

# 5 NEW PLACES TO FIND HIPAA VIOLATIONS IN YOUR PRACTICE'S COMMUNICATIONS

And How to Fix Them



How to Fix the  
Most Common  
Medical Office  
HIPAA Mistakes

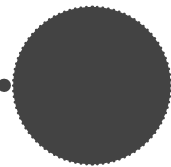
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### INTRODUCTORY

Introductory content is for medical professionals who are new to the subject. This content typically includes step-by-step instructions on how to get started with this aspect of business communications and learn its fundamentals. Read our [“Introduction to Business Communications”](#) ebook.



### INTERMEDIATE *◀..... This ebook!*

Intermediate content is for medical professionals who are familiar with the subject but have only basic experience in executing strategies and tactics on the topic. This content typically covers the fundamentals and moves on to reveal more complex functions and examples. After reading it, you will feel comfortable leading projects with this aspect of business communications.



### ADVANCED

Advanced content is for medical professionals who are, or want to be, experts on the subject. In it, we walk you through advanced features of this aspect of business communicatins and help you develop complete mastery of the subject. After reading it, you will feel ready not only to execute strategies and tactics, but also to teach others how to be successful.

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## 10 MEDICAL PRACTICE HIPAA MISTAKES & EASY FIXES

By Wendy Hebert-Pitre

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Wendy began her role as content creator at Dexcomm in June 2017 and primarily managed the content on Dexcomm's Company and Product News Blog as well as Dexcomm's award nominations, speaking engagements, and PR opportunities. She has since worked on Dexcomm's sales and marketing team, managing the production of customer case studies as well as Dexcomm's group demos, and also contributed greatly to Dexcomm's social media presence on Facebook and LinkedIn.



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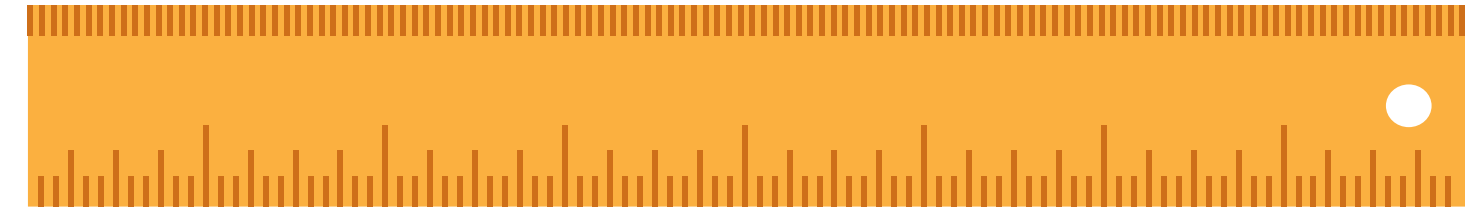
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“Secure communications are one of the crucial components of protecting your medical practice.”

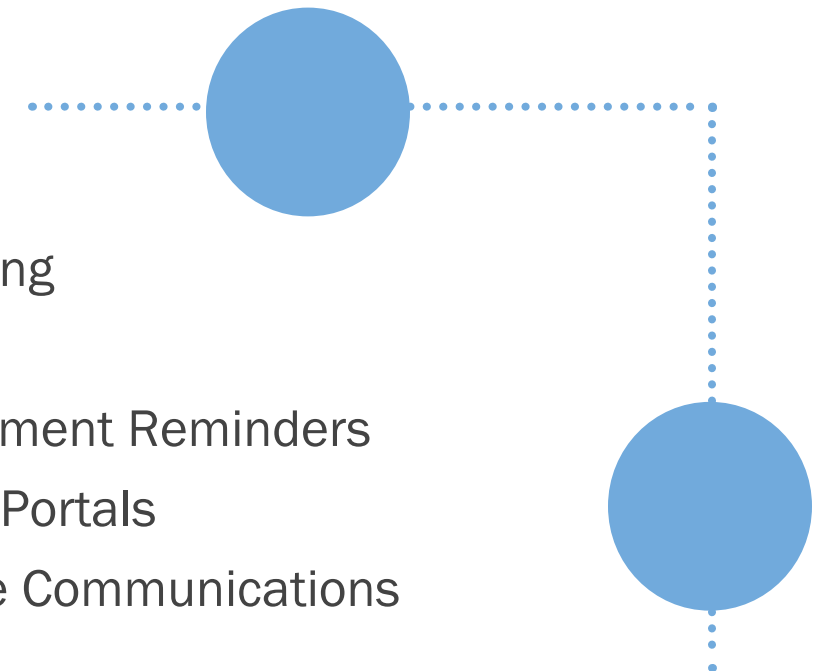
HIPAA compliance is a top concern for medical practices, and for good reason—violations can result in serious consequences, including large fines and potentially even jail time. To make things more complicated, the laws themselves tend to be rather vague on what actions practices need to take to become HIPAA-compliant.

If you'd like to learn more on what HIPAA-compliant communication entails throughout your practice, including marketing efforts, emails, appointment reminders, patient portals, and communication with other practices, we have put together this ebook with helpful resources to help you stay up to date on the latest recommended best practices for HIPAA-compliant communication.



## Communication Touchpoints:

- Marketing
- Email
- Appointment Reminders
- Patient Portals
- Practice Communications



Source:

Whether you've only just decided to beef-up communications for your business or you've been keeping an eye on it for a while, this ebook will help prevent you from falling victim to some of the most common HIPAA communications mistakes and teach you how to fix the HIPAA mistakes you might already be guilty of making. Consider it a sort of secure communications first-aid kit, and get ready to start applying some HIPAA band-aids!

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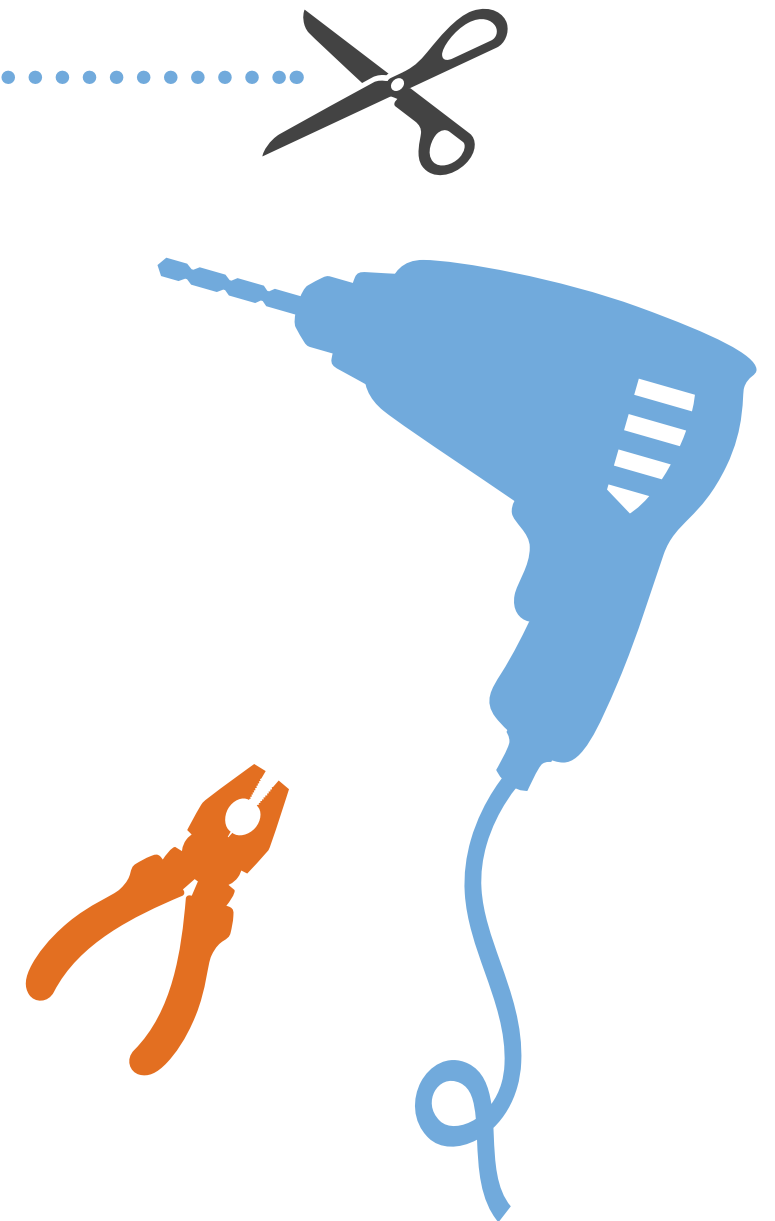
## Area Number 1

# MARKETING

Digital Marketing is crucial for growing practices, as more patients are looking to online sources of information about their medical needs and where to get treatment. Like nearly all business, you probably have a website (or you should!). Some practices also use social media, email marketing, and chat options on their website to communicate with their patients. Staying secure is a must in these situations. These tips will help you to stay HIPAA-Compliant in these situations.

## WHAT'S THE MISTAKE

Your company's marketing channels must be HIPAA compliant. There are many avenues that patients interact with your practice that may not be thought of as falling under the marketing umbrella. Let's look at several of them and provide you with tips on how to make those touch points more secure. Common touch points include



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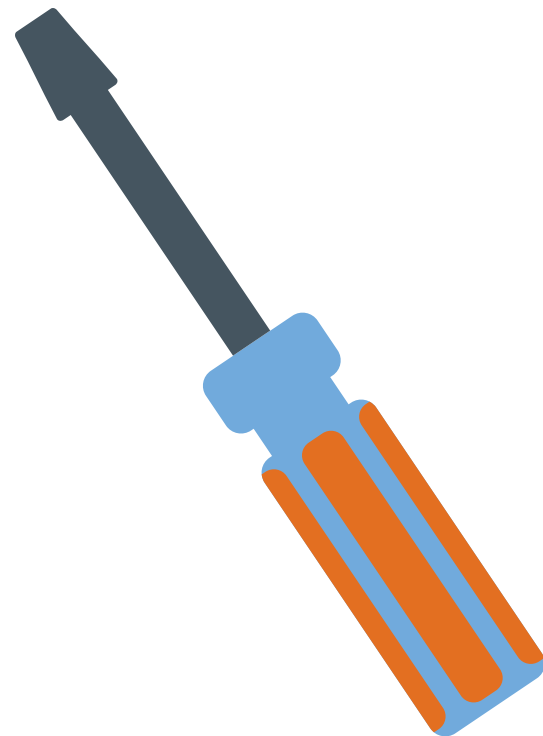


# WHY IT HURTS

Not integrating your business blog with your company's main website can be damaging for several reasons:

## SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION (SEO)

One of the biggest benefits of business blogging is its impact on search engine optimization. Because each new blog article you publish creates a new web page that can be indexed in search engines to help you get found online, you really want your business blog to be associated with your main website. That way, any SEO juice you generate from your blog will automatically benefit your corporate website as well. Hosting your blog on a free platform's URL like <http://companyblog.wordpress.com> will only guarantee that the SEO credit you've built gets applied to the blogging platform, not your own website.

