

SO YOU THINK YOU CAN BLOG



Thinking of starting a blog? Read this first.

BY NAREN ARULRAJAH

Blogging is an established way to develop a powerful web presence. It can serve as a persuasive communication channel to guide, inspire, and support the community, including loyal customers, colleagues, and others, as well as strengthen your reputation as an expert in your field.

Before you start blogging, ask yourself why you want to be a blogger. You may wish to promote your cosmetic practice or build a strong web presence so Google lists you at the top of its searches or you may seek to share knowledge with patients and visitors alike. There is no wrong answer. Recognizing your own intentions will help you understand your key performance indicators (KPIs) and realistically measure the success of your blog down the road. (KPIs are quantifiable metrics that put the results of your blogging efforts in numbers.)

Blogging takes time, effort, and clear intentions to attract and engage visitors. The average 500-word blog post will typically take a couple of hours of your time. Organize your schedule so you are able to post constantly and consistently at least for the first year.

Bloggers often cover intriguing topics as a series, published in parts, so they can draw in readers one absorbing blog post at a time. Alternatively, you could pick a new topic every month and invite your readers to share their favorite subjects. Pay attention to the title of your blog

entry. The average person spends less than a second to decide whether to read a blog or not, solely based on the title. Make yours count.

- Your voice should be authentic and genuine when blogging.
- Your readers are likely to treat every word you write as “expert advice.” Support your blogs with factual evidence, such as statistics (with cited sources), links to other credible sources, etc.
- Make your blog colorful and exciting with “guest blogs.” Reach out to experts in your community or even someone credible from your audience and ask them to contribute when and where it makes sense.
- Even the cleverest blogs need to be actively promoted until they establish a loyal base of readers. Promote yours across your social media platforms, on your business website, and even on other bloggers’ sites. (You could even return this favor by inviting them to write a guest blog for you.)

After you have been blogging for a while, check your analytics. Google Analytics is one of the best data sources. It can tell you the number of people who visited a page, how long they stayed, how many bounced (left without taking any action), and much more.

To measure the social performance of a post, you can also use third-party software, a WordPress plugin, or custom-coded snippet to count shares.

Once you see how you are doing, you can tweak your blogging strategy accordingly. ■

DO THIS NOW

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NAREN ARULRAJAH

- President and CEO of Ekwa Marketing, a complete internet marketing company that focuses on SEO, social media, marketing education, and the online reputations of dermatologists and plastic surgeons.
- With a team of 180+ full time marketers, www.ekwa.com helps doctors who know where they want to go, get there by dominating their market and growing their business significantly year after year.
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