

WHY is blogging so important?

By Matthew A. Perosi



In the June issue of *The Retail Jeweler*, I explained that you can use storytelling as a method of marketing your website. This storytelling process is called blogging, and it's a much different type of marketing than traditional advertising. Previously, I explained technical aspects about blogging software and linking techniques, but this time I'd like to explain why blogging is such an important marketing tool and is what in professional marketing circles is a new and important part of the marketing mix: advertising, sales promotion, direct mail, personal selling, public relations and now with the development of the Internet, blogging is added to the mix.

With traditional advertisements you create it, pay for the media placement, directed to your target audience and then hope that interested customers will see and respond to your ads. On the other hand, with blogging you publish a story online that potential customers will eventually find when they search Bing or Google.



Google and Bing will read and save all the stories you publish online, although they call them "blog entries" instead of "stories." It's also common practice to say you are "posting a blog" rather than "publishing a blog," but the concept is the same and the goal is to give Google and Bing something new to read. In reality, they are not actually reading your blog entries, but rather they are simply saving your words in their database.

Blogging became an important part of the marketing mix because Google and Bing match those saved words from your blog to the phrases that people type into search. A successful match of your words to searched phrases will make your website listing appear in the Google and Bing results. That listing, in effect, becomes an advertisement for your store. Through blogging and the search process, your prospective customers see your story when they need to see it.

Depending on the blogging software you choose, and how you set it up, you have the ability to show or hide the date you posted your blog. A few years ago it was standard practice to include the posting date for your blogs, but now it seems like many blog writers are hiding the dates altogether. As it

turns out Google and Bing use a few factors to figure out when you first published your blog online, the most obvious is the posting date. They then use this date as a method of ranking your website.

Blog posts with recent dates usually rank much higher in search results than older dated posts. Likewise,

blog posts that show dates will usually outrank similar blog posts with hidden dates. Google continually recommends the "creation of new quality content," which means they want you to write and publish new stories frequently. Many jewelers can't maintain the frequency that Google recommends, so they choose to hide their publication dates.

You might have a well written engagement story published to your blog but it will still look unprofessional if nothing new was published in two years. Hiding the date only hides it from readers, not from search engines because they can read other date information from your website. The search engines' goal is to satisfy the user and they always want to make sure the user has the most up to date information. Outdated blogs usually indicate abandoned websites, a uncaring business, or businesses in financial distress. These three reasons are enough to lower the ranking of a website with an outdated blog.

There are times when it makes sense to hide the dates for your posts. When you publish educational information like the 4C's of Diamonds there is no need to include a publication date since that information won't ever go out of date; this type of information is known as "Evergreen Content."

The most successful websites have new content added weekly, or even daily. It will take a while to implement routine successful blogging, but it can be an effective and rewarding element in your marketing mix.



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