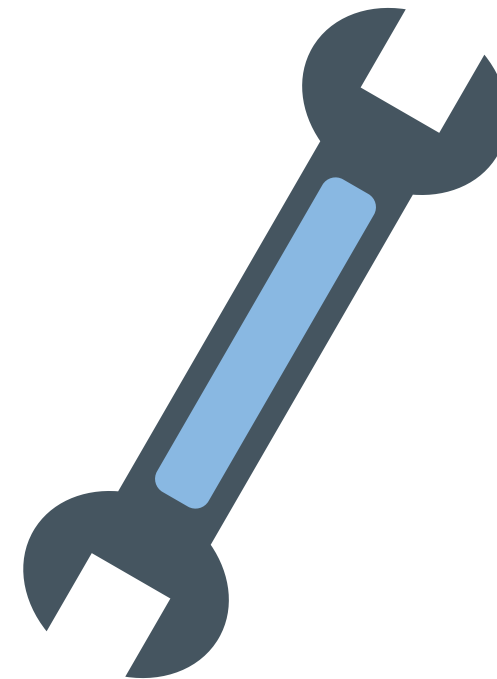


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## BRANDING

There are a few negatives associated with hosting your blog separate from your main website that affect your company's branding. First, even if you link to the blog from your website's main navigation, your site visitors will get sent to a completely different website, which may not espouse design and branding elements consistent with your main website and may result in confusion. Furthermore, sending site visitors to a blog on a free platform can result in the perception of your brand as unprofessional or unreliable, undermining your credibility as a business.



## CENTRALIZATION

You might be hosting your blog on a separate URL only after you've purchased a unique domain (e.g. <http://thisismyblog.com>) and linked to it from the main navigation of your company website. While this is a better practice, you're still sending site visitors away from your main website. This is counterintuitive, as usually the goal is to attract visitors to your main website by using your blog as bait. Ultimately, you want all of the engagement to happen on your main website, and you want your blog visitors to associate your blog with your brand name.

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# EASY FIX

## 1 SUB-DOMAIN

Our recommendation of the ideal home for your blog is on a sub-domain of your main website (e.g. <http://blog.website.com>).



## 2 WEBSITE FOLDER

Another good alternative is to put your blog in a folder of your main website (e.g. <http://website.com/blog>). Both of these options will allow your corporate website to benefit from the search engine optimization advantages your blog will generate.

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The only difference between the two is that a sub-domain will allow you to set up your blog as slightly independent from the main website (though still contributing SEO advantages), which gives you some additional flexibility regarding the blog's layout and design.

## 3 SEPARATE DOMAIN

Hosting your blog on a completely separate domain such as <http://thisismyblog.com> is a third option, and it's an okay alternative. However, if you decide to go this route, bear in mind that you'll ultimately be embarking on two separate link building campaigns – one to boost the SEO of your main website and one to boost the SEO of your blog.

One benefit of this option is that your blog is completely separate from your main website, which may help it seem less promotional since it's not directly connected to your product. (Although arguably, one of the benefits of keeping your blog and website together is that the thought leadership on your blog increases the credibility and trustworthiness of your brand and its products.)

While it's a limited benefit, hosting your blog on a separate domain can also offer a way to pass some link-building SEO juice from your blog to your main website.



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# THE SWITCH

If you've been hosting your blog on free URLs like Blogger or Typepad, you are going to have difficulty switching it over to a blog that you host and keeping the search engine traffic and page rank your blog has achieved. If your blog is on blogspot.com, Google does not let you do a 301 redirect from your old Blogger site to anywhere else. (A 301 permanent redirect is how you set up a clean forwarding address from your old site to the new one.) That means that Google does not let you redirect the SEO value to a new site.



Google has programming interfaces to support an automatic transfer of your blog, but they have their quirks. One does not let you migrate comments (an important part of any blog) and the other doesn't let you move more than a few dozen articles – period. There are ways to keep your search rankings when you switch, but you will probably need the help of programmers to transfer your data and keep any SEO.

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## MISTAKE 2



# PUBLISHING TOO MUCH PRODUCT- CENTRIC CONTENT





# WHAT'S THE MISTAKE

The content you publish on your blog is too heavily focused on you – your products, services, achievements, and why you're awesome – and it's seriously lacking thought leadership.

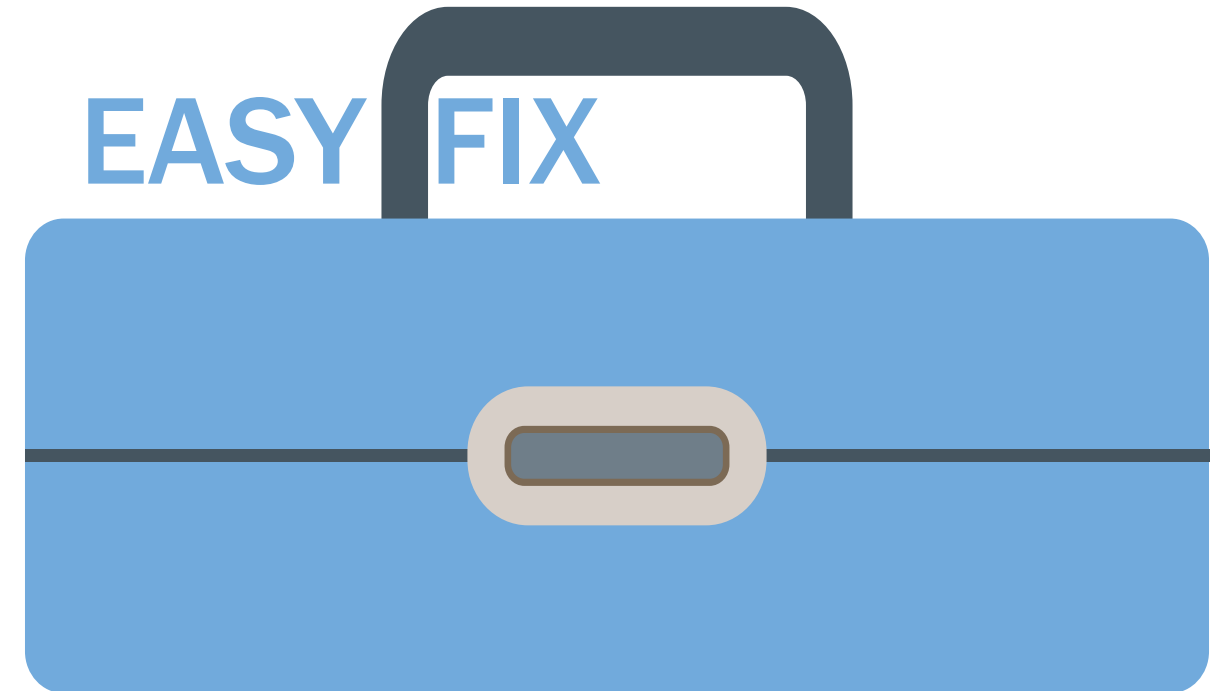
## WHY IT HURTS

Publishing product or company-focused content is okay only if you limit it to a company news and/or product blog. For the purposes of this ebook, we're focusing on the type of business blogging that allows you to exhibit thought leadership and expertise. In this type of blogging, you'll get stuck if you feature too much product-focused or company-centric content.

If people are visiting your blog expecting to find educational content and all they find is you talking about how great your products and services are, you're not going to accomplish the same goals or attract as many readers as you would if you published educational industry content.



# EASY FIX



Change the way you think about content for your blog. Instead of creating product-focused content that is unlikely to get shared, consider spending more time on educational, data-driven, or especially thought-provoking content relative to your industry. This type of content has a much better chance of attracting readers – and spreading.

“Change the way you think about content for you blog.”

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By creating these types of content, you'll start establishing your blog as a valuable resource for your industry. Because people are more likely to share content that is educational in nature, your content will have the capacity to reach a larger audience of potential customers.

As a result, people will start to associate your business with industry expertise, translating to more credibility and trust in the products/services you have to offer.

## EXAMPLES OF THOUGHT LEADERSHIP CONTENT

- Industry/market data
- Industry best practices
- Reports based on industry research
- Content that educates
- Thought-provoking content
- Industry (not product-focused) case studies
- Industry-related news topics and takeaways

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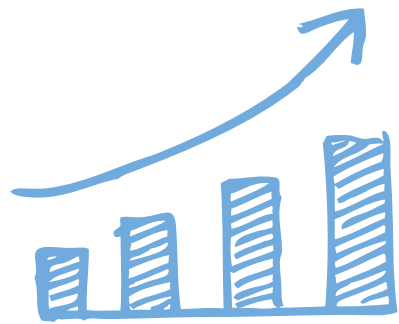
### MISTAKE 3

# PUBLISHING INFREQUENTLY / INCONSISTENTLY

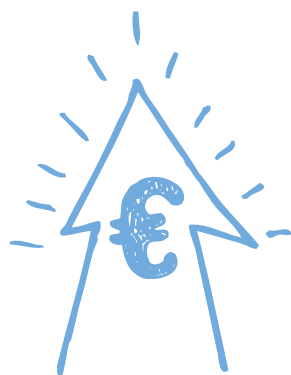


## WHAT'S THE MISTAKE

You have a blog, but you don't publish posts on a regular basis, and when you *do* post, you're not publishing enough articles to make your blog effective.



Businesses that blog **at least 20X** per month generate over **5X more traffic** than those that blog fewer than 4 times per month.



Businesses that blog **at least 20X** per month generate nearly **4X more leads** than those that don't blog.

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## WHY IT HURTS

Research shows that the companies benefiting most from business blogging are the ones that blog frequently and consistently. Adopting a laid-back approach to business blogging won't move the needle; creating a blog that actually generates business success takes time, effort, and dedication. According to HubSpot's [State of Inbound Marketing 2011](#) report, 57% of companies that publish a business blog have acquired a customer from a blog-generated lead.



Ignoring your means you are leaving prospective customers on the table.

In addition, there is a direct correlation between the frequency of blogging and traffic and leads. Note the data on the previous page from HubSpot's research in its [Lead Generation Lessons From 4,000 Businesses](#) report, which indicates that the more often a company blogs, the better that company is able to generate traffic and leads. Ignoring your blog rather than keeping it updated with fresh content means you are leaving prospective customers on the table.

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## EASY FIX

Make a commitment to the upkeep of your blog. The most common frequency we observed for business blogging is weekly, so start by striving for at least one blog post per week and work your way up. If time or bandwidth is a major concern or deterrent for you, consider other ways to source content for your blog.

