at creating your first video, so we'll look at the following areas:

1. Planning
2. Execution
3. Editing
4. Getting it to your blog
5. Things to remember

Planning

How much planning you put into a video depends on your niche and on the subject matter of that video, you can probably talk about your views on a news story etc without any planning, but if you are reviewing a product or using slides then you need to think harder about it.

One thing that will be invaluable on longer videos (and you can use it on shorter ones too as they are so easy to make), is a cheat sheet. Simply take a notepad or piece of paper and working through what you want to say just make some quick notes, literally just a few words per line that guide you through the video. That way if you ever draw a blank in the middle of the video you can just look down and get right back on track.

If you are doing something like an interview then you might want to be more detailed and write down questions you want to ask or observations you want to make about the other persons work, but for most videos simple notes work fine.

Planning also means you need all your slides checked and finished, and any other websites or windows open that you will need so you can check for any problems before you are in the middle of the video!

You need to pick a location and check to make sure it is suitable, if it is at home then make sure you won't be disturbed, if you are elsewhere make sure you are not going to have loads of noise or distractions.

Then once you have all that done, TEST your equipment, take it from someone who has recorded full 30 minute videos then gone back and realised they hadn't changed the settings on the microphone so they have no audio - testing is a lifesaver! Record just 10 seconds of you talking, then go back and make sure it recorded ok, that should prove that everything is setup ok and ready to record.

Something else you need to think about is the size of the video, if you want to upload it to YouTube then 1280 x 720 or 640 x 480 are the recommended sizes, but if you then want to embed it into your blog then 1280 x 720 is probably going to be way too big!

In fact on some blog themes then you might even struggle with a video that is 640 x 480, but if you find that is the case then you can easily swap to a new theme.

The preferred format for YouTube is Mp4, but if you are putting it straight onto your site then you could use either Mp4 or FLV format.

Execution

This is the fun part - making the video! Now unless you are trying to make a super serious and professional site about financial services, then your video does not have to be like a polished newscast.

To bond with your viewers, and more importantly to keep them interested and watching, then most people prefer it to be natural and just flow like a normal conversation. Don't get too stuffy about speaking 'correctly' and don't try to think too much about what you are saying, just let it flow naturally like you are speaking to a friend, and not only will you enjoy it a lot more, but the end result will be much better.

Also - don't be afraid to have fun, and to let your personality show, again this depends on the niche, but for most niches then you can let your personality through and that really helps you to build up a following and to connect with your viewers. It looks false and boring if you try to suppress your emotions, so as long as it is appropriate then let your emotions show and your views and opinions too (as long as your views and opinions are not going to get you into trouble!).

Do you need someone there with you to help you film? Well that varies from video to video, it is a LOT easier when you don't need someone, so I try to avoid it wherever possible. If you are doing an interview you can set it up to point at you both beforehand, if you are outside say recording something about dogs, then you could put the camera on a tripod or just hold it yourself and film your dog or the dog and owner you are talking to. It really depends, but wherever you can then plan ahead and avoid the expense and hassle of getting anyone else to do the filming.

Don't worry too much about stopping, and saying um and ah in your video, but try to avoid it wherever possible, you can edit it out later but sometimes it can be hard when you 'um' in the middle of a word etc.

Editing

This is where the magic happens, you can take out all the pauses, most of the ums and ahs, and just polish it all up (I know I said it should be natural - but too many ums and ahs make it hard to watch!).

Don't be too critical, but do tidy it up so it flows nicely and sounds good. You might want to add notes to the video too - with most software you can add in text and little boxes and arrows etc to highlight things or correct mistakes, give urls etc. If I say something wrong in a video and don't spot it at the time then I will often just put a little note in the video - we're all human and make mistakes, and it is easier than redoing the video! (or... you can do a little bit of video and insert it into the main one but the volume of your voice may be different than the main video and your surroundings etc).

You might want to add a starting screen to your video or an ending screen to it, with most software you can add in images for that and just tell the software how long to show that image for (make sure it is the same size as the video dimensions or it will distort). You can even add music to the start if you want but that is getting a bit fancy!

