

## **TSDN – 036 How to Publish Your First Blog Post?**

By

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Last week, on TSDN – 035, we defined what a blog is and we briefly discussed what you would need to start a blog and I gave you tips for publishing your blog.

Today, I will talk to you about publishing your first blog post.

When you have answered the basic questions about your blog, you should have a good idea what sort of things you should write about. For example if you are writing a sports blog, the question I would ask is, what sort of sport are you focusing on? Do you report on everything or you are reporting on a specific sporting activity? You could be writing about football (soccer) or rugby. It could be cycling or running. Maybe you'd prefer to follow and write about golf or tennis. Maybe you'd rather to swing towards baseball (pun intended).

Someone may not be so keen as to write about sports. You may perhaps be interested in gardening or fashion designing. Some people prefer to write about politics, religion, science, movies and the list goes on. Whatever one chooses to write about, it then opens doors to further choices.

Let's say I choose to write about Gardening. This subject alone is rich and broad. There is always something to write with regards to gardening. You can write about vegetable gardening and a few months later, you switch to flower gardening. You can write about grass and its variants. You can write about the problems and solutions of gardening. What about pests and solutions to that problem? What sort of tools a gardener may need to own? Various type of soils and so on and so forth. There is so much to learn and write about with regards to gardening.

Some people would prefer to just write spontaneously, as ideas come to mind. These sort of bloggers are free spirited. They write about anything and provoke readers to take a second look at life. Some prefer to post in the form of an open diary. I mean to say, they write about stuff that is taking place in their personal lives. If this confuses you, think of it as a text version of the Kardashians. Only without the Kardashian drama.

Once you make your choice and have decided on the name of your blog, domain name and a hosting service. It is time to publish your first post.

### **1. CHOOSE A THEME FOR YOUR BLOG**

Most hosting services will guide you through the process of setting up your blog. I personally recommend **Wordpress.com**. All the processes which were described in the last episode, will be easier to setup because **Wordpress.com** provides a setup wizard for you. Also during the setup process you will be given a chance to choose a theme for your blog and then customize it to your liking. There are hundreds of themes to choose from.

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If you are working on a budget, there are free themes which are perfect for getting started. There are also paid themes which allow your blog to look a little bit more professional and attractive. There are also themes which are designed for businesses and online shops. Some themes are suitable for news blogs, photographers, podcasters and much more. Choose the one that works for you. Don't worry if you end up not liking it in the future. You can totally switch to another theme at any time, without losing your content.

Having chosen and customized your theme, you are now ready to publish your first post.

## 2. CHOOSE AN ATTENTION GRABBING HEADLINE

The first thing your potential readers will see on your post is the headline. It is critical to choose a headline that will make your target audience to stop what they are doing, and pay attention to your post. If your headline is dull and unattractive, your post will be treated as something that never existed. You need to pull the readers to your post by provoking their curiosity.

This means you must have a good idea as to what would interest your potential readers. What are your readers searching for? What is it they want to know? What problems they wish to solve? Are you able to meet their expectation?

Let's say, your potential audience wishes to get out of debt and begin a journey to financial freedom. If you have ideas on how to help them improve their financial standing, you could draw their attention with these headlines: **"How to Get out of Debt and Reclaim Your Life?"**, **"How to Shame Your Creditors and Live a Debt Free Life."**, **"How to Pay Cash for Everything and Never Borrow Money Again."** There are also other headlines which are related to money and can be used to draw the attention of your readers. You can put up a line that says: **"3 Reasons Why You Are Still Poor?"**, **"4 Ways You Can Buy the Bank and Never Owe It Again."** Try something along those lines.

What about cooking. Some people may want to write about food and cooking. There are scores of people who are looking for easy recipes for easy and quick meals. Equally so, there are hundreds of blogs offering these recipes. One out of a number of things that could make a new culinary blog to stand out, is to use an outstanding headline. Pull the eyes of potential readers to your blog post. You can put up something like: **"4 Quick Recipes for Instant weight loss."** Or **"Common Colds Hate These Foods"** You can even go as wild as saying, **"If You Eat This You Will Keep the Doctor Away."** Make your posts believable even before they are actually read.