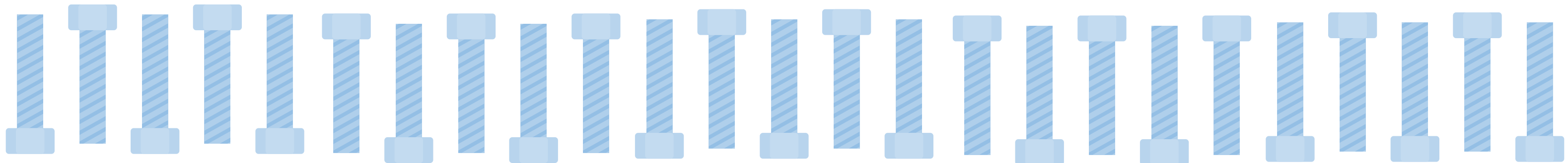
We'll address this more in Marketing Mistake 10 (Not Sourcing Content), but keep in mind there is no rule stating that only one person can contribute content to any given blog. Encouraging other employees in your company to contribute content is a great way to divide the responsibility and workload of content creation as well as elicit new and varying perspectives and insight, which can add depth to your blog.



## NEED HELP GETTING ORGANIZED?

Consider sitting down and creating an editorial calendar to keep you on track for regular publishing. Decide how many times per month you'd like to publish, then create a dedicated Google Calendar or an Excel document and mark off the actual days you will commit to publishing. Go one step further by planning the topics you will write about on those specific days, always keeping in mind your audience and considering topics that might line up with timely elements like upcoming industry events.

Once you've worked your way into a regular blogging routine, consider increasing your blogging frequency.



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## MISTAKE 4

# PUBLISHING OFF-TOPIC CONTENT

## WHAT'S THE MISTAKE

Your blog is unorganized, all over the place, and lacks a concrete, unified theme.

## WHY IT HURTS

Without a clearly defined purpose and focus, your blog will suffer. If you're expecting to generate a community of subscribers, readers, and fans that you're hoping to someday nurture into paying customers, you need to give them a reason to keep coming back.

There's no doubt about it: people like guarantees. When people visit HubSpot's [Internet Inbound Marketing Blog](#), for example, they come to find resources about inbound marketing because that's what the focus of the blog is. Over time, that's what they've come to expect.

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## EASY FIX



It's about time you decided on a focus/topic for your blog. Spend some time figuring out what that is, and keep that focus in mind every time you create blog content.

### TIPS FOR DEFINING YOUR BLOG'S FOCUS:

1

Think about the goals of your blog. What are you trying to accomplish by publishing a blog?

2

Generate a list of keywords that describe your industry, products, or services, and see if that helps you come up with a focal point.

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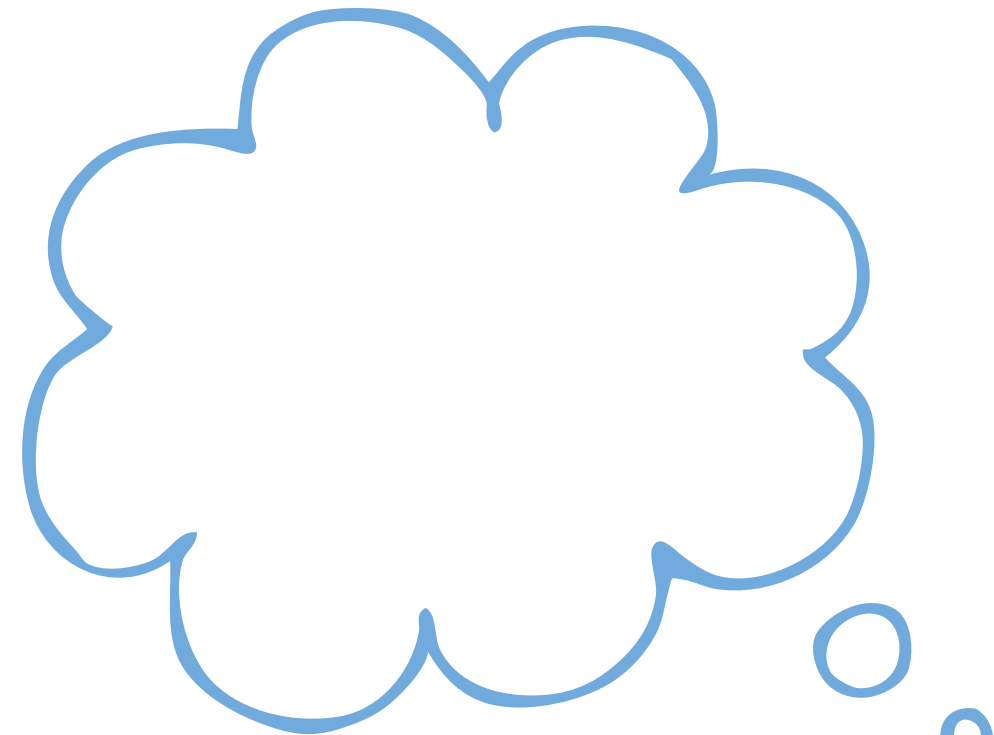


3

Is there a specific industry-related topic on which you or your business can share expertise or knowledge?

4

What does your audience want? Ultimately, you're trying to attract a certain audience for your blog. Think about the persona(s) of your ideal customers and consider what information they might be looking for that might lead them to your blog, and ultimately, your product/service offering.



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## MISTAKE 5

# OFFERING NO CONTENT VARIETY

## WHAT'S THE MISTAKE

Your blog is a monotonous stream of the same type of content, offering no variety and boring your readers to death.

## WHY IT HURTS

While people crave consistency in focus on blogs, you also need to keep them interested through the range of information you present. The most engaging blogs offer content to their readers in many ways. People like to consume information differently, and by not offering variety, you're limiting the reach of your content only to people who like consuming information in one specific way. Plus, a one-track blog can get really boring.

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## EASY FIX

Variety is the spice of life, so start spicing up your blog by introducing content variety. Think outside the box, and brainstorm a style bank of different types of content you can create for your blog. The following page provides a solid list of ideas to get you started.



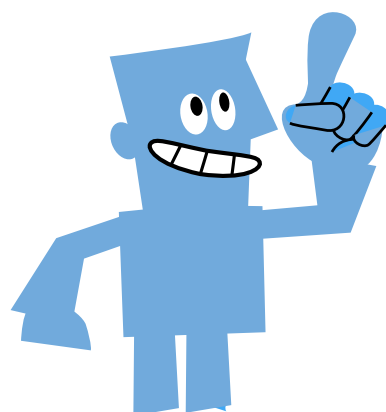
### TYPES OF BLOG CONTENT:

1

Text-based copy

2

Charts or graphs



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3

Audio content (podcast content, interview recordings, etc.)

4

Cartoons

5

Infographics

6

Guest blog articles (from other industry bloggers or experts)

7

Curated lists

8

Industry-related book reviews

9

Q&amp;As

10

Videos (interviews, screencasts, instructional how-to's, entertaining/funny videos, music videos, news-style videos, etc.)

*I'm sure you can come up with even more!*

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## MISTAKE 6

# FAILING TO ENCOURAGE ENGAGEMENT

## WHAT'S THE MISTAKE

Your blog is a one-way platform for your ideas, offering no way for your readers to engage in conversations, interact, and provide feedback or insightful commentary.

## WHY IT HURTS

Just as you tend to hate the guy at a cocktail party who talks about only himself without letting you get a word in, no one likes a blog that suffocates conversation and engagement. Blogging is social, and treating your blog like a megaphone instead of a platform for two-way communication will suck the life out of it.

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## EASY FIX

Remember that your blog's readers are critical to the success of your blog, and treat them as such. By publishing a blog, you're also creating a community of potential customers, and these prospects like to be heard. Take the following steps to make sure your fostering interaction on your blog:

### KEEP COMMENTS OPEN

Don't close the comments on your blog. They're essential to facilitating conversation about your blog content. Prospects like to be heard.

### MONITOR & REPLY TO COMMENTS

Keep track of the conversation that takes place on your blog by monitoring comments. Replying when appropriate will show your readers you're invested in the community you've created and care about what they have to contribute.

### DON'T MODERATE COMMENTS

Moderating comments will only deter people from commenting in the first place. Don't fear negative comments (people are nicer than you think), and embrace feedback as constructive criticism. If you want to take extra precautions, publish a page that outlines your blog's comment policy and encourage people to comment intelligently and respectfully.

### LISTEN TO FEEDBACK

Have you noticed that your readers aren't responding well to a particular topic or type of content? Show them you're listening by improving and modifying your blog's content based on their feedback.

### ASK QUESTIONS

Directly promote interaction by posing questions within your blog content. Ask readers how they feel about the topic, if they have any additional insight or advice, or can point readers to other resources they've come across related to the topic.

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## MISTAKE 7

# NEGLECTING TO OPTIMIZE FOR SEARCH

## WHAT'S THE MISTAKE

You're not actively doing anything to take advantage of your blog's power to help you get found in search engines.

## WHY IT HURTS

As we hinted in Marketing Mistake 1 (Not Integrating Your Blog With Your Main Website), one of the greatest benefits of business blogging relates to search engine optimization. If you're not consciously acting on the various ways to optimize your blog for search engines, you're missing out on a tremendous opportunity your blog can offer to increase your keyword rankings and grow your organic search traffic.

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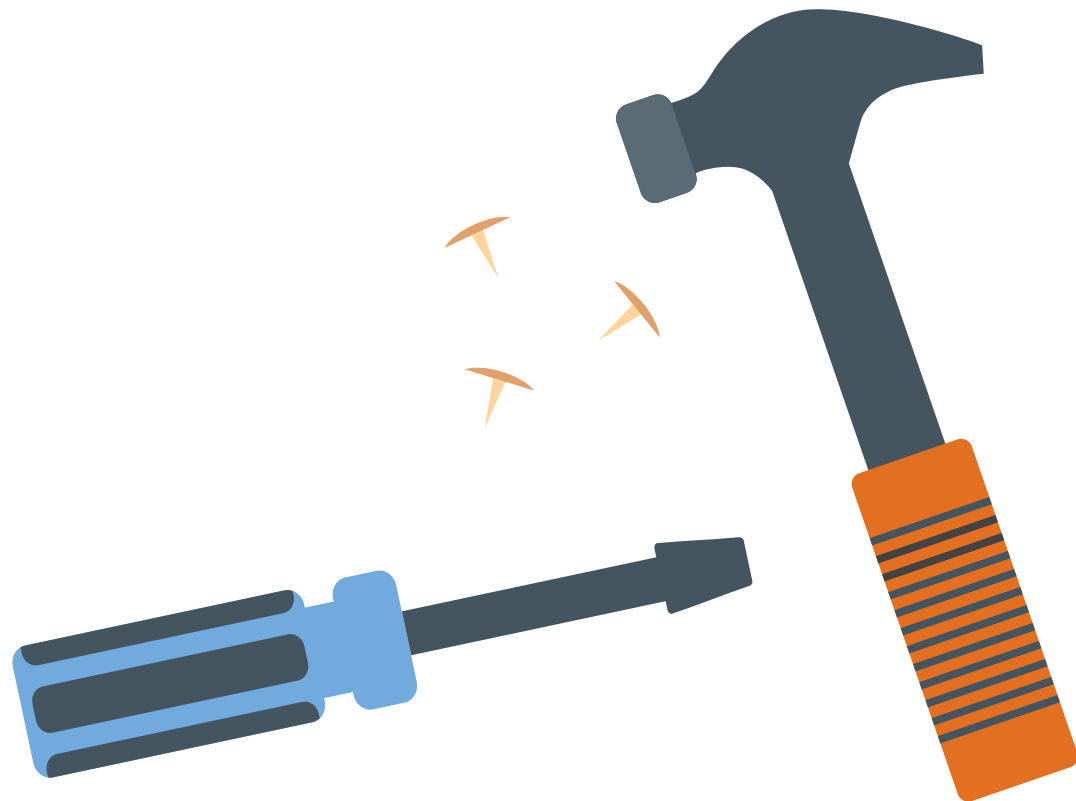


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## EASY FIX

The number of terms that a website can rank for is directly related to the size of the site. More often than not, the difference between a 50-page website and a 500+ page site is a blog. Because of this, blogging is an absolutely essential practice for SEO and traffic-building. More indexed pages mean more opportunities for keywords, so develop an SEO strategy for your blog and implement that strategy for every piece of content you create and publish on your blog.



