

CLIENT BONUS

# Blog Post Optimization Checklist



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# Table of Contents

Blogging For Business .....	3
There's Just One Problem... ..	4
How To Optimize Content.....	5
Get A One Page Checklist .....	9

## Blog Post Optimization

# Help Get Your Content Found More Often Online

Publishing new content on a consistent basis keeps your brand in front of your audience and top of mind. It also gives people a reason to visit your website and search engines a reason to display your website in search results.

## Blogging For Business

Blogging is the fastest way to expand your online footprint and build brand equity that results in more sales and more revenue. Check this out:

- Every time a new blog post is published, a new searchable URL is added to your website
- Publishing a new blog post just once each week for a year will add 52 new indexable, searchable URLs to your website.
- That action creates 52 new ways people can find you online – that's 52 new chances you have to appear in the search engine results when someone is looking for what you do.
- Publishing twice a week adds 104 new indexable, searchable URLs to your website, which is the same as adding 104 new opportunities for a potential client or customer to find you online in a single year.
- Publishing three times each week, adds 156 new indexable, searchable URLs to your website, which is the same as adding 156 new opportunities for a potential client or customer to find you online in a single year.

## There's Just One Problem...

Many business owners believe blogging for business is a waste of time because they tried it and it didn't work, or someone else told them that they tried it and it didn't work.

I often hear stories like this:

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**"I read about how blogging is a great way to get more people to my website and I even went to an event to learn about blogging to generate leads. But I tried it for a few months, wrote a lot of articles, and published at least one or two a week — and it didn't generate any new leads, so I gave up."**

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Business blogging gets a bad rap because a lot of experts tout the results blogging can create without also sharing the tactics you must understand before you start blogging — tactics that ensure you see a positive return on investment.

Even with great content, blogging as a lead generation strategy could flop if you don't:

- Establish a clear content strategy aligned with what you're selling
- Define the target keywords or key phrases for the content you're creating
- Learn how to optimize your content for SEO and people

## How To Optimize Content

Creating and publishing content without search engine optimization is like going fishing and dropping your hook in the water with no bait.

To create the results you want from your content marketing efforts, you need to optimize your posts for humans and search engines using on-page search engine optimization tactics. The good news is that all of these tactics are free.

Here is a checklist for optimizing blog posts:

- 1. Select a focus keyword**

To increase the effectiveness of your content and the probability of it gaining traction in search engine listings, the post content must be focused around one primary keyword or key phrase you want to rank for. Start by defining the specific keyword or key phrase for a piece of content and use it in the headlines and body copy.

- 2. Use related keyword variations**

Keyword stuffing is a fancy way to refer to the overuse of a keyword or key phrase on a page or post. Using a keyword too many times and stuffing it into the content in unnatural ways does more harm than good.

The best practice is to write for humans and use a natural, conversational tone. Just as you may use different variations of a word in a conversation and say it in different ways or different contexts, you also need to use variations of words in your content.

### 3. **Keep the content on topic**

The more focused content is, the better it perform in the search engine listings – and that means more organic website traffic.

Avoid long tangents that stray off topic and if you notice the focus of your content shifting as you write, consider either adjusting the focus keyword or key phrase or breaking the content into two separate posts.

### 4. **Style the post content**

If you want people to read your content, it must feel easy to read. Use short paragraphs separated with a blank space, bold and italic formatting, and bullet lists and number lists, and break long content into sections using subheadlines.

The main headline should be an H1, all primary subheadlines should be an H2, and all secondary subheadlines should be set to H3. Typically, the H4-H6 headline levels are often unneeded.

### 5. **Write a compelling headline**

Just as people ignore a book with an ugly cover, they also ignore content that appears boring, vague, irrelevant, or too general.

People click on links based on the perceived value of what they think they'll get by clicking the link – and that can be entertainment or education. This means your headlines must capture attention, create interest, spark curiosity, or make an irresistible promise.

## 6. Confirm the call to action

Keep the reason why you are investing in content marketing top of mind – it's likely that you're creating and publishing content to generate leads, make sales, build your email list, and create opportunities.

This means you want people visiting your website and engaging with your content to take some type of action. Know what that action is and include a call to action at the end of your blog posts.

