Is Professional Blogging the Career for You?

You keep up with current events. You are passionate about your interests. You enjoy participating in discussions and making your point of view understood. Web logs, identified internationally as “Blogs,” have given traditional methods of communication a run for their money!

Forget Stereotypes! Make Blogging Make you Money!

Remarkable success in the world of business has catapulted the Blog’s reputation from that of a personal diary to their rightful place upon the pedestal of exciting internet careers. Bloggers have the opportunity to work for themselves, on their own schedule, and from any location with an internet connection. As is the case in all forms of business, hard work and talent will present a Blogger with handsome returns. So now that the prospect of a lucrative Blogging career has got your attention, you need to consider seriously whether becoming a Professional Blogger is the right choice for you.

Blogging as a Business

Blogging is a form of freelance work, and when opening your own small businesses, it can feel like there is a lot at stake. First thing’s first: you need a solid plan and a budget *before* you act. Do your goals include writing blogs for the long term as a profitable hobby or as a profession? Where are your start-up costs coming from? Are you prepared to earn another form of income while your new blogging business is in its first stages? There is a distinct possibility that professional blogging and freelancing may not earn the money you expected, and almost

certainly not from the beginning. This is not something to be discouraged about because the bulk of freelancers and entrepreneurs earn money on the side until it is no longer necessary. After all, the American Dream was not built on getting something for nothing; it's about seeing opportunity in dead ends, working hard, and reaping the rewards!

There are necessary costs associated with freelancing as a professional Blogger that you can be creative with. Freelancer's are ahead of the pack straight out of the gate because they can take advantage of the space they live in and convert a basement, dining room or bedroom into an in-home office. Not having to lease a business space on top of financing your own housing is easier on the piggy bank.

Essential Tools for Successful Blogging

The most absolutely necessary tools are a computer with a word processor (not everyone can have perfect spelling and grammar all of the time), an internet connection, and reading material; particularly current newspapers, magazines, and books. If your purse strings are really tight, do not be shy about visiting your local library and booking time to use their computers and internet connection. Most libraries offer this service for free or low-cost to members. Just visit or call ahead to inquire about fees and to book a workspace and internet timeslot for yourself. Prepare notes and a rough draft beforehand and bring it with you when you go. This is not a great solution because your blog-posting opportunities are restricted to that of the library's hours of operation. You might consider shopping around for communication "bundles" from your local telephone, cable and internet providers to combine services and save money.

The Secret to Writing Well

The key to writing and blogging well is to read lots! Magazine and newspaper subscriptions can be costly but you can read most print publications (e-zines) online for free. There are millions of articles published online, but it is up to you, the professional, to use discretion when conducting internet research; you owe your readers an accurate, objective point of view on your topic of choice. An often overlooked resource is that your local library may already, or may be willing, to subscribe to most papers and magazines that you could be interested in. This relies on available funding, but it never hurts to ask! Books, on the other hand, can be a costly expense. But books are worth their weight in gold and they are tax deductible if purchased for your business.

Blogging Platforms and Your Budget

Your choice of blogging platform will also affect your budget. There are countless free blogging platforms that individuals may use recreationally, for purposes such as the illustrious online diary or rant, but there are scores of serious Bloggers and professionals who have had great success with free platforms. As time passes and confidence builds, many professional Bloggers eventually turn to designing their own website. Because a personal site allows you complete creative control, this step will certainly take time (and time away from reading and writing). However, if you are not web design or programming inclined, it is worth the money to pay for professional web development services. The way your site looks and functions impacts your visitors' first impressions before they've even read a line of your text.

Choose a Domain Name you Can't Live Without!

If and when you choose to branch out and take over your own site, you will need to purchase and register your own domain name (URL) for your website (registration fees are about $7/year). There is also the cost of hosting fees to consider, and the options are shared and dedicated servers. A shared server is a cost effective solution if you do not anticipate using a great deal of bandwidth for flashy animation or high volumes of traffic. A dedicated server will cost you a bit more, but will allow you to manage several websites at a time on a single account. My advice is before you invest a great deal of time and money in developing your own web space, why not take advantage of what someone else has already developed while you learn the ropes, make mistakes, and most importantly, gain experience.

The Secret to Beating the Competition...

Consider also that when you break into any industry you immediately face competition with someone else to sell similar products and services. As such, marketing now becomes one of your biggest priorities. You are blessed if you are naturally a wonderful writer, but you are destined to go unnoticed and unpaid if you do not manage to drive traffic to your blog. There are countless marketing strategies available for all budget types, and not all of them will be right for you. Marketing yourself is a necessary expense: Advertising costs money because it works!

You will encounter other professional bloggers, talented hobby bloggers, and trained journalists. They all create content that detracts attention from your own. Invest the time to make sure your blog contains accurate, interesting details and raises thought-provoking discussions. Ranting is entertaining, but repeat visitors come because you satiate a need they have, and often it’s for information.

Not all Bloggers are experts in their fields or necessarily in the art of writing. But Experience is worth its weight in gold. If you’ve got it, flaunt it. If you don’t, give yourself the opportunity to develop it. You don’t have to be a novelist or trained copywriter; but you can take a lesson from them: be an effective communicator. Read a ton about topics that interest you. Allow yourself a ‘probation period’ to develop your research and writing skills.

Be a Good Blogger that Individuals and Businesses Turn To

Not everyone will be an internet millionaire. What happens if you are among the Bloggers this year that will not make more than a few thousand dollars trying this as a career? Do you have the time to invest in this initially, because it may take weeks, months or years before it pays off? If you truly enjoy blogging, then keep it up. Practice makes perfect. Perhaps your time has not come yet. If you have no financial motivations for blogging, there is still value in blogging regularly. Writing is cathartic. Sharing experiences and interests with family, friends, and visitors is as valuable as joining a team or a group- and you can do it on your own schedule!

Before you make it all about money, make it about being a good Blogger that individuals and businesses will turn to.

Explore an Exciting Opportunity for Income!

This article is designed to generate some self-dialogue for you to consider your own cost/ benefit analysis of starting your own Blogging home business, not to talk you into or discourage you from exploring a new and exciting opportunity for income. I've outlined the importance of knowing yourself and your goals. You are aware now of a few potential drains on your resources and of good ways to minimize initial expenses so that you can give yourself a head start in the Blogging industry. Because there is so much earning potential and an equal potential to go bust, be sure you make an educated decision before starting up a Blogging business for yourself.

If you have a blog that requires fresh content on a frequent basis, but you don't have the time or resources to dedicate to it, contact iwebwork's writing department and let us beef up your blog for you!