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## STEP 1: IDENTIFY YOUR KEYWORDS

Remember back in Mistake #4 (Posting Off-Topic Content) when we suggested brainstorming keywords to help determine a topic for your blog? This same practice is an important step in developing your blog's SEO strategy. Keep in mind that the more general a keyword is, the more difficult it will be to rank for (e.g. the head term "blogging" would be more difficult to rank for than the long-tail keywords "how to use a blog"). Use [Google's free Keyword Tool](#), which offers insight into the competitiveness of a specific keyword, to help you choose realistic keywords related to your blog's topic.

## STEP 2: OPTIMIZE BLOG CONTENT WITH THOSE KEYWORDS

The most important places to include keywords on any page of your site are in the page title, the URL, and the H1 (Header) tag (or in your blog's case, this usually means your blog title). This means that if you're trying to rank for the keywords "how to use a blog," you need to make sure to use that phrase in that order in all three places. You also need to make sure that this phrase appears up front. A common mistake is for a company to put its name before its keywords in page titles (e.g. HubSpot | How to Use a Blog). Instead, you should write: How to Use a Blog | HubSpot.

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## MISTAKE 8

# IMPLEMENTING A POOR BLOG DESIGN

## WHAT'S THE MISTAKE

You're focusing 100% on content and ignoring valuable design elements of your blog that can act as powerful boosters of traffic and leads for your business.

## WHY IT HURTS

Yes, as an inbound marketer, your blog content has to be amazing. However, a bad blog design can hamper even the best content. Think about it this way: would you buy an expensive sports car and drive around with four flat tires? You'd still be able to go fast, but not nearly as fast as you could be going. A clear, lead-focused blog design will help turbo-charge the results of your inbound marketing content.

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# EASY FIX

A blog's design could be one of an infinite number of choices. However, great business blog designs share common traits of success.

## A CTA IN EVERY POST

In a chapter about blog design, it would be simple for us to start out with some “fluffy” design advice. But that wouldn't help your company's bottom line, would it? Even if you stopped reading this post after this tip, you'd still leave with its most important takeaway: You **MUST** put a [call-to-action](#) in each of your blog posts. Yes, you should test the design and placement of your calls-to-action, but first and foremost, you need to use them in your posts. This is one of the most powerful levers for transforming your blog into a well-designed lead generation machine.



### SUBSCRIPTION CTA

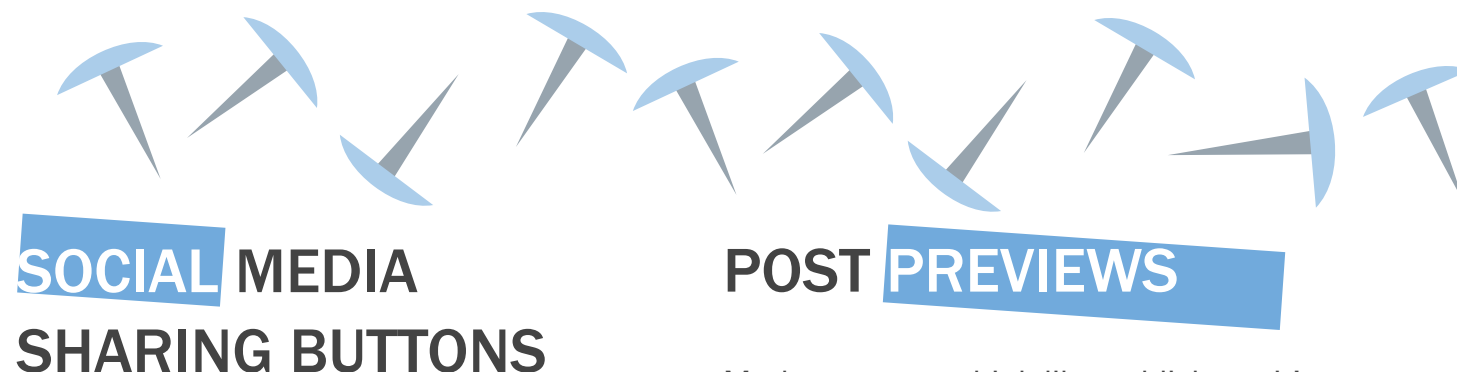
Every visitor to your blog isn't going to convert into a lead instantly. Some visitors will need to learn about your business over time. A way to help expedite this process is to get more visitors to subscribe to your blog via email or RSS. To do this, you need to have a clear call-to-action that encourages people to subscribe via either method.

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# CLEAR CONNECTION TO THE WEBSITE

Your blog isn't an island; it's a key component of a successful website. Your blog design must make it clear and simple for a blog reader to get to key parts of your core website. It's great if you have awesome content, but it needs to be connected to your products or services to help move relevant visitors further along in the buying cycle. Have a clear blog navigation that connects to your website, and consider using some sidebar real estate to direct visitors to key website pages.



## SOCIAL MEDIA SHARING BUTTONS

Too much of a good thing can be bad. Yes, you want people to share your blog posts, and having social sharing buttons on your blog is helpful. However, giving people too many sharing options is distracting. It actually causes users to become overwhelmed and, subsequently, take no action. So limit the sharing buttons on your blog to only those networks that send traffic and leads to your business. If you don't get any traffic from StumbleUpon, then why clutter your blog with its button?

## POST PREVIEWS

Marketers must think like publishers. It's easy to think of your blog as just a blog. However, you should think of it as a digital publication. Your blog is just like a trade magazine for your industry. One trait of magazines that people love is the table of contents that provide a preview for all of the articles in that issue. Instead of displaying your entire, most recent article on your blog's homepage, display only an excerpt and an image from several of your most recent posts. This will allow visitors to scan some of your blog's content and give them a choice of what to read first.

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## SIMPLE SORTING OF CONTENT

Depending on how prolific of a writer you are and how long your business has been blogging, your blog design needs to make it easier for visitors to find older and relevant content. As a marketer, you have several design elements to help achieve this, including blog search, tagging and recommendation widgets. As with social media sharing buttons, you don't need to use all of these. Organize some user testing sessions to understand what people unfamiliar with your blog find to be the best methods for discovering past content.



## PROMINENT HEADLINE FORMATTING

In your blog design, make sure that your headline is formatted correctly. This means it needs to be the star of the show when it comes to the text on a page. Make sure it is significantly larger in font size than the body or subhead text on the page. This may seem like a small detail, but making your headers pop makes a huge difference!

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## PROMINENT POST IMAGE DISPLAY

A great blog is visual. You shouldn't knock readers over with blocks and blocks of text as soon as they arrive. Look at your blog design. How are you using images to draw in readers? There are many ways to showcase images from posts in the design of your blog. It can be as simple as an image next to an intro paragraph on your blog's homepage or something far more customized. The important thing to remember is to not make assumptions on what your readers want. Instead, conduct user tests to collect feedback and determine the best option for your audience.

## FAST PAGE LOAD TIMES

Online readers are impatient. When they are looking for information, they want it NOW. If your blog post takes too long to load, then your visitor will bounce and go elsewhere. In order to prevent this issue, you need to test your blog's load time. This [free tool from Pindom](#) will tell you how long it takes for your blog to load. Ideally, the load time for your blog will be under two seconds.



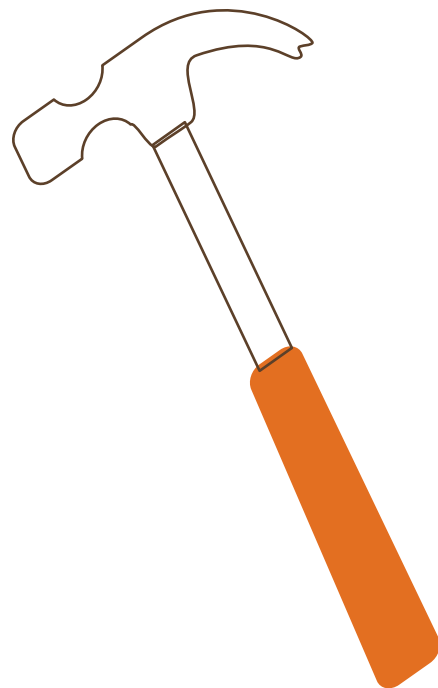
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## A CLEAN SIDEBAR

A blog's sidebar can easily become the junkyard of the page. It's all too easy to keep cluttering a sidebar until it has a seemingly endless list of useless widgets. Look at the sidebar of your blog. Look at each widget or design aspect of that sidebar. Does it really serve a purpose? Is that individual element encouraging the behavior you want your readers to take? If the answer to either of these questions is "no," then delete it from your sidebar. De-clutter that blog sidebar and get users to take the actions you want.



## SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOW BUTTONS

Your blog is a great place to promote your business' presence in social media, and it's often the first place people look to find it. Consider adding buttons with links to your corporate Twitter account, Facebook fan page, LinkedIn company page and Google+ business page to encourage people to connect with you on social media.

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*“Your blog is a great place to promote your business’ presence in social media.”*



## A SEARCH BOX

Encourage readers to spend additional time on your blog by enabling them to easily search for other blog content. This can easily be accomplished by adding a search box to the header or sidebar of your blog.

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## MISTAKE 9

# RUSHING BLOG TITLES

## WHAT'S THE MISTAKE

You're so focused on the content of the blog post itself that you don't consider the powerful impact the blog article's title has on the post's performance.

## WHY IT HURTS

A great title is often the difference between a business blogging article that generates a few views and an article that generates tons of views. While the title isn't the only important element of a blog post, it's usually a potential reader's first impression of your content. Writing exceptional blog titles is something of an art form. Think about it: a link to a blog post shared on social media is usually only accompanied by a title, so you'd better make sure that title is darn good if you want people to click on it.