I know some of these are fictional headlines but I believe you get the idea. A great headline is the draw card for searchers to notice your blog post. You may have to do a research on what people are mostly searching for online. Knowing the questions most people ask in

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Google search, may be another way to figure out what sort of headlines to put up, in order to reach your target audience and perhaps draw their attention to your post.

### 3. STRUCTURE YOUR POST WELL

You may have a compelling headline but this is not a guarantee that your reader will stay, except when you have written a well-structured post. What may turn many readers on or off, is the readability of your blog post. For someone getting started with blogging, you don't need to worry much about the rules of grammar and other things that pertain to writing a politically correct English text document. What you need to focus on is that your ideas are easily understood by your readers. Your ideas should be well connected and they must be flowing to a certain direction. They must take the reader from the position of doubt to the place of confidence that they have found the solution to their problem.

Writing a post is like building a house. A well-structured post would have:

#### a. An Introduction

An introduction is like the front porch of a house. This is where the front door into the house is found. In the introduction you tell the reader what you are going to write about. If you flunk your introduction your reader will leave. You must have a way to hook the reader. Many bloggers use rhetorical questions to get the reader hooked and make them stay to read on some more.

A sales person who is selling a weight loss formula would open his post in this manner: **“Have you been made fun of due to the size of your body? Have you been trying to lose weight to no avail? Do you want to wear what you want without being judged? If you answered “yes” to any one of these questions, I have a solution for you.”** These questions do not require an answer, instead they are used as a platform get the reader's attention and also to invoke the reader's emotional investment into the post. Once a person is emotionally invested to something, they linger a bit longer to find satisfaction.

So, write a compelling introduction, giving a reader a clear idea of what your post is about. So you tell the reader about what you are going to tell them.

#### b. The Body

The body of your post is like the inside of the house. The house has bedrooms, a dining room, a lounge, a kitchen, a bathroom and a study area. Each of these rooms have detailed and relevant furniture. As the house have different rooms, for different purposes, your post should have paragraphs that would communicate different ideas. Each paragraph should carry a certain idea and then flows to another paragraph to explain another connecting idea.

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You must use shorter paragraphs to drive your point home. Shorter paragraphs will encourage the reader to stay and will help them to comprehend your main idea.

It is good practice to use text breakers, like related images. Many readers get bored when reading a long body of text without any other form of visual arts in sight. You may use images or quoted text for emphasis and to give the reader a small break.

In the body of your post, it is where you explain your ideas in details. This where you tell the reader what you have promised to tell them. You define problems. You explain why they have not been solved before and how are you planning to solve them. You explain how your solution is different from others and why it will work. You allow the reader to see the value of what you have to offer. This where you tell stories to which your audience can relate. You use graphs, bullet points and whatever means available to help you get your main idea across.

You have hooked the reader in the introduction and in the body you are reeling them in.

### **c. Conclusion**

The conclusion is the final structure of your post. This is where you summarize everything you have said. Basically, you tell the reader what you have told them. This is where you compress all the ideas you have unpacked in the body, so that the reader can have something to take home.

Also in the conclusion you tell the reader what to do with the information you have just given them. Some people would have no idea what to do with what you have said and so they need a call to action.

## **4. GIVE A CALL-TO-ACTION**

A call-to-action is not a mysterious thing, really. This is where you tell your readers what to do. I know, some people will not feel comfortable with telling people what to do, but in the case where you need readers to share your posts if they find it helpful, you need to tell them to do so. If you have links that may help your readers, you need to tell them so that they will click on them.

Sometimes you may want to give freebies like free eBooks to your readers. You will need to tell them what to do in order to get the freebie. Some people use call-to-action in order to build a mailing list and to gain more subscribers.

Always give a call-to-action so that your reader can engage and do something with your content.

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This is all for today. Be on the lookout for **TSDN – 037 How to Publish and Promote Your Blog Post?**

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