Don't forget that you can put your url onto the video, most pieces of software allow you to put a watermark on your video that shows up all the way through. This is particularly important if you put your videos on YouTube first and then embed them in your blog - as other blogs can also embed your videos as well, if you have your url on it then you assert your ownership of the video as well as possibly getting traffic from those other sites too.

Getting it to your blog

There is no real secret here, you just need the right format and size, then the first option is to upload it to YouTube and grab the embed code from the page after it finishes uploading, then go to your blog, go to 'html' view on the post screen (just on the right at the top of where you type in content) and paste it in and publish.

If you are using Camtasia then you open your FTP program, upload the video and the files they give you to a new folder on your server. Take the code out of the html file they gave you, make sure the reference to the file is ok (if you put the folder for the video inside another you are going to need to add that extra folder in so the code knows where the files are), go to code view again and paste it in and publish.

If you are using a plugin then usually you upload the file and put a link to that file in your post and the plugin uses that as its cue to activate the player and grab the file, but each plugin is different so you need to read the instructions that come with each.

Things to remember

Don't forget what I said about doing a short test first, that not only tests the equipment, but you should check you are in shot correctly and that everything behind you is ok, you don't want something sticking out the side of your head as you talk because there is something behind you!

Keep it natural - natural and 'homemade' is often better.

You can edit later, so don't sweat it if you mess up, just restart from a point before you messed up and then cut out the bit you don't want later!

Watch out what size your video is recorded at, if you start too small it is hard to make it bigger without sacrificing quality, try to record at the same size you want to display it as, this makes things much easier in the long run.

Should I Write Anything Under My Video?

This is an important question with regards to video blogging, first off - yes you should write something under the video, but let's look at why.

The more obvious reasons you want to write under the video are to convey more information and to encourage discussion. Getting comments on your video helps to keep people coming back (to see if anyone has replied to their comment) as well as show people that the video is popular and also give you great feedback.

If in the video you mention a website url then you can put the link under the video to encourage people to click it, or if you think anything needs further explanation then you can add it in there.

It is also useful to give a brief overview of the video for those people who need some encouragement to watch it.

Now the less obvious side of this is to do with SEO, yes YouTube videos can and do rank well by themselves, and if you use YouTube as the way to get the videos onto your blog then the videos on YouTube may bring in their own traffic by ranking for things, but you also want to get free traffic to your blog and the rules are different for websites that aren't owned by Google!

SEO is the process of making your page as attractive to the search engines as possible so they rank your page in the search results and you can get free traffic to your site when people search for those terms. YouTube is owned by Google and gets special attention, for the rest of us then there is no evidence yet that Google will count a page with just a video on it on your blog as the same as a page with unique text content.

You see Google wants unique content, it wants fresh ideas and fresh opinions to rank in its search results, so if it either finds that your page contains the same content as somewhere else, or that you don't have any writing on your page, then it may just bypass your page and not even consider ranking it for anything.

As a general rule of thumb you want 200 words of unique content on the page along with your video, just to show Google that you have unique content. They are getting better at recognising and processing videos - but to be on the safe side then just add in some information about the content to bulk the page out.

Getting free traffic from Google is worth the extra bit of effort!

Branding yourself

Once you have some videos up then you want to consider how to promote them, but even before you do that then you might want to think about creating a brand for yourself.

What is a brand? Well Wikipedia describes it as:

"A brand is a collection of experiences and associations connected with a service, a person or any other entity."

Like that free Wordpress theme site I mentioned earlier - Themes.Rock-Kitty.net then you can see that she has a image of the 'Rock Kitty' with the guitar, that image and the domain name can help people to recognise your work and remember you more.

Think about if you saw two videos a month apart by the same person - would you remember that they are by the same person? Would you remember the domain name unless it was on the video? Would you feel any connection with it?

I've only seen that image on the rock kitty site once or twice but if I ever saw it again on the net I'd instantly recognise it and probably remember the domain name as well - that is powerful!

Of course in a business sense a brand is so much more, it is about the quality of your content and the products you promote and all sorts, but for what we are talking about then just think of it as making yourself more noticeable and getting people to remember you.