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# EASY FIX

Luckily, you too can learn the art of writing exceptional blog titles. All you need is some guidance and a little practice. Here are six characteristics of exceptional blog titles.

## 1 ACTIONABLE

A great blog title is actionable, not passive. Most likely, your readers want to learn something from reading your post. Use your blog title to demonstrate that your article will give them action-oriented takeaways by incorporating verbs and other action words from the get-go. An actionable title will also give readers the impression that your blog article is a must-read. Notice how actionable the following title example is, indicating that the reader will learn how to create a Google+ Page.

*Example: "How to Create a Google+ Business Page in 5 Simple Steps"*



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## 2 KEYWORD-CONSCIOUS

With many blogging platforms, your blog article's title also doubles as the page title for that web page. And anyone with a basic understanding of search engine optimization understands the importance of the page title. Incorporating appropriate keywords your business is targeting in your blog title is a great way to get more SEO bang for your buck. HubSpot, for example, recently ran a campaign about [marketing automation](#), and the following blog article appropriately targeted that specific keyword.

*Example: "10 Things We Hate About Marketing Automation"*

## 3 BRIEF

Be concise and to the point in your blog title. Punchy blog titles are much more sharable and effective than long, drawn-out titles, which can sound complicated and lose a potential reader's interest quickly. A good rule of thumb is to keep your title around eight words or fewer, as demonstrated by the following example.

*Example: "101 Signs You're an Inbound Marketer"*

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## 4 CLEAR

One of the goals you should have when creating your blog title is to clearly communicate what the article is about. Avoid language that is vague. Ask yourself, “If I read this title, would I have a clear indication of what the content I’m about to read will tell me?” If you can’t easily answer that question, you probably need to rework your title. In the below example, the title makes it obvious that the reader is going to learn various ways to make his/her content more visual – 6, to be exact.

*Example: “6 Creative Ways to Make Content More Visual”*

## 5 DEFINITIVE

Show potential readers you are an authority on the topic you’re writing about. Use words that are strong and definitive. Leave wishy-washy language out, and avoid questions. Be confident in your writing. After all, if you’re not confident that what you write is awesome, why should others be? The following title, for example, couldn’t be any more confident.

*Example: “The 15 Best Facebook Pages You’ve Ever Seen”*

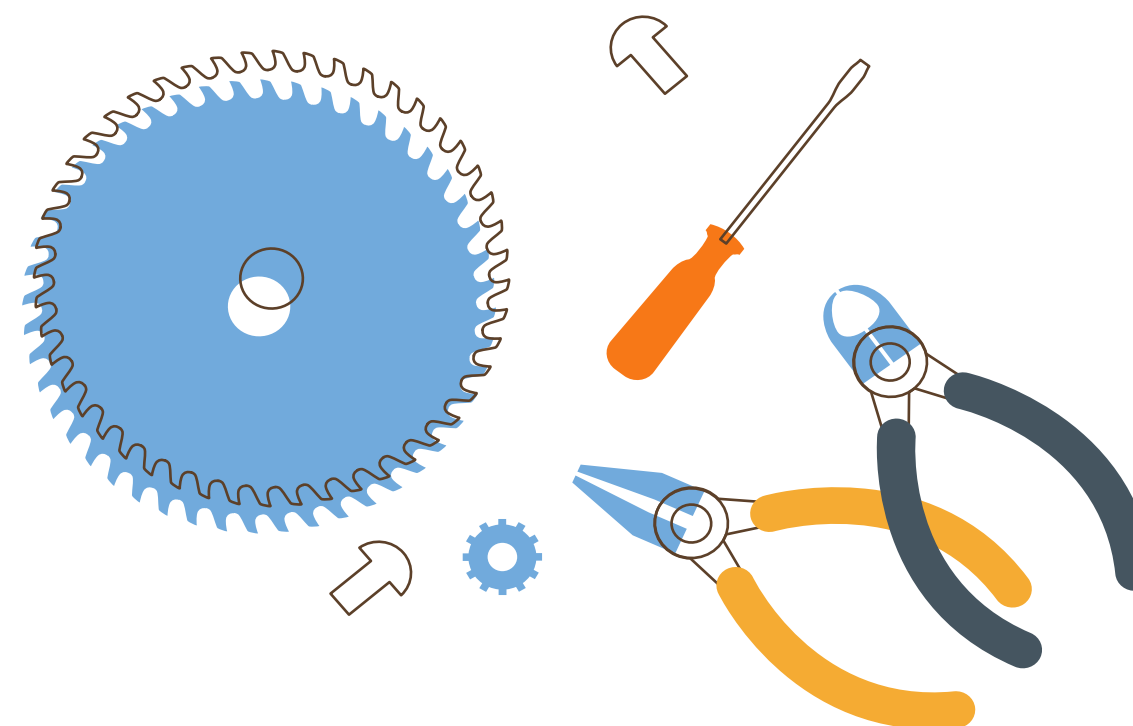


Create a blog title that incorporates these 6 characteristics, and we can bet you’ll be well on your way to mastering the art of exceptional blog titles that generate more views and, ultimately, more leads!

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## 6 INTRIGUING

Potential readers should take one look at your title and think to themselves, “Ooo... that sounds interesting.” A lot of times, this will depend on the blog’s topic itself. Are you writing about something that would actually be interesting to your target audience? If so, it shouldn’t be difficult to come up with an intriguing title. If not, you might want to reconsider your blog topic in general. Consider adding a little mystery into your title. While you might think this advice is a bit counter-intuitive to our point about being clear, there’s a right way to do this. The key is to indicate what the reader will learn from reading the blog post without actually telling them exactly what it is. Consider the following example. The reader knows he/she will be reading about a content marketer’s confessions, but the reader has no idea what those confessions are. Even just the word “confessions” alone implies intrigue.

*Example: “Confessions of a Content Marketer”*

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## MISTAKE 10

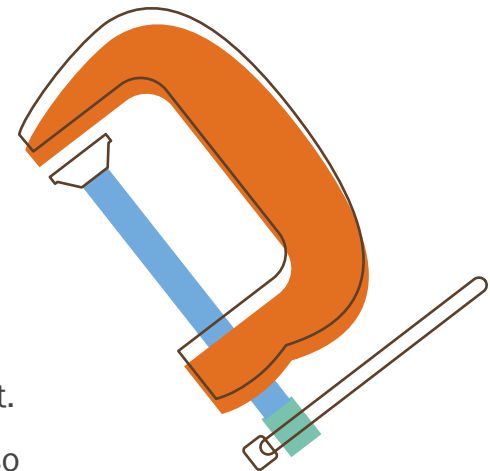
# NOT SOURCING CONTENT

## WHAT'S THE MISTAKE

You're killing yourself over the grind of regularly coming up with original blog content so much that you're starting to burn out and are even considering giving up on blogging altogether.

## WHY IT HURTS

We've already emphasized the importance of keeping your blog updated frequently and consistently with fresh content. Let's face it, though – it's not as simple as that, and it's also not hard to get so frustrated with the pressure of publishing content on a regular basis that you feel like giving up. This is dangerous, because we also know how valuable your blog can be and how much it can benefit your business. In addition, a one-track blog that offers only one person's perspective may result in an uninteresting, unsuccessful blog.



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## EASY FIX

Contrary to popular belief, your blog doesn't always have to consist of completely original content, nor does it have to come from just one contributor. Consider the following content source suggestions to keep your blog frequently flowing with great content.

### CURATE CONTENT

For some reason, the term "content curation" seems to be one that few people are talking about in the marketing and blogging world, yet it's a helpful strategy that many are taking advantage of. Content curation is the process of selecting and aggregating information into one place that creates more value for information consumers. While the information itself may not necessarily be original, the aggregation of resources from different sources on a specific topic can be a great, supplemental alternative for your blog. Curated content can offer a lot of value to your readers since they don't have to look for it themselves amongst the tons of content noise already on the web.

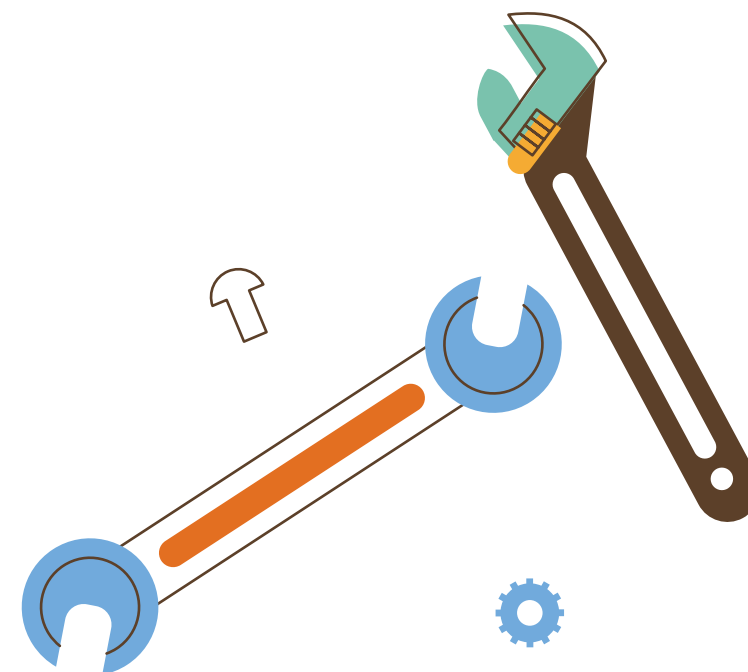


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## ENCOURAGE EMPLOYEE CONTRIBUTIONS

There is no rule stating that there can only one contributor per blog. There is also no rule that says contributors must only come from your company's marketing team. At HubSpot, every employee is encouraged to contribute, whether they're in marketing, sales, or another department. This practice results in the division of content creation responsibilities, making our blog regularly populated with content. It also creates a more dynamic blog with varying perspectives. Motivate other members of your team to contribute to your blog by offering incentives and creating a content culture at your company.



### WELCOME GUEST BLOGGERS

Give yourself a break and accept guest blog articles from other industry experts and thought leaders. To expedite the process, create a form for your blog through which interested parties can submit their ideas for guest articles. Accepting guest blogging submissions will also open up the opportunity for you to guest post on your guest bloggers' blogs in return, which can introduce you to a separate blog's worth of subscribers, help to attract new readers for your own blog, and help you build links into your site for SEO.

