



How to Write an EFFECTIVE BLOG POST SERIES

BloggingConcentrated.com

How do we write a book about “how to write an effective blog post series” and at the same time say “there is no should?”

The problem with “should” isn’t that there aren’t general guidelines and best practices, but that for many people “should” becomes law. There is not one single program that works for everyone. But there is insight gained from the knowledge of others. Combine that with your own knowledge of your audience and their desires and you have the makings of success.

So let’s study what makes a truly effective blog post series AND YOU add that extra special thing that makes people love you.

How is the book organized?

There is much overlap from one of these paragraphs to the other. But we’ve decided to break it into 3 sections:

1. Structure: Planning the Series
2. Voice: Writing the Series
3. Promotion: Sharing the Series

Structure

Goal Achievement

The most important part of the entire process is to determine the goal of series. Are we trying to sell a product? Create conversation? Impress a sponsor? Grow the list? Promote a service?

Without a goal we're just writing to write and that is the opposite of business building. If we're going to spend all this time, let's do it with purpose and a goal for the reader in mind. With that goal in hand, we'll be able to craft the voice and words to move the reader to action.

You can see in these two examples that the goal of that author is conveyed in the post. In this first one you can see the article was designed to attract people interested in process improvement:

No matter how much content you create or where you deploy your content, driving revenue is the ultimate goal with any publisher. Interactive content is proving to be an increasingly valuable tool in many publishers' revenue tools arsenal.

Do you currently have a scalable and repeatable process in place to help you drive revenue? Could you improve upon your current process? [Let SnapApp show you how you can start or improve your current process.](#)

In the finale of our 'Blueprint For Success' series, we will be discussing how to best measure the success of your native advertising efforts.

 Like { 3 }  Tweet { 14 }  +1 { 2 }  Share { 8 }  Submit

And in this second the goal is list building:

If you haven't subscribed and would like finding joy and this series to come directly to your inbox simply click ->>[Subscribe to finding joy by Email](#) (it's a two step process – make sure to confirm via the email sent to you). And please take time to visit many of the other wonderful 10 Day series

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Mapping the Series

With the goal in mind, let's map out the entire series. Each post should support the final end goal. Since readers will be finding these posts without necessarily having read the first one, we'll need to map out the series so each can stand on its own.

Topics that require the reader to take actions, like how to posts, should include the full table on instruction therein. No one wants to take apart a toaster one Monday only to find out that the next step won't be released for another week.

Speaking of timing, our best advice for viral momentum is to hold your series to a maximum of 5 days and to publish it over the course of one week. If we are writing with the goal of our audience taking an action, we'll lose too many people over the weekend to make that effective.

Keeping the series to a one week time frame builds momentum, keeps a reader's interest and gets them excited about taking action before the often finality of a weekend break.

Mapping out our posts enables us to plan our cross promotion as well. While the blog posts will likely get traction the week they are published, the real value is the traffic they continue to get over the long haul. And while the links to the other series posts aren't live during the week of promotion, we need to think through how the series will link within itself once it is complete.

Interlinking the Posts

The entire "linking" structure is a pain in the butt the week of promotion. Typically it looks like this:

Tying Together the Blog Post Series

- 1st Post
 - Create your 1st post
- 2nd Post
 - Create your 2nd post (linking to 1st)
 - Update 1st post (and link to the 2nd)
- 3rd Post
 - Create your 3rd post (and link to the 1st and the 2nd)

That clearly gets a bit more cumbersome at the 4 and 5 post level. But a post lives forever, so attention to how you link the posts together to support each other and provide the reader great segues is important.

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There is great power in interlinking the posts. But, as always, determine that it makes sense and that you are not simply driving traffic away from your series and thus losing momentum. Always look at the goals (from the first section) that you have for your series. You, at this point, should know the funnel and trajectory that you want your readers to take while they work through your series.

Linking through copywriting

You can foreshadow and preview the next post (or posts) within your series. Foreshadowing is often covert - meaning you don't come out specifically and share details about what you're talking about, but rather structure your writing in such a way that your reader is prepped and wondering what is next.

Previewing of the next post would be much more direct. That would be the end sentence of "come back tomorrow to learn the top tricks of spring gardening and why vermiculite is a clay soil gardeners friend." You could foreshadow this same topic by talking about different soil types and discussing the needs for strategies to deal with it.

Use them both. Save the preview for obvious moments and at the end of the day's post and work the foreshadowing in throughout your text. Always refer back to your overall structure and them for your path and purpose. In fact, in that structure you can determine how, when, and where you'll add these elements. Foreshadowing is anticipating the next question that your reader might have and why the next post will be the answer to that question.

Oh. . . and when you mention other posts it's best to leave out references to time as the posts will live forever. There is no real reason to say "yesterday's post was about. . ." since you don't know the frequency nor the time when your readers will read your series. Instead refer to previous sections as simply that or chapters or other day titles (ie. "as we stated in our chapter on. . .").