So how can you brand yourself? Well a brandable domain name would be a good start, try to think out of the box and make it link in to you as a person, so instead of having dogblog.com you'd have DogBlogger.com or instead of GadgetReviews.com then you could have GadgetGeek.com. Can you see how those two variations make them talk about a person rather than a site, you are the 'Dog Blogger' or you are the 'Gadget Geek', which leads us onto the second part...

You really need some sort of logo or mascot to represent you so that you can use it as a visual aid to help brand you. You can get this kind of thing done easily on Elance.com and I had an amazing logo done for just over a hundred dollars, a mascot might cost more, just browse the job postings for similar jobs and find what people are quoting for them to get a rough idea.

Then you need to make sure you use your brand wherever you can, refer to yourself as the Dog Blogger in your posts and videos, get your mascot/logo out there - put it at the start of each video, put it in your profile on forums etc and you will slowly start to build your brand and hopefully your traffic and reputation within the market.

Promotion

Now you have your blog up and running with some videos on it then you need to start getting some traffic to your videos! Here are some of the top ways to get traffic to your video blog:

SEO

If you take my advice and add in unique content below each video then you will find as you add more and more posts that your free traffic from Google and the other search engines will inevitably start to grow as terms you use on your posts are picked up and your pages rank for them.

For your post to be ranked by Google then a lot of factors come into play - the PageRank of your page which is essentially how many links you have coming to that page from within your site and from other sites on the web. Then there is the title and description of your page, and your use of words on the page, even the structure of your urls.

SEO is a complicated subject which it would be impossible to cover in depth in this guide, but here are the top tips to help make your blog as SEO friendly as possible.

Step #1: Make sure you have a good url structure to your blog, to do this go to 'settings' in your control panel, and then to 'permalinks'. Go to custom structure and type in:

```
/%post_id%/postname%/
```

That means you now have a much more SEO friendly url structure than the default (only do this on new blogs, if you do it to an old one you will lose all the old rankings you may have had as all the urls will change to the new ones you just made!).

Step #2: Download and install the [All in One SEO plugin](#) which gives you the ability to add page titles and descriptions to each post you make. Once you have installed and activated the plugin then you will find it on the page where you write new posts, just a bit down the page from where you write the main content.

Step #3: Make sure most of your posts target specific keywords, and put those keywords in the title, description and in the content as well. Don't overdo it though! Two or three times in the text is fine, and once in the title and once in the description.

You want to use low competition keywords ideally, so head over to the [Google Keyword Tool](#) and type in the topic you want to cover in the video (or do the opposite and search using your niche keywords to find content ideas!) and find keywords you would like to target.

Then type them into Google and check out your competition on the first page, go to each site and check out the Page Rank of the page (you need the Google toolbar installed for that) and

then also maybe go to Yahoo and type in "link:" followed by the url of the page. This will bring up the number of links that the page has pointing to it.

This gives you a rough idea of the competition, higher PR pages like 3 to 4 and higher are going to be harder to beat, and you need to try and get the same amount of links as the person in position number 1 if you want to try and take their place, so the number of links they have is a good indication of the work you will have to put in.

Also check that lots of big sites like about.com and Wikipedia.com are not ranking in the top spots as they will be hard to beat!

When you first start off it is probably best to go after really low volume keywords that will have very little competition, as you build up your confidence and skills then you can move up to more competitive phrases.

Step #4: Make sure you build links to your posts that ideally contain the keyword you are targeting in the anchor text (the text in blue on a link), although don't overdo this as you need a variety of different anchor text links - having them all the same and/or with that keyword in is not natural and Google will think you are up to no good.

You can grab links from articles, social bookmarking, RSS submissions, forum signature links, comments on other peoples blogs - there are loads of different methods!

Step #5: Rinse and repeat with new posts.

Some people love SEO and some hate it, it is certainly not a quick way to get traffic when you are doing it to your own new site and posts, things like article marketing and social media can bring traffic extremely quickly to your site, but then it fades just as quick, SEO takes time to build but the results can last indefinitely as long as you put in a bit of work to maintain them.

Do steps 1 - 3 even if you aren't interested in SEO so if you decide to do some later you have a good foundation to build from and also because that will more than likely grab you some free traffic anyway!