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10 HIPAA MISTAKES

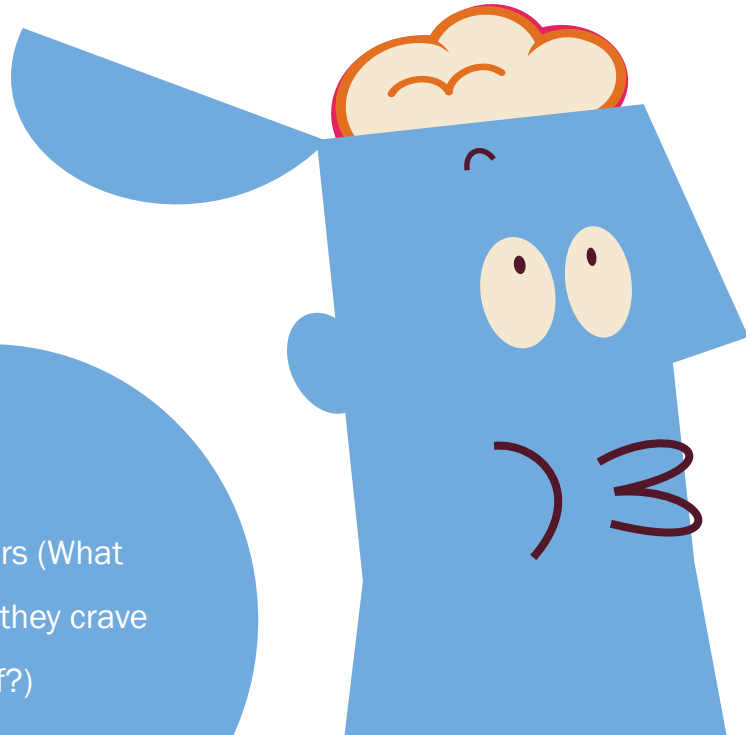
Running into the problem of a lack of content ideas? Make content sourcing part of your daily routine, and consider these sources to help you come up with blog topics and ideas:

Your own  
experiences,  
perspectives, and  
opinions



Reader feedback  
in the 'comments'  
section from past  
blog posts

Your customers (What  
information do they crave  
more of?)



Your network of  
colleagues ,contacts,  
and connections

What others are talking about (e.g.  
other media that focuses on the same  
topic, industry publications, forums,  
other industry thought leaders/experts,  
breaking industry news, etc.)

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## MISTAKE 11

# NOT OPTIMIZING FOR LEAD GENERATION



# WHAT'S THE MISTAKE

There are few (or maybe even zero) [calls-to-action](#) (CTAs) on your blog, severely limiting its potential to convert visitors into leads and customers for your business.

## WHY IT HURTS

At HubSpot, our blog is one of the top sources of leads for our business. If you're not optimizing your blog with offers and calls-to-action, you're missing out on a tremendously powerful business opportunity to generate leads, thus diminishing the value of your blog's ROI.



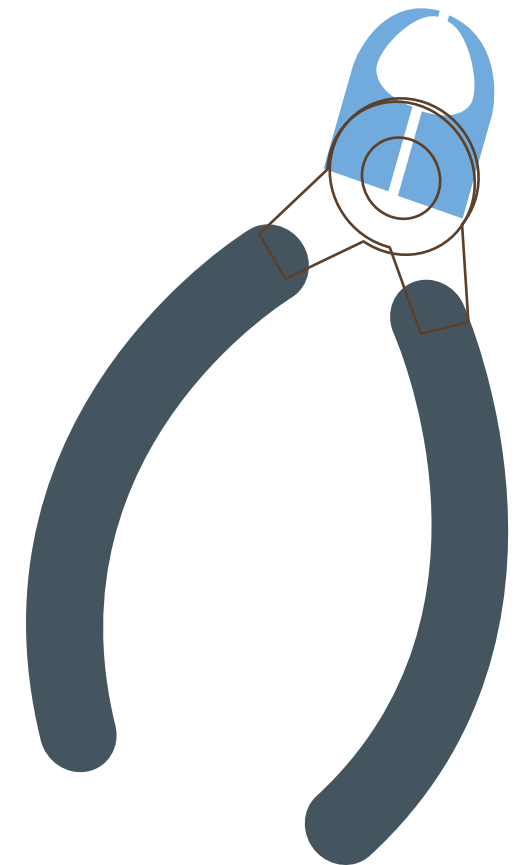
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# EASY FIX

As we mentioned in Mistake #8, make it a habit to ensure that every blog post you publish has a CTA in addition to placing CTAs to the top and/or sidebar of your blog. Also think about revisiting old blog posts (particularly those that receive the most traffic) and adding CTAs to them too, since people are still probably finding, reading, and deriving value from your blog's evergreen content today as well.

On the next few pages, we'll discuss the different types of CTAs and how to place them on your blog.



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# DIFFERENT TYPES OF CALLS-TO-ACTION

Depending on the blog visitor, that person could be at a variety of different points in the sales process: a first-time visitor, a warm, sales-ready lead, or somewhere in between. As a marketer, you should diversify the lead generation offers available on your blog so they apply to these different personas. These offers will fall into two different categories and should be attached to landing pages with lead-capture forms to pull in new and reconverting lead information.

“You should diversify the lead generation offers on your blog so they apply to different personas.”

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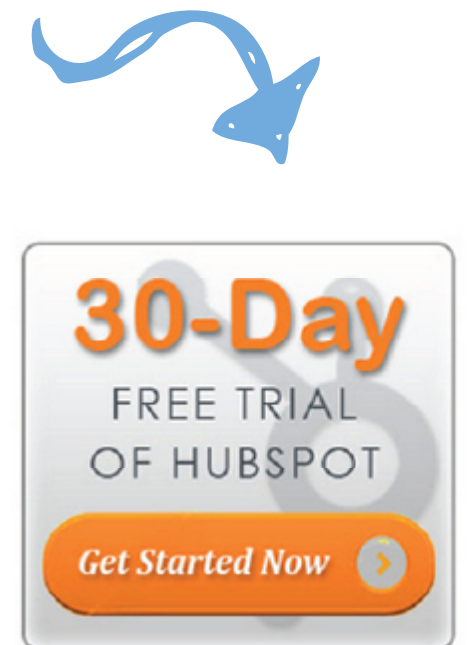
## 1 CONTENT-FOCUSED OFFERS

These types of offers are for ebooks, webinars, research or other content that provides more in-depth information than a blog post. Usually, these offers are geared toward first-time visitors who aren't ready for a lot of product-driven content.



## 2 PRODUCT-FOCUSED OFFERS

These types of offers are direct product offers such as free trials, discounts, demos, etc. These offers are geared toward warmer leads who have already seen some of your premium, thought leadership-driven content offers and are now looking for more product-driven information.



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# CTA PLACEMENTS

So how do you best promote these offers on a business blog? Because all blogs are different – with different topics, audiences, and reader consumption habits – it’s important to test various placements, designs, and copy of your CTAs to maximize your conversion rate. In terms of placement, start experimenting with the following three CTA positions.



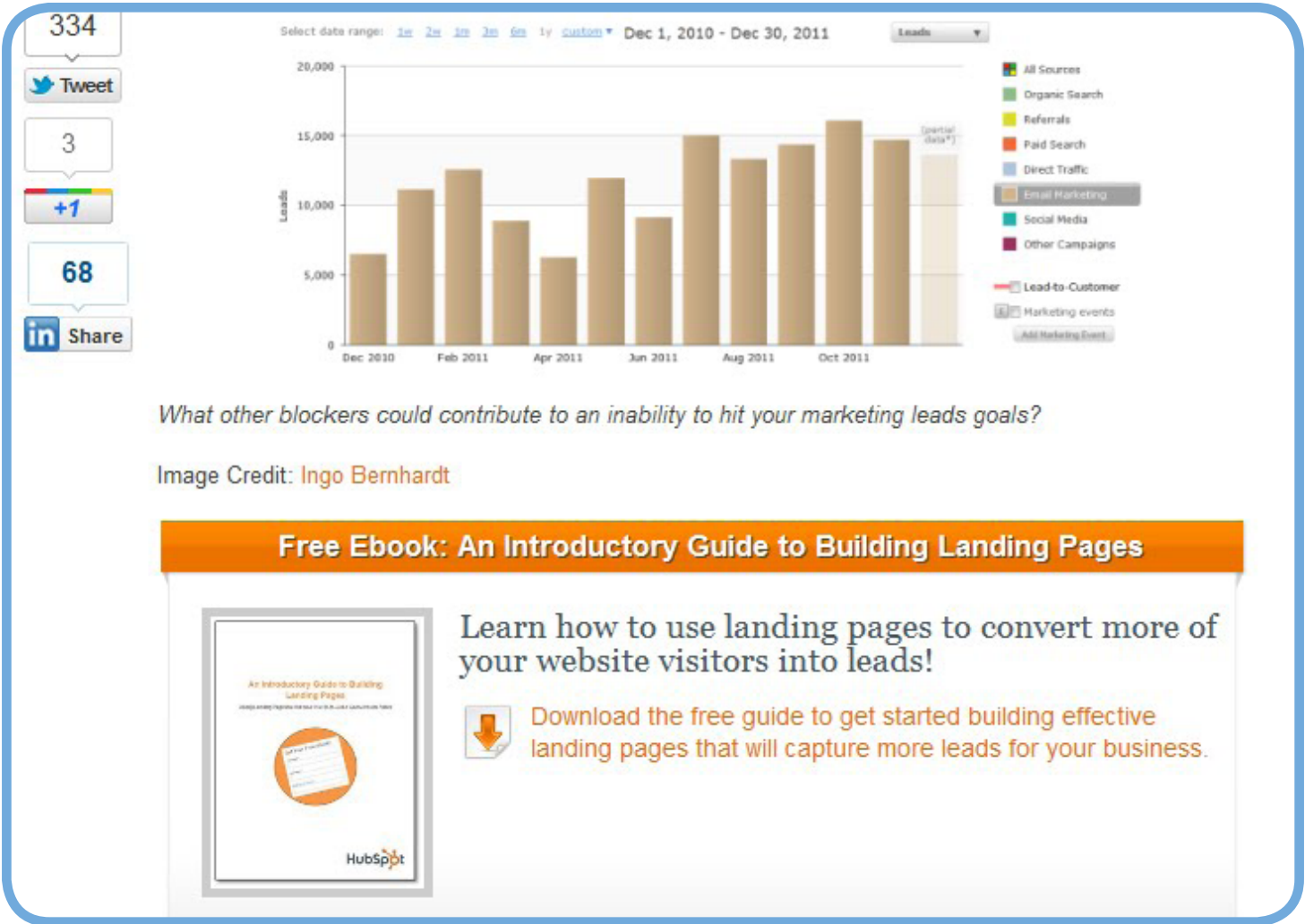
Because all blogs are different, it’s important to test various placements, designs, and copy of your CTAs.

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## AT THE END OF A BLOG POST

The online equivalent of calling a lead within minutes of conversion, a CTA at the end of a post that is relevant to the topic of the article will capture blog readers at their peak of interest and can dramatically increase your chances of generating business blog leads (see image below).