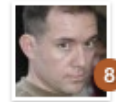
This is also a great time and way to add people to your email list. It's an organic, non spammy way to simply remind people to join your email list so that you don't miss a day within your series. Or skein. (Unless, of course, your goal is something different)

Here are some examples of ways sites have created linking within:

In my series about "Making Money with Google AdSense" Leslie Samuel's team created "chapter links" at the top of each post linking to the others.

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How to Use Your AdSense Dashboard To Make More Money – Making Money With Google AdSense (Part 3 of 3)



29 November

CATEGORIES: [MAKING MONEY ONLINE](#)



[Part 1](#) | [Part 2](#) | **Part 3**



Did you know that you could make money with the

In this example the author was quite a bit more overt about the nature of the series and how to reach the “Index Post” for the entire series.

in Start

Make Money Blogging: Big Business and Corporate Blogs

[This is a part of the [Make Money Blogging Series](#).]

This might not sound too glamorous at first but



This site uses the end of the post to highlight the other blog posts in the series. And you can see in this example that the series isn’t over yet. The final two points listed are not yet live links, but are rather titles of to-be-written posts:

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Be sure to drop by tomorrow to read about the next blog post style in our Blog Posts Made Easy series, the ever popular "list post."

- [Intro Simple 4 Step Blog Post Formula](#)
- [Repost Post](#)
- [Contact Post](#)
- [List Post](#)
- [Regular Feature Post](#)

Listly

Another option for cross-promoting posts is to use Listly. With Listly you can create an embed an unfinished list at the end of your blog posts. At the end of Series Post 1 embed a Listly list. Then when you write the 2nd in the series, add it to your Listly list and it will automatically show up at the bottom of the first post. Keep embedding the list and adding links to it and all the related posts will show up at the bottom. Presto!

Voice

Now that you've committed to writing your series one of your most powerful assets is your own voice and branding. Sure you'll find other bloggers who have written series and posts on the same topic, but you need to remember what you bring to the table. Your perspective is unique, your structure yours, and your voice is what your readers have come to love and respect.

This section is all about making your voice stronger and providing some options to make your series stand out. But, remember just as we stated in the beginning and as with everything you need to run these ideas through the filter of what makes your site awesome. Make sure that your series is written in your voice and structure.

Each of your posts within your series should have the power to stand alone. Why is this important? You don't know where and what posts people will land on your page so you need to make the content compelling enough to stand on its own AND that the content makes sense. Here are some suggestions for making your voice stand out.

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Naming the Series

Have you considered calling your series something other than a series? What about choosing a name like trilogy, course, manual, skein (that's pretty cool), chapter, phase, catalog, bulletin, brief, collection or more? Don't limit yourself to just the phrase "Blog Series". An interesting title for this collection of posts certainly can draw more attention, and more traffic, to your work.

Now, make sure that the series title makes sense and doesn't leave too much room for conjecture about the series goal. Make a title and consider a powerful subtitle for graphics (or the description part of facebook or pinterest images).

Titles

Don't overlook the title of your series. Titles are very powerful as they are the reason most people opt to read the next line, open your link, or click through on Facebook or other social media sites. In fact, according to CopyBlogger 8 out of 10 people will read your title and not click through to read the rest. This is your opportunity to hook your potential readers and give them a reason to stay.

Now, when considering a title for your series remember the goal of the series. Does your series provide an outcome for your readers? What questions does it answer? Are you going to give them resources to move from point a to point b? These questions are the questions that your title should answer. In fact, if you can, brainstorm with some blogger friends about your title and the effectiveness of the title in communicating the goal of your series.

For you to determine on your own, should your title include reference that it is part of a series or not? Will your subject be helped by the concept?

Images

In a series Chris Brogan wrote he purposefully used "old time gas station photos" from Flickr's Creative Commons in each post of the series to give them a similar look and feel.

The images that your series use should all be reflective of the message of the series. That does not mean that the images need to be all the same. However, the images should all make sense as part of the series. Often times images can be used to enhance and solidify the text by offering a visual clue that cements the points made.

Images don't have to always have an immediate and obvious connection. Sometimes there is power in using an image that makes the reader pause and reflect a bit. These esoteric images work best when you are writing a series that is content and mindset based strategy. Yet, other times, there should be a direct relationship between the images and the text. For instance, if you're providing a five day series about frosting amazing cupcakes then your images should probably be reflective of the steps taken.

Look at images as a way to draw your reader through the text and as a way to break up the text to keep interest, intrigue, and momentum.

Finally, don't overlook the power in adding in images that add you and personality to your text. One of the most powerful marketing tools that you have is the ability to create an emotional connection with your reader. Maybe, going back to the cupcake frosting example, you show an image of you frosting these cupcakes or the mess behind you or how your little one picks at the frosting. These little bits of surprise in your copy can truly make your readers become fans. And, in fact, sometimes adding in a teaser or element of surprise in your images each day can be the very thing that some readers return for.