Viral Reports

The term 'viral' is overused today for things that are just popular, real viral reports and videos spread across the internet like wildfire with every person who gets it spreading it to multiple others so the growth is exponential. Now in the marketing world people talk about 'viral

reports' when they just mean making a popular report, the chances of having it go viral are slim at best!

So what do you do? Well you create a report that you think either gives great information or is quite controversial, or quite funny, of course it has to be related to your niche as well! Then you give it away for free and ask others to pass it on, if they like it they might pass it on to their friends who pass it on to their friends who... you get the idea!

Then in the report you can have links to your site, either to the main page or a video that explains more about what is in the report, or to a squeeze page preferably so you can collect people's email addresses. You then get free distribution of your work as people pass it on so you can relax and do other things!

If you make a really good report you might get a good amount of links and traffic from it, but don't expect it to go viral, maybe I should have named this bit 'Free reports' instead!

Give away your free report at every opportunity, in forums, articles etc and help it spread.

Viral Videos

Hey everybody else is using the term 'viral' so it doesn't hurt if I use it too! But videos are a lot easier to make viral than reports, if you put them onto YouTube then someone can just email a link to their friends and everybody loves to watch funny or interesting videos! You might find that person forwards the link to their friends and so on.

Making these kind of videos is hard as you never know what people will go crazy over! Try to do something unusual or funny and in some way related to your niche, maybe if you are in the dog niche then film your dog doing a funny trick or something, or compare pictures of dogs to celebrity faces who you think look similar (you do that at your own risk!).

The trick is to make it niche specific, the celebrity one might be a bit too general, having a bunch of people forwarding that round as they think it is funny won't help your dog blog as they are just interested in a funny video not anything to do with dogs. So maybe an easy trick you know of to stop your dog barking or jumping up etc would be better to get dog lovers to forward them.

Social Media

This means different things to different people, but to me it means any site where you can interact directly with others and be 'social' like forums and groups. These can be great places to get traffic from as the people are usually all interested in the same topic as it will be group or forum related specifically to your niche.

So head out and find the top forums and groups to do with your niche, go to Facebook, MySpace, Yahoo groups, Google groups - all of these are great places to interact with others.

Now don't go in there and just start posting links all over the place, you'll be thrown out as a spammer! Instead then in forums you can usually have a link in your 'signature' which goes to your blog, just put a link to your blog in there and a reason for them to want to visit, then post good information and helpful posts, help people and interact, and every time you do then your little advert gets dropped in front of more people who might check it out!

Groups are trickier, most of the time they don't have anything like a signature so you have to be more direct. As you build up your blog then you will have more and more videos that could help people with certain problems, this gives you the perfect reason to post a link - if someone in a group asks a question and one of your videos answers it (or you can make a video quickly that answers it) then you can legitimately post a link to tell them about it! 😊

Articles

Articles are a brilliant way of getting traffic to your site, not all articles will actually 'stick' and bring your traffic for the long term, but they bring a nice little surge of traffic when they are published and they give you a chance to grab a link to your posts as well for SEO purposes.

The idea of article marketing is that you give the article directory 400+ words of unique content which helps their site grow, and in return at the bottom you get to put a little 'bio box' where you tell the reader why they should visit your site and give a link or two.

The big article directories get a huge amount of traffic and you can tap into that when you publish your article. Try to give good information in the article as if it is a crappy article then they will think your site is going to be the same and not visit it!

Also when you write your bio box then make sure you give them a good reason to visit, don't introduce yourself and just tell them you have a good blog, tell them about a good video you have or the benefits of visiting your blog - make it compelling!

The only article directories I bother with are:

EzineArticles.com

GoArticles.com

www.mymilliondollaradayquest.com

Buzzle.com

ArticlesBase.com

There are hundreds and even possibly thousands of other small directories, but the effort to write an article and submit it to these is not worth the traffic they can bring.

Guest Blogging

This is a great way to build your brand, get valuable links and traffic to your site. You can offer to be a guest blogger for another blog in your niche and provide them with free content, in return for being able to link to your site. They get free content and you get traffic, it is a great pay off for both of you.