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## TOP BAR AND/OR SIDE BAR

Placement of these CTAs are helpful in capturing leads who may not be reading a specific blog post but are merely scanning your blog as a whole. They should be more visually-oriented and include your top, more general content offers that are applicable to the majority of your blog's readers and audience as a whole.

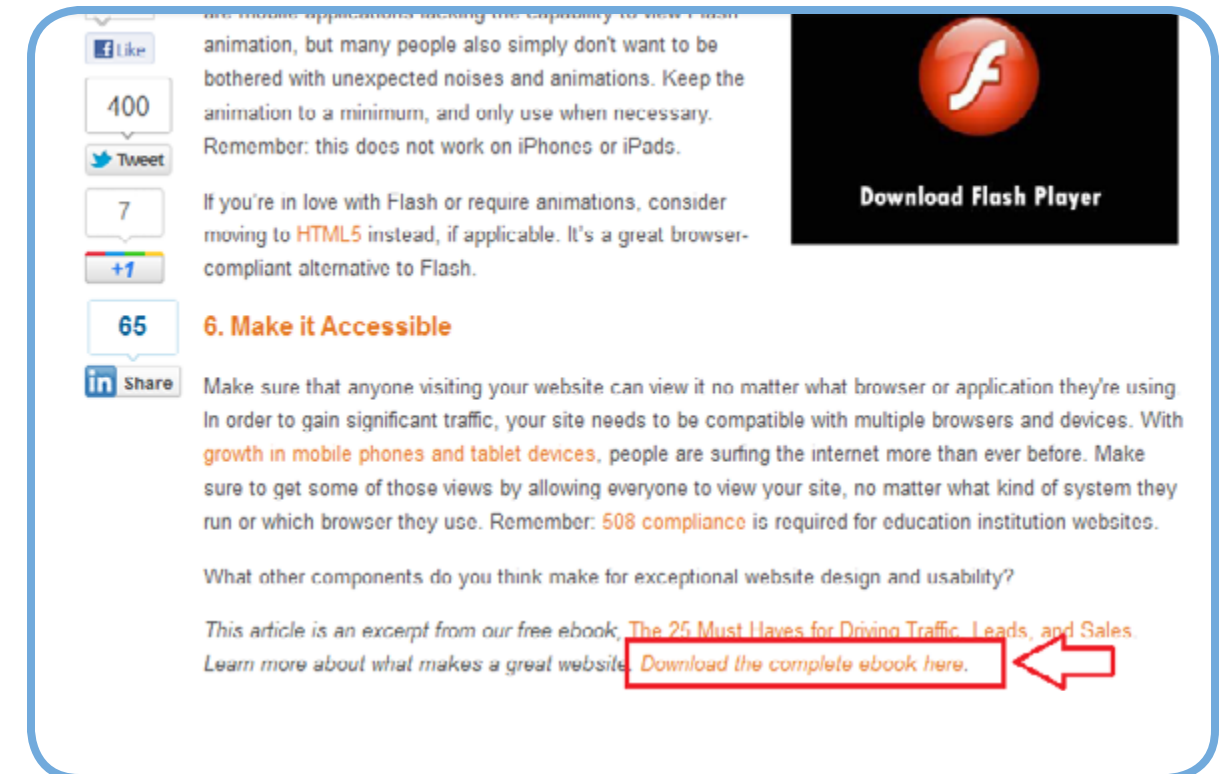


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## ANCHOR TEXT LINKS

You may already be linking to other articles or outside resources within the body of your blog articles, but you can also sprinkle in anchor text links to some of your content offers related to that post's topic. Use these links to direct readers to landing pages with a relevant offer as a way to help supplement lead generation.



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## MISTAKE 12

# FAILING TO PROMOTE CONTENT IN SOCIAL MEDIA

## WHAT'S THE MISTAKE

You've launched a business blog and are publishing articles on a regular basis, yet you're not taking advantage of the power of social media to promote your blog content and increase your readership and subscriber base.

## WHY IT HURTS

By not promoting your blog content via social networks and social media sites, you are missing an opportunity to reach a large audience of readers who may be interested in your content but don't even know it exists. If you're putting a lot of time and effort into your blog but none into promotion, you're squandering your blog's potential.

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## EASY FIX

Spend more time building your reach in social media and promoting your content there. If you don't have the time to promote your content, scale back on the amount of content you're creating to allow yourself some more time to promote existing content.

## CREATE A PRESENCE

Don't have a Facebook business page, Twitter account, LinkedIn company page, or Google+ business page for your company? [Create your accounts](#) today!

## EXPAND YOUR REACH

Promoting content via your presence in social media is only beneficial if you have a following. Spend time on increasing your following, and the number of people you reach with your content promotion will increase dramatically.

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## SHARE LINKS TO BLOG CONTENT IN SOCIAL MEDIA

Tweet links and post content to Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and other social media sites your audience populates. (Expedite this process by connecting your blog to your Twitter and Facebook accounts with tools like [Twitterfeed](#) so new blog content is automatically shared).

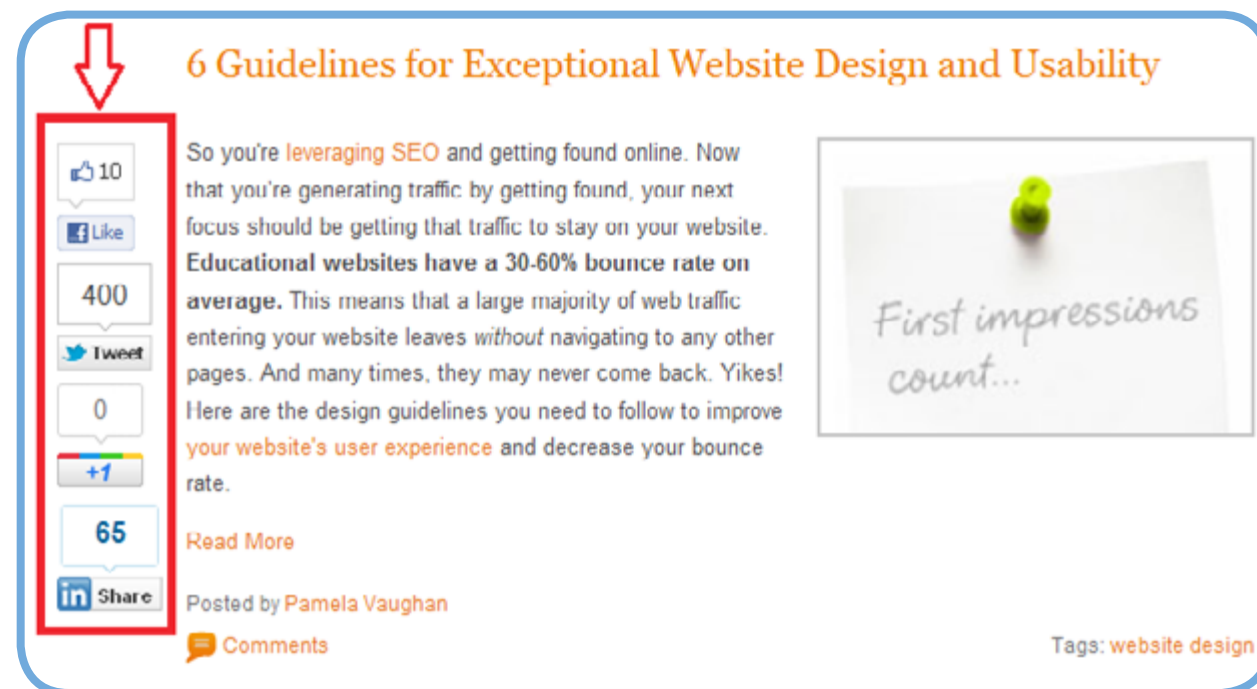
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## MAKE SOCIAL SHARING EASY

As mentioned earlier in the ebook, you should be adding social sharing buttons to every blog article to encourage your readers to share your content with their networks, too. Your readers, who each have their own, individual reach, can serve as powerful evangelists for your content.



## DON'T STOP AT NEW CONTENT

If you're regularly publishing content, chances are you have a lot of older pieces of content at your disposal. Don't stop at only promoting your brand new content. Consider sharing evergreen content in social media, too. Just because an article isn't necessarily "new," doesn't mean it's not new to many of your readers.

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### MISTAKE 13

# IGNORING BLOG ANALYTICS





# WHAT'S THE MISTAKE

You're blogging away, but you haven't stopped to analyze your blog's success or to think about whether your efforts are paying off.

## WHY IT HURTS

Analytics can give you valuable insight into the success of your blog and help justify your efforts to your boss and management team. They can also be helpful in determining which topics, titles, and types of articles are working – or not working – for your blog's audience. By failing to analyze your blog's effectiveness, you're ignoring information and data that can take your blog to the next level and increase its effectiveness.

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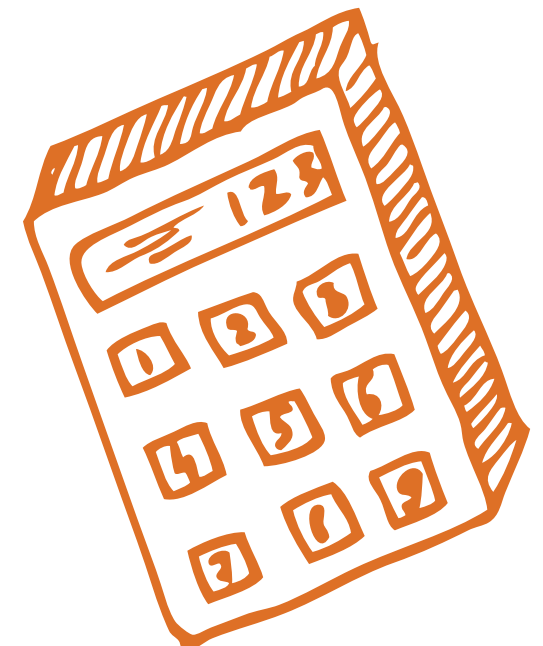


# EASY FIX

Pay regular attention to analytics so you're aware of how your blog is performing. Depending on your blog's goals, you may want to focus on different metrics. The following several blog metrics can help measure your blog's success.

## MONTHLY VISITORS

Measuring the number of monthly visitors your blog receives can help you determine its reach. It might also be helpful to break this number down further to determine where your visitors are coming from (e.g. social media, search engines, direct traffic, etc.).



## TRAFFIC-DRIVING KEYWORDS

You can also measure your blog's reach by tracking the number of keywords that are driving traffic to your blog and noticing if those keywords are drawing more traffic over time.

