

TIPS FOR THE SOCIAL MARKETER CHEAT SHEET

BLOGGING

Blogs play a key role in educating prospects for lead generation and nurturing. Many of your most qualified leads—whether you’ve identified them or not—are readers of your blog. Your blog can be one of the most powerful marketing assets – if you stick to the topics your prospects and customers will find most compelling and avoid the hard sell. A blog adds a human touch, especially when a blog has several contributors and it also lets you focus on your prospect’s agenda instead of yours. It can be a great idea to try and get participation from leaders in your organization. Not only will this diversify your blog content, but it will also bring more visibility to your key thought leaders. Additionally, a blog is great to make sure you keep up with your content marketing mix, as the format is more conducive to quick, easily digestible posts.

Blogs boost your organic search engine by adding pages to your site and encouraging inbound links. Blogs give you a greater chance of showing up in the right search engine results. They also give other sites a reason to link to you, increasing the number of inbound links and boosting your search engine rankings.

Blogging Techniques

- Establish a corporate blogging strategy that includes overall goals and success metrics
- Identify and recruit blog contributors in your organization
- Blog with your keywords in mind—at Marketo we use a Top Keyword spreadsheet to help guide our efforts
- Link to your blog from other pages on your corporate website
- Respond to blog comments within 24 hours and make sure all of your bloggers are aware of and abide by this rule
- Remember your content mix—include content that is diverse and speaks to all places in the buying cycle
- Encourage your readers to participate by including calls to action at the end of each blog. At Marketo, we often ask readers to participate and answer questions
- Make sure your content is easily digestible for your readers by including bullets or top 10 lists

5 Tips to Write a Killer Blog Post

1. Make a list. One of the simplest B2B blog post concepts can be the most effective: list posts. Think “25 Must-Read Email Marketing Resources,” “15 Influential Leaders in Search Engine Optimization” or “30 Can’t Miss Social Media Conferences.” List posts are effective because they are easily scanned. Plus, readers know exactly what they’re getting simply by viewing the headline – influencing many to share the content with their social networks even before clicking through themselves.

List posts can also effectively attract inbound links. For example, with the “15 Influential Leaders in Search Engine Optimization” post, thought leaders profiled are likely to link back to the post from their own blog or corporate website.

2. Write the unexpected. Tips and checklists are popular blog formats, but to create a post that truly stands out, write a reverse tips or checklist post. For example, instead of “10 Ways to Improve Deliverability on Your Next Email Campaign,” try writing “Top 10 Ways to Get Flagged as Spam.” When it all boils down, both posts offer similar takeaways: how to ensure your emails reach subscribers’ inboxes. The reverse post concept may be even more successful at attracting readers and inbound links, thanks to the “shock” value.
3. Play off current events. Relating B2B blog content back to current events can help make posts relevant, timely and interesting. For example, an event planning software company could leverage a news item about the Summer Olympics on its blog. A post could discuss the planning element of the large-scale event, and tie in the company’s business offerings.
4. Leverage someone else’s thoughts. Thought leader interviews make great content for B2B blogs. At Marketo, we have used this concept on many occasions where top influential have provided insight on a range of B2B marketing topics. Leveraging the insight and opinions of respected industry leaders not only provides interesting, relevant content for readers; it can also position your B2B organization as a thought leader.
5. Use stats, poll results or other research. Research-driven posts – whether based on an in-depth research report or a less formal reader poll – are another killer element for B2B blogs. B2B organizations can leverage their own research, or that of other groups. The benefits of research-driven posts are two-fold: First, bite-sized statistical information is simple and quick to read. Secondly, it’s easily sharable via social networks.

Blog Commenting

Blog commenting is underrated—few companies recognize that engaging and commenting on relevant blogs achieves marketing goals and therefore do not realize its full potential as a marketing tool. It's a great platform for discussion and an engaging method of marketing.

Increases readership: Find leads who are looking for you, but just haven't found you yet. Some people just need that link to click to your website when they aren't actively searching for it, and you can meet them halfway by providing information they want and a link to one of your related blog posts.

Heightens brand awareness: Make your brand top-of-mind. Leads are doing research on the internet for your product, so be where they are, which won't always be on your website. Once they see that you have been commenting on blogs with great information, they'll start to wonder what your company does and how your company can fix their problems.

Strengthens relationships: Customers may be commenting on others' blogs, which is a perfect time to begin a relationship with them by engaging them in a discussion. If customers are the ones writing the blog posts about you, just drop them a simple thanks! They will appreciate it, and you will benefit.

Enhances your SEO: Your blog comments will generally include keywords that leads are searching for. The more you comment, the more likely your lead will find you. However, be careful: it is not a best practice to load your comment with keywords and a link—this is frowned upon. Write a comment that continues the discussion, and if a link is relevant, post it! You are doing them a favor. Additionally, if the blog is considered credible in the eyes of search engines, you can possibly increase your position in organic search results as more people click on your website and therefore increase visits to your site.

Identifies you as an expert: Leads are looking for information. If you can provide what they're looking for, awesome! You just won points in their book. Now they'll be looking to you for answers. However, comment with caution! Comment and engage with prospects and customers on blogs with topics similar to yours, but be careful not to merely advertise your blog or products. Instead, further a discussion and spark their interests in the topic with your expertise, and if you have a relevant article or blog post that covers a similar topic, add a link to your post if you think they'd appreciate it. Chances are, if they're interested in what you have to offer, they will religiously follow what you have to say and share that information with their colleagues.

Quick Tip

A key thing to keep in mind is ensuring that your blog content is always relevant to your audience. Make sure you are focusing on pain points and that your posts are always relatable. Additionally, if you can tie in something emotional that will really strike a chord with your prospect, he or she will continue to come back for more insight.