It may require you to build a relationship with the other blog owner first, some blog owners are more reluctant to let people they don't know provide content to their viewers, it depends on your reputation and on the particular niche, all niches have different kinds of people in them. Of course if you have built your brand up and been providing good quality content then most people will jump at the chance to have the 'Dog Blogger' as a guest on their blog!

Make sure you provide some really good content when you make the guest post (video or text, ask the blog owner which they prefer) so that other blog owners want you to be featured on their blog and the people reading it will be more likely to click through to check out your site.

Interviews

Interviews are a great tool you can use because when you interview other people who have websites then often they will link to the interview from their blog and get their readers to go to your site and check it out!

You can interview experts or other blog owners, even normal people in your niche to see what their main problems are etc, all this is great content and content you can offer to other blogs as free content for them or you can stick onto video sharing sites to grab traffic.

YouTube/ Video Marketing

I know you have a video blog but don't forget the power of other video sharing sites to get traffic to your videos if you upload them to those sites.

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If you are uploading your videos to YouTube and then embedding them into your site then you are already taking advantage of their site as the videos will now doubt get views by themselves on the site and drive traffic to your site (if you put your url in the description and on the video!). But don't forget all the other video sites out there, you can upload those videos to the other sites as well, but that means the contents of your blog are spread out all over the net so there is no really unique content on your blog where you want it.

The best thing is to create videos specifically for these sites, make them short, just a couple of minutes long, and have them naturally lead into visiting your blog, so maybe talk about a problem and give step 1 to solving that problem, then tell them the rest of the solution is on your blog and link to the post in your description. This gives people more of an incentive to visit your blog as they want the rest of that info!

All those short little videos you give out all over the net on these video sites help to brand you again as they get your logo/mascot out there!

Let' now look at how to make money from your blog.

Monetising Your Blog

Unless you are doing your vlog just for pleasure then you want to make cash from your blog! I'm now going to take you through the top ways you can make good money with your vlog:

Banners

You remember those offers you found on the affiliate networks when you were looking at what niche to go into? Well now is the time to get them and start to integrate them into your blog. You want a few banners on your blog, they won't get that much attention but they are across your entire blog so some people will inevitably click through.

Most bloggers have a square banner in the top of the navigation area above navigation links, and then a horizontal one which appears after each post, these seem to be the most logical places where the most people will come across them.

Recommendations

The most powerful way to make money though is through recommendations, people tend to just 'filter out' banners as they see them on every site they visit, so they are not as effective as they used to be, but people do read your posts so that is the best place to advertise.

The idea is to find an offer related to your post, say your post is on dog fleas, then you can put in the writing under the video that you found this great flea treatment which... (visit the site and find out why they say it is great!) and if they want to check it out they can just click the link below, then link to the offer with your affiliate link.

That is 10x more powerful than the banners as people are on your blog watching your video and reading your post, you have their attention and they will read what you have to say if they have taken the time to watch your video. Don't forget to mention in the video that in the text below you have found a great solution to their flea problem to make sure everyone looks!

Adsense

Another great way to make some money from your blog is with Google Adsense, this allows you to put PPC ads on your blog that are targeted to the content of your post. You put some code on your blog wherever you want the ads to appear and then Google analyses each page and displays ads that are relevant to your readers.

If you are using this then it is even more important to make sure you have relevant text under each video as Google will not be able to analyse the video to find out what is about. Some people hate AdSense as you only make a few cents per click, others swear by it as the ads change for every page so they are always relevant whereas a generic banner might not be.

Try it out and see what you think for a few weeks before you make up your mind about it.

Make Premium Content

If your niche has a lot of content you can create then you could section off some of it as 'premium' content and charge a small monthly fee for access. Maybe have tutorials in there with a video showing how to do something and an accompanying pdf, or have interviews with experts etc - there are loads of great ways to make this work.

You can then advertise the premium content on your blog using banners or in your posts and as long as people like your normal content then you can get a steady stream of people who will want to check out your premium stuff too - that could build into a nice monthly income!

Create Your Own Products

Now you have a vlog and have presence, traffic and a brand in your niche, then maybe it is time to create your own products? Information products are easy to produce and can be sold for a great price if you are solving someone's problems.