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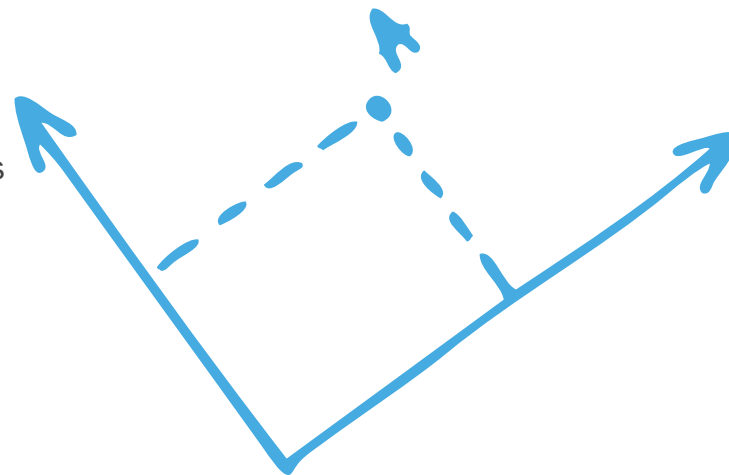
## BLOG SUBSCRIBERS

How many people have subscribed to your blog (via RSS and email)? This number is a great indication of your blog's stickiness, as these readers have opted in to receive your blog content regularly.



## COMMENTS GENERATED

If your blog posts are generating few comments, this is a sign that your blog lacks engagement and interaction. To increase engagement, try asking questions within your articles to encourage dialogue. You can also use blog comments for qualitative feedback. Do you notice a pattern in which certain article topics or types of posts are generating particularly positive or negative comments? How can you apply what you've learned when creating future blog content?



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## PAGE VIEWS

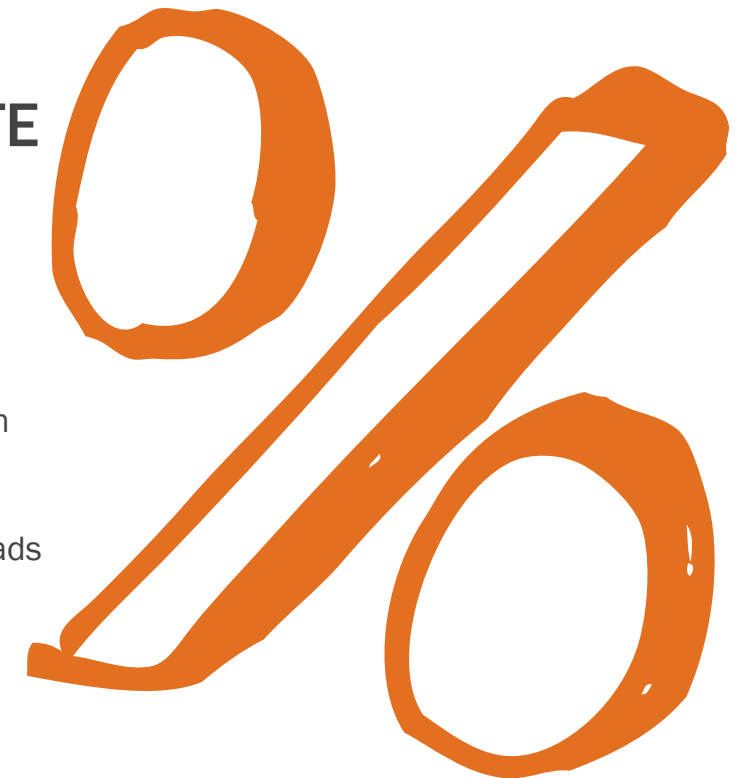
Are certain articles generating more page views than others? Number of page views can give you great insight into which articles are successful and which aren't.

## SOCIAL MEDIA SHARES

Have you noticed a spike in the number of tweets, retweets, +1s, and Facebook shares of your blog content? This is also a good measure of your blog's authority.

## LEADS & CONVERSION RATE

At the end of the day, the most important metric for bloggers is how many leads – and ultimately, customers – were generated from blogging. Track conversion by determining how many of your leads originated as blog visitors.



## INBOUND LINKS

Inbound links are a great measure of your blog's authority. More inbound links to your blog content means more SEO authority for your blog.

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## MISTAKE 14

# NOT TESTING BLOG ELEMENTS

## WHAT'S THE MISTAKE

You start running your blog a certain way -- using the same design for your calls-to-action, the same formula for blog post titles, and the same blog design for months and months -- all under the assumption that it's the best way to do things. But you haven't tested any of it, so how do you know for sure?

## WHY IT HURTS

You know what they say happens when you assume...

In all seriousness, by neglecting to test various elements of your blog, you're missing valuable insights and opportunities to improve your blog's performance. Just because a certain CTA or blog design seems to be working well for you doesn't mean there's no potential for improvement. Even the simplest test can lead to major improvements.

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# EASY FIX

Test anything and everything on your blog. Just be sure you test one variable at a time so you can isolate your variables and be certain that the change occurred because of that one tweak. Furthermore, make sure your tests produce **statistically significant** results before you implement the effective changes on your blog. Here are three variables that are easy to test on your blog that can greatly improve its performance.

## 1 BLOG TITLES

Do actionable titles perform better than titles in the form of a question? Does the inclusion of numbers in titles generate more page views? Do certain words elicit greater or fewer views? Try different methods of structuring your blog titles to see which resonates with your audience best.



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## 2 CALLS-TO-ACTION

There are quite a few variables you can test in terms of your blog's calls-to-action, including placement, size, format, color, and language. Test them all with the goal of maximizing the click-through rates of your blog's calls-to-action. More click-throughs will likely lead to more conversions!

## 3 BLOG DESIGN/LAYOUT

How does your blog's design and layout impact its performance? Are visitors turned off by too much sidebar clutter? Are the colors and visual elements making readers less likely to click on your top banner calls-to-action? Are they finding it difficult to locate your blog's 'subscribe' button? Test different versions of your blog's design and layout to optimize for views and leads.

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## MISTAKE 15

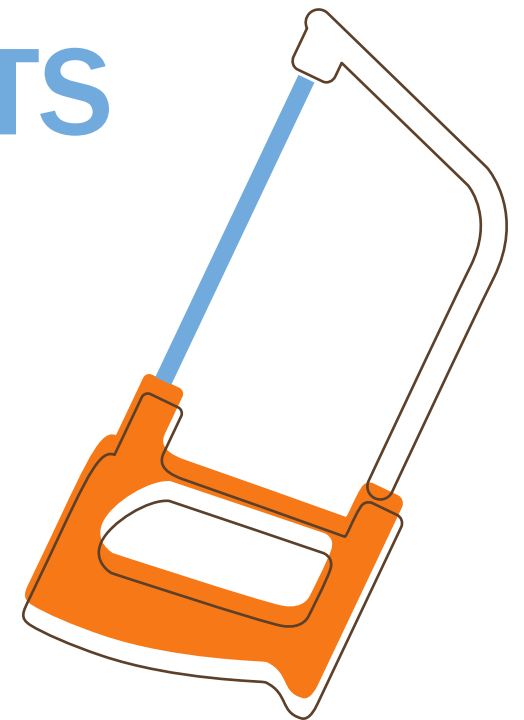
# EXPECTING OVERNIGHT SUCCESS

## WHAT'S THE MISTAKE

You just started blogging, aren't seeing any significant results, and consider abandoning your blog.

## WHY IT HURTS

Giving up on your blog means you'll be missing out on a valuable opportunity for lead generation and new customers.



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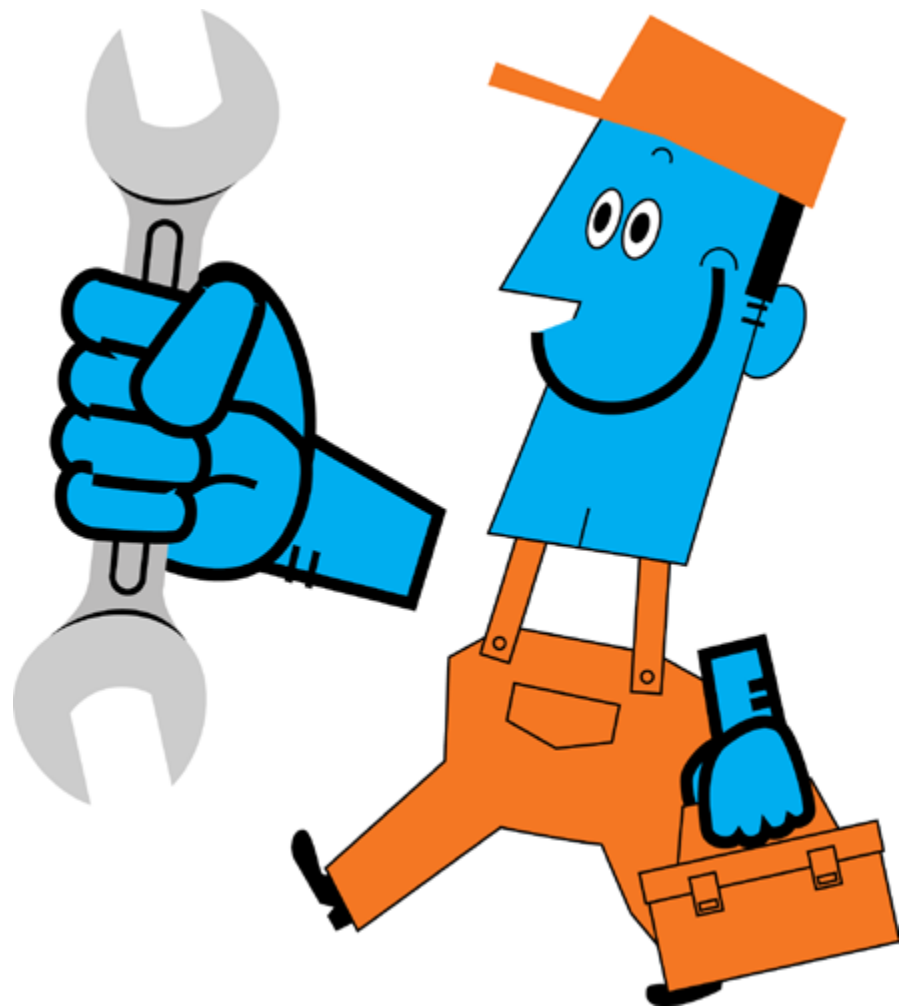


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## EASY FIX

Don't give up! Building a successful blog takes time, effort, and commitment. If you've read this entire ebook, hopefully you're walking away with some action items that have the potential to improve your blog's performance. Spend time taking the steps outlined in this ebook to tweak your blog and fix its mistakes, and stay dedicated!

Good luck!



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“This ebook is your checklist for fixing HIPAA bloopers.”



Whether you're currently making 2, 10, or all 15 of these business blogging mistakes, it never hurts to conduct a regular audit of your blog and its performance to check for weaknesses and identify opportunities for improvement.

Use this ebook as a checklist to make sure you're staying on top of blogging best practices and can be at the ready to fix any major blogging bloopers that sneak up on you. Before you know it, you'll be a blogging ninja who generates tons of valuable traffic, leads, and customers from your business blog.



# START FIXING YOUR MEDICAL COMMUNICATION MISTAKES

Talk to our communications consultant today, which includes a look at your current needs and our suite of communications tools.



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