Using Guest Writers

You can also consider adding in guest posters and experts. Is there a series that you're interested in writing but don't have all the knowledge? Adding guest posts and experts can give you more credibility (and increase) your reach with your readers. But, again, make sure that it fits your brand, your voice, and your overall arc for the series. Maybe you don't have a guest for every day of the series, but chose a day/topic for the guest author to come and share their perspective or point of view.

For example, if you're doing a series on spring gardening you could do a section on gardening in different zones and then pull in regional "experts" to share their gardening wisdom. You'll gain cool perspective, like don't plant until after May 15 for those of you who live in a climate like Minnesota, for your readers. This will also add to the wealth of knowledge shared and will help in promotion of your series.

Above everything keep your voice consistent. The best way to do this is to look at your plan and arc for your series and make sure that each additional post reflects the overall structure of the series within each day.

Promotion

Preselling the series


The most effect way to promote your series is to begin to presell the series in the weeks prior to launching it. Consider writing an entire post discussing the series, getting people to opt-in to your email so they don't miss the series, creating images for the series, sharing it on facebook or on your sidebar as well. In fact, you can also link to your series at the end of blog posts as well getting your readers excited about this series.

In this example on LinkedIn.com, you can see they created a page housing links to all the posts in the series. . . more of a collection than a series (but useful to look at). While this looks more complete at the end, it is a great way to drum up interest in the beginning.

LinkedIn Official Blog

Recent PostsPopular PostsTopics

LinkedIn Speaker Series Articles




The Disciplined Pursuit of Less: LinkedIn Speaker Series with Gregory McKeown

Brian Rumao

May 22, 2014

Editor's note: This was originally published on LinkedIn by Brian Rumao. Are you struggling to find enough time in the day? Wondering how to prioritize among several competing priorities? At LinkedIn, one of our mantras is "focus". In fact, our CEO Jeff Weiner has even made it an acronym, shortened to FCS: Fewer things done better, Communicating the right information at the right time to the right person, and Speed and quality of decision-making. So we were honored to recently...

Topics: [LinkedIn Speaker Series](#)



Redefining The Meaning of Success: LinkedIn Speaker Series with Arianna Huffington

Rachael Holley

May 12, 2014

For a series that Rachel wrote several years ago Findingjoy.net gained a great deal of subscribers when the series was presold at the end of a different high traffic post. Here's the example of how that high traffic post ended written one week prior to the series start:

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Are you interested in joining me for a journey in intentional parenting? Starting next Monday I'll be beginning a series called 10 Days of Intentional Parenting. {Click [10 Days of Intentional Parenting](#) to start at Day One.} I'm aiming to put together a journal for each day for you all and then I'm working on some activities to go along with each day. Nothing too hard, but hopefully each day provides you with some wonderful springboard moments to examine your journey as a mother and to then cultivate some intentional moments with your children. If you'd like finding joy and the 10 Days Series to come to your inbox simply click [Subscribe to finding joy by Email](#)

You can also use your site or a Facebook page to further discuss each day's series. This is a great time to build up traction on the social media sites which support your site. You can use your hashtag to create possibilities for your readers to join in via Instagram, Twitter, or Facebook. But, as with everything, make sure that the social side of promotion fulfills your ultimate goal of the series - whether it is building your list or making sales.

Image Marketing

Begin to create images that link to your series. Create an image that will serve as your series landing page - similar to the cover of an ebook. Add these images to the end of posts as a call to action or consider creating a pinterest board specifically dedicated to this series. You can also create a hashtag for tracking of the series. This is extremely effective if each day of the series has a call to action for your reader.



When designing graphics for your series always use consistent branding. Don't switch up fonts or overall design aesthetic. Now, this being said, the images shouldn't be clones of each other with DAY 2, DAY 3, etc. . . written on them, but rather create images that have a solid brand

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throughout. Ways to do this would be to create a logo for the series, use a similar graphic/picture, and to use the same font and structure of text placement.

Internal Promotion

Promotion doesn't always mean to those outside your site either, putting your images into the sidebar of your site to drive your own visitors to the series posts is well played as well. The problem with doing that is you take up valuable revenue generating space in the sidebar to move the audience to something that is often unproven.

Using the Sidebar Ladder (<http://sidebarladder.com>) plugin however, once someone sees your link to the series and clicks it, that advertisement can forever be gone from the site for that visitor and monetization put back in its place.

If you're using a plugin like nRelate or YARPP you should be able to configure it so that only the other series posts (or strategically related posts) show up in the "related posts" part of the site at the bottom of the post.

Networking

Sometimes it is beneficial to work within a blogging matrix to help promote your series. Just like you looked to experts for different topics where you weren't the expert working with others can be an excellent way to increase reach and to promote your work to a new audience. Look for other writers within your field and work together to create series where you can interlink to them as well at the end or at least promote them. But remember, doing this will drive traffic from your site so always have a clear call to action prior to the end.

Conclusion

Don't write a blog post series just because. It takes too much time away from things that could really grow your business. But if you can create an effective series with real goals and cross-linking to move people, you can gain a lot more traction than single posts do alone.

Serve. Serve. Serve.