

TSDN – 035 Things You Must Know If You Want To Start A Blog?

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What is a blog?

You may have heard people talking about a blog before and perhaps you have been wondering as to what on earth is a blog. If not, then you already know what a blog is and you will agree if I say, the word blog is short form of the word weblog. Basically a blog is website which is regularly updated with new posts on daily, weekly, biweekly or in some rare awkward cases, on yearly basis.

Why should you want to start a blog?

There are many reasons why people would want to start a new blog. Some of those reasons would be boredom. One would pass some extra time by putting a line or two out there for others to read and hopefully to comment on it. In short blog writing can be done as a hobby. A lot of people have started blogs as a hobby with no particular purpose in mind.

On the other parts of the world there are people who would start a blog for business purposes. One will start a blog to promote a particular service or product, hoping that, some lonely people who have extra money would be interested in reading and perhaps end up buying what he has to sell.

Some people write blogs just to inform the public about the events that have taken place in their local communities. Basically, these people are the pain in the butt to the news agencies. Instead of waiting for tomorrow's newspaper, people will now go to Mindy's blog and read about a tornado which stole Mr Smith's car and planted it on Mrs Huckleberry's roof top, just minutes after the events. Mindy will even have a picture or video which was taken as it happened.

Some will start a blog to entertain their readers. They would post fictional stories, poems, lyrics to famous songs and more.

The reasons for starting a blog are endless.

When you have resolved to start a blog and you don't know how and where to start, this is your day to know. I am going show what you need to start a blog and how to start a blog.

1. What do you need to start a blog?

a. Idea

You need to have a good idea what your blog will be about and what do you want to achieve in the end. You need to determine what kind of a blog it will be. This will help you to know what to write about on regular basis. You may want to start a business blog, where you showcase your work. It could also be a place where your customers can actually book your services or make orders

for the product you have on offer. My blog is where my podcast episodes are found. It serves as a go to place for my podcast listeners.

Before you publish your blog, you need to ask yourself these questions:

Who is your reader? Where is your reader located? Is your blog intended for men or women? What is the current situation of your reader? Are they in business? Are they employed? What value do you bring to them? Why should they read your blog? What is the cultural background of your reader? In which language are you going to write?

Most of the time we get a temptation of wanting to speak to the whole world, but in reality, not everyone will appreciate what we have to say. It is better to focus on a specific audience to which you can bring value. So, these questions will help you to narrow down to a specific audience. They will also help you to focus on a specific niche. Once you determine the reason for your blog and the people it is intended for and the value you wish to bring your audience, you will know what to write about. You will have a good idea on what to research and then present to your readers.

b. Name Your Blog

Every blog has a name. A blog name sets it apart from other blogs in the same genre. People cannot find your blog if you refer to it as a news blog. There are thousands of news blogs in the internet. You need to give it a good name. A name could be anything. It could be “Lungisa’s Blog” or “The Weed Man” or something that is befitting and available.

c. Give It Domain Name

Your blog must have a domain name. A domain name will in most cases match the name of your blog, if it is available. For example, my domain name is: **thespokesdude.com**. It is easier for me to tell people where to find my blog. When you start a blog with hosting companies like Wordpress.com, the default domain name will be `thenameyouhavechosen.wordpress.com` and this is on their free hosting plan. In the case of my site it is `thespokesdude.wordpress.com`. This may work for you while you are starting but in the long run depending on what you wish to do with your site, it is better to buy a custom domain name. Wordpress.com at this moment charges \$18 for a custom domain name if you choose to stick with their free hosting plan.

d. Hosting Service

So you have a name and a domain name for your blog, now you need a hosting service. I currently use Wordpress.com. Wordpress.com has five different plans for blog hosting. There is a free plan which is very basic and restricted. This one is best for just getting started. There’s also a Personal Plan for just bloggers and for personal use. Then there is a Premium Plan which best for

freelancers, they also have a Business Plan which is best for small business and an E-Commerce Plan which is best for online stores. Depending on your budget and the purpose for your site, you can choose from any of these plans and begin working on your blog.

e. Internet Connect

Without an internet connection you will not be able to do what I have told you. Your blog can be started using a smartphone, a tablet or a computer. These devices must be connected to the internet.

2. Tips For Publishing Your Blog

The Frequency of your posts

It is very important to commit yourself to your blog. Decide on the frequency of your posts. This mean you need to choose whether you will be posting daily or weekly? If weekly, how many posts per week? If you decide to post on Monday, it is important that on each Monday you publish a post. Never skip an appointment with your readers. If you post on random days, your readers will not know when to expect your posts as a result they will be turned off and move on. Be consistent.

Stick to your Niche

It is important for the sake of your audience to be consistent with both the timing of your blog posts and with the content of your blog. If your blog is about gardening tips, then stick to gardening. Your readers will not appreciate it if one day instead of receiving a post on gardening, they find themselves reading about politics and the elections. Stick to your niche! Make sure that your posts are well researched and useful to your audience. This will build your credibility. You will be able to retain your current readership while receiving new readers.