You should know from all your videos and research what the main problems in your niche are, and you can then make a series of videos giving information on how they can get round those problems. Make it good unique content that either hasn't appeared on your blog before or go into more depth in the videos and provide other resources like checklists and written instructions to help people out.

Then like the premium content if people visit your blog and like your normal content they will be much more likely to consider your products as they know and trust you.

Put eBay & Amazon Listings in Your Posts

Wordpress is powerful platform, and you can get countless plugins to do all sort of things on your blog. One premium plugin you can get to help you make money is [PHPbay](#) which allows you to insert little bits of code into your posts and it then pulls eBay listings or Amazon products and puts them into your post and formats them for you.

As long as you have affiliate accounts with Amazon and eBay then you can profit anytime someone clicks through and purchase something. This is particular powerful with the eBay listings as everyone loves to bid on things and when they see an auction at just a few cents they jump on it, even though it will probably finish at much more! You make a percentage of the eBay fees that they get off the seller and you can also get a nice bonus for any new people who create an account after clicking through your affiliate link.

The nice thing though is that all you need to do is put in the code they give you and the number of ads you want and the keywords related to what you want to show, and the plugin does all the hard work for you! Plus they are totally different to generic banners so people won't tune them out like they usually do.

The method I like the best is making recommendations in my posts, but I also use banners and eBay listings as well, don't put all your eggs in one basket, have lots of different income streams just in case one dries up!

How to Sell Using Your Videos

If you want to make serious money then you can't just rely on sticking up a video and hoping people buy from a banner you have on your site, we already talked about how powerful recommendations are so let's dig a bit deeper into how you can use your videos to help you make the maximum amount of money possible from your blog.

Building Trust

Videos help to build trust a lot easier than text does, so you are already in a better position than most bloggers to make money. People will trust your recommendations and your advice a lot more as long as you work hard to provide good quality information and don't do anything to abuse their trust (i.e. recommending poor quality products).

You can help to build trust by revealing more of your personality so that viewers feel they know you better, and whose recommendations would you trust more, one from a stranger or one from someone you know?

Make sure you take the time to respond to comments on your videos as well, you don't need to respond to them all, but chiming in now and then is expected and if you don't then you don't just lose the trust of the people who asked you something in a comment, but anybody who visits and sees that you don't bother to respond may also react that way too. If you don't want certain videos to be commented on then you can switch comments off for that post at the time of writing it.

Directing Peoples Actions

You might not think that simply telling people to click your link below and go and check out a website would have much effect, but it can have a huge effect!

Don't expect people to take the actions that you want, direct people instead and make sure that they are doing what you want them to. Just a simple 10 seconds at the end of a video where you ask them to leave a comment, click through your link or even sign up to your list (and tell them how and where the signup area is) can have a dramatic impact on your profits.

Preselling

This is the act of warming people up to be more receptive to your offers or the offers on the sites you are an affiliate for. This can have a huge impact on conversions as you are providing

them with comparisons and research that they would probably do themselves if you didn't tell them, and then they would be leaving your site to do that!

A simple example is maybe you are promoting a flea treatment that uses a shampoo that lasts for months after one use. Now you could make a video about fleas and then talk about the drawbacks of using just a collar, and talk about the other treatments, then talk about the advantage of using the shampoo (you need to research all of it to make sure you are giving good information!).

Now when you have a link below the video to buy the shampoo and you ask them in the video to click through and go and check it out - do you think they are going to be more or less likely to buy?

Hopefully if you did it right they are much more likely to buy, you have already helped them to decide they don't need any of the other products and you have given them the information about why, and you have told them why the shampoo is the right choice.

This means they don't need to search around a load of sites to find out what the best flea treatment is and find out how effective flea collars are etc (I have no idea if flea collars work or not, this is just an example!), as long as they trust you then they are much more likely to buy.

You can use this in many ways, maybe you aren't talking about competing products, maybe you discuss the format the product is in, like getting a dog training DVD course rather than a book - then discuss the good and bad points of both and why they should buy the DVD course (and why they should get the specific one you recommend) .

It gets easier after you have done a few!