## 7. Add at least one image and optimize it

Interesting images enhance written content and posts with images receive more clicks from social media than text posts alone. This is why every blog post should have at least one image. And the longer your content is, the more images you may want to add.

Some experts recommend including an image every 300-400 words. Just remember to optimize every image for search engines by adding a descriptive name, appropriate ALT text (alternative text), and whenever possible, a compelling, keyword-rich caption.

## 8. Add optimized links

Links are the roads humans and search engines use to travel through the internet and discover more content. Further your SEO efforts by adding optimized internal and external links that use keyword-rich anchor text (the text of the actual link). Internal links are links to other pages and posts on your own website about the same or a similar topic.

External links are links in your content to other websites. While you may think sending people away from your website with an external link is a bad idea, when done right, it's actually a signal to search engines that

you're helping people discover more quality content — and that's what they like to see. **Add a unique HTML title**

While the HTML title for a blog post may use the same words as the primary on-page headline, they are actually not the same things — and they are added to your website in different places.

The HTML title is like the sign on the outside of a building telling people what's inside. It's a sign for humans and search engines that tells them what your blog post is about. The HTML title is also typically the text that is used for the link displayed in the search engine listings.

Your HTML title must be relevant to the blog post topic and no more than 55-60 characters in length. It should also include your focus keyword and key phrase.

## 9. Add a unique HTML meta description

The HTML meta description is a unique, short description of what the blog post is about. It should include your focus keyword and be written so it convinces, encourages, and persuades others to click your link and read the post.

The meta description is often the short two-line description displayed under the link in the search engine listings. Limit it to no more than 300 characters in length to avoid having any of it cut off.

## 10. Define the category

Your blog is like a giant file cabinet for your website and the categories are like the large drawers inside the file cabinet. Use categories to organize posts by primary content topic. Ideally, your categories would match either the top 5-10 keywords you are targeting with your site or the primary topics your income streams are built around. When assigning categories to a blog post, use no more than 1-3 categories.

## 11. Define the tags

Staying with the file cabinet reference, tags are like the individual file folders inside the big drawers that separate content into smaller groups. Tags are secondary keywords and key phrases that further break down the primary ones used as categories. Be sure the tags assigned to your post are relevant to the content and stick to no more than 3-5.

## Get A One Page Checklist

Jump to the next page for a simple one-page checklist you can print and keep next to your computer for easy reference.

# Blog Post Optimization Checklist

## 1 Select a Focus Keyword

- Focus the post content around one primary keyword or key phrase that you want the post to rank for.
- Use the keyword or key phrase in the post content.

## 2 Use Keyword Variations

- Write in a natural, conversational tone.
- Do not use your focus keyword too many times.
- Use variations of the focus keyword or key phrase and related keywords.

## 3 Keep the Content on Topic

- The more focused the content, the better it will perform.
- Avoid long tangents or fragmented content, as well as content that is too broad and general.

## 4 Style the Post Content

- Use short paragraphs separated with a blank space, bold and italic formatting, and bullet lists and number lists.
- Break long posts into sections using H2 for primary subheadlines and H3 for secondary subheadlines.

## 5 Write a Compelling Headline

- The headline must have emotional value.
- The headline must be accurate and persuasive to convince people to click on it and visit your website.
- Do not mislead your audience.

## 6 Confirm the Call to Action

- Confirm a call to action has been added and that it is powerful and compelling.
- Use action verbs and strong button text.

## 7 Add an Optimized Image

- Add at least one image.
- Consider adding an image every 300-400 words for long posts.
- Optimize images by using a descriptive name and appropriate ALT text.

## 8 Add Optimized Links

- Add internal links to other posts and pages on your website.
- Add external links to other relevant websites or web pages.
- Optimize each link with keyword-rich anchor text.

## 9 Add a Unique Page Title

- Add a 55-60 character page title that is unique to this post.
- Include the focus keyword or key phrase.
- Make it compelling and interesting.

## 10 Add a Unique Meta-Description

- Add a 160-300 character meta description that describes what the post is about.
- Include the focus keyword or key phrase.
- Make it persuasive.

## 11 Assign the Post a Category

- Assign the post to one primary category. This is a content vertical that is ideally tied to a revenue stream or area of focus for your business.

## 12 Assign the Post Tags

- Assign the post to 3-5 tags in the primary category. These are more narrow content verticals of the category.