Redirections

Another powerful feature of using video rather than text is that you can get videos to redirect through a link after the video finishes, Camtasia does it and I am sure there are other players and pieces of software that can do it too.

This means rather than having to rely on people to click the link that you provided below the video then you can just quickly tell them what you are doing, 'After this video finishes I will redirect you to that product we spoke about so you can see it for yourself' and then it redirects them through your affiliate link automatically as soon as the video reaches the end.

I would use this sparingly as you don't want to annoy people by having every video redirect away from your site. But if you review a product or make a strong recommendation about a product, then if they have watched the whole video you can guess they are at least somewhat interested in the product, just make sure you warn them and then redirect them so you don't have to rely on them clicking the link which they may never get round to!

How to Find Endless Content Ideas

Content ideas are the lifeblood of your vlog! Without new content ideas then it will just stagnate and start to lose traffic and income, so below you will find some great ways to come up with almost endless content ideas!

News

News is a great way to get new content ideas. There is always some new news and you can often turn that into a new post. Whether you are just commenting on a silly news story about something in your niche, or whether you do a more in-depth one where you look at some new trend or problem or product that has appeared in the news, then it can be a great source of content ideas!

Google Alerts

Google has a [free alert service](#) where you type in some keywords that you want to find and then as Google crawls the web if they find that keyword or keyword phrase on a new page they index they email you a link to it (you can get instant emails or daily summaries).

You can also select just to receive links to items in the news, or on blogs, or just video results - so this means you can have Google as your own little spy to report back to you on anything juicy you can use to spark ideas or talk about on your blog, which leads me into...

Other People's Content

There is a right and wrong way to do this - most people would say it was wrong to steal other people's content and they would be right, but there are ways you can use it that are acceptable.

Copying other peoples content is illegal, but using it as the basis for ideas is fine, and also commenting on it is usually fine as well. So say someone made a post or video about 'The top 10 things you shouldn't feed your dog', well you could use that as inspiration for a spin off post, so maybe if Easter is near you could make a video about the hazards of that time of the year for dogs, both in what they eat and getting the wrappers stuck in their throats etc.

Now I would never have thought of that idea unless I considered the title of the 'top 10' video I spoke about, I made the first video title up and as I looked at it the other idea came to me - so you can see this can be a great way to think of new ideas when you are not feeling that creative.

You could also create a video discussing another persons post, so maybe you comment on that list of 10 things they gave and add in a few more that you know of, or maybe you dispute one of them etc, you could even just be giving them praise, then remind people to watch what they feed their dogs and tell them to go and visit the other persons post to see the list.

This means you can get kudos for finding and directing your viewers to good information while you still get to make a video about it and add content to your blog. You could also build a relationship with that other blogger from doing this - and then maybe secure a guest blogging post or other business relationship from it - you never know!

Interviews

Interviews are always good content, as even if you are interviewing multiple people on the same topics then you will still get fresh ideas and fresh points of view from the people you interview, which will help your viewers and keep them interested.

You don't have to do it face to face don't forget, you could do an audio interview over skype and then use some PowerPoint slides at the time or afterwards to add depth to it and turn it into a video. There you go - you now know how to create a vlog, how to make money from it and how to get great ideas for posts!

Final Thoughts

So you should now know everything you need to know about running your own vlog and making money from it, the rest of what you need to learn comes from action.

You can only learn so much from a written guide, getting out there into the 'trenches' will help you to pick up the skills and learn the little tips and tricks along the way that help you to stand out above all other blog owners.

Don't forget to drive traffic to your vlog as you put effort into creating the videos so it would be a shame if nobody actually saw them! And don't forget to take the time to make money from your vlog, it is not 'bad' to direct people to products that will help them, and you deserve to make money from your recommendations, so do it whenever you can and use all the tips in this guide to make sure you get the largest amount of people clicking through your links as possible.

Who knows you may be the next internet celebrity and become a worldwide name, or if you prefer you could just be a celebrity within your niche, and who knows what that could bring - magazine appearances, tv appearances? You don't have to do any of them if you don't want to, but they are a perk that can drive a ton of traffic to your site and make you a lot of money if you use them wisely.

Good luck and get vlogging!

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