

THE BLOG PROGRAM

Podcast Transcript

Episode 15 – State Of Blog Marketing

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We are going to talk about the state of blogging in 2014.

Alright, well, welcome to Episode 15! I told you in the last episode that I was going to make this weekly and at least as of now, I'm a man of my word. ☺ We are here; the following week was Episode 15. And in this one we're going to talk about the state of blogging in 2014.

It was probably 2 or 3 weeks ago now that I actually released a new free report at blogmarketingacademy.com and it's called The State Of Blog Marketing In 2014. Now, you can download that report for free and you can find that at blogmarketingacademy.com/2014. And there's a lot of great data there for you that is quite actionable in the upcoming year.

But in this episode, what I'm basically going to do is go over the big points about that report. We are going to talk about 5 different points that I do talk about inside that report but we're going to go over in a little bit of haphazard fashion, so to speak; because there is going to be definitely more information for you inside that report.

So with that, let's go ahead and talk about what blogging is actually going to look like in 2014.

Now, the short story is that it's not going to look a whole lot different than what we saw in 2013 but I think it's really important that we notice some of the trends that are happening and make note of them because if you're not paying attention, not looking at the world around you, it can be really easy to fall into the trap of doing everything the same way all the time.

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So, the first thing that I want to talk about is some of the changes that have occurred in the world of "search", primarily here with Google.

You probably have heard about some of the algorithm changes that Google has done over the last few years by the name of "Penguin", "Panda" and most recently, "Hummingbird". Now, I'm not going to get into what these things do because there's about a billion different blog posts out there as to what the primary changes were with these algorithms. But the big thing that you should take away from it is that Google is definitely working on giving ranking to quality over quantity. And that is something that we should be all doing, anyway.

But I know a lot of people get stuck in this mindset of trying to game Google. They're trying to find these backdoor avenues into getting rankings and getting traffic from Google. But really, what it comes down to, if you just step out from all these algorithm changes that Google has done, you could see that all they're trying to do is get the best quality stuff up in the rankings and push all the junks down. And if you are putting out junk, you're not going to get as much activity on your site. That's just the way it's going to go.

So, some of the things that you need to do is concentrate on things that are going to be indicators of quality. Content link is definitely one of them. Having images on there is definitely one of them. Having a social proof on there is definitely going to be huge and that means that having people share your content on social media, people linking to your content organically; not you going out and buying links but linking to you organically. These are basically things that if you have good content are going to happen naturally. And you need to allow it to happen naturally but you need to give it the right fuel which is content that is going to be worthy of being shared.

Now, one of the other things that Google has been really clamping down on is that, anybody who is trying to gain the system is basically going to die off the internet. So, things like old school link building where you're going out there posting tons of blog comments linking back to your blog or you're doing these link wheel things with blog networks and buying links and all that kind of stuff... it's pretty much going the way of the dodo birds. ☺ So, I really won't do that stuff anymore, it's just a bad idea. So, link building is definitely been on the decline and we're seeing an increase in actual content marketing. Duh! Right? I mean, this is fantastic for the end user, but yes, it does mean that us, as bloggers and content creators can't really shortcut our way to success anymore. We actually got to bring our "A" game and do, not only content but real content marketing.

That's something that we're going to be talking about here in just a little bit - that marketing is very, very important. You've got to know how to do the marketing in all the stuff that comes after you hit the publish button. Not just focus on great content because there's a lot of good content out there that don't get seen because they don't know how to market it afterwards.

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From there actually we're going to go to the next bullet point. I told you we were going to gloss over these things here.

The next one is "Multiple Mediums". I've recently written a blog post about this at blogmarketingacademy.com, but this year, more than any other year is the year that if you are focusing exclusively in written blog post, you are shooting yourself on the foot. You have to be out there on other mediums. Is it any coincidence about deciding to bring this podcast back and do it weekly? Hell, no! I'm doing it for a very big reason. And I'm also making a much bigger deal out of video myself this next year that I have them. It is because you need to be out there on these multiple mediums.

Now, it's not really about volume here. It's about how to get the most out of each thing. So, one of the things you want to focus on when it comes to these multiple mediums is REPURPOSING. So, in my case, I'm doing a written blog post each week, I'm doing podcast each week, and I'm doing a video each week at least, one of each. Now, that does that mean that I have to come up with three different topics every single week? No, it does not. I could have the same basic idea in each one, but because I'm hitting a different content format, it's going to hit a different audience in most cases.

So, think about repurposing. How can you take your written blog post and repurpose that into a video? Well, it should be pretty easy. You just literally put yourself on camera; you talk about what you just wrote about. And you could do the same thing in your podcasting. This exact episode, I wrote a report about the state of blog marketing in 2014. Now, I'm doing a podcast on the exact same topic. So, you can actually do that.

Allow yourself to get in to these other mediums. So you're going to need to do blog post, you're going to need to do videos; you're going to need to do podcasting. If you want to do live stuff and do webinars and Google Hang Outs and stuff like that, definitely, explore it. But one of the other things to keep in mind, another reason why this is very important; is that our users, our readers is consuming our information on a lot more devices now. We're not just using our computers or using our tablets, our phones.

Think about Smart TVs that are going to get even more popular than they are already are. You've got these little devices like the Apple TVs and the Ruckus and things like that that enables people to consume internet content on their televisions. You've got a lot of people that are canceling their cable out there because they're just tired of the whole thing that cable does and they're like, "well, I'm just going to get my stuff off the internet". So, you want to "be there". Yes, you can actually be on TV. You just do it off the internet.

In fact it comes to mind to me how YouTube.com recently re-designed their user profile pages and the cover art image for those profiles is now really large... really large. Way bigger than a mobile screen. Why did they do that? It's because they're thinking ahead for television. Yeah, you can already get YouTube on a television but they're expecting it; you can just tell, to be an even bigger deal. So you need to be there. You want to be on ALL these platforms.

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Okay, so that's the idea of multiple mediums. It's just kind of the general idea. Let's go into the next one and that is "The Noise Level".

Yes, there is a lot of noise on the internet. They can be harder and harder to actually stand out and get noticed because you have so many people out there putting out really solid content. And it's going to get worse, actually, because as the shortcuts are disappearing because of all the stuff that Google is doing that I've already discussed; you're going to find a lot of big companies and brands getting into real content marketing. They're actually going to be making investments into quality content, putting out real content with real marketing behind it. They're actually realizing the value of real content which is awesome for all of us.

But as a content creator, that means you're going to have peak companies with money and staff out there basically competing for user attention. So, you as a content creator are going to need to pay special attention to the marketing aspect of this. Not just creating content but actually knowing how to do the marketing after that content. Now, obviously my site is called Blog Marketing Academy for a reason because I'm a big believer in the marketing that comes after this, so obviously, I would love it if you just continue to stay with me for the scope of this year because you're going to learn a lot about how to do this.

But I want us to touch on a few basic concepts. One is called "Positioning". Now, positioning is not a new concept, whatsoever, but it's an old marketing concept that basically brings up what people associate you and your brand with something else that they're already familiar with so that you connote certain emotions and certain images to them. You think Nike, well you'll probably think of a runner that's out there accomplishing their things and just doing it. Well, that's positioning.

There's a lot more about positioning inside my report but you need to pay special attention to what that is and what you're doing with regard to positioning because it's going to help you stand out as a brand. Branding is important because it is going to help people make that bond and that connection with what you're doing online and therefore want to look at you and your content over somebody else.

Another important concept that I talk about in this report is called "Content Packaging".

Now, in a product, we know packaging as the exterior look of a product. You go to the store to buy a particular thing and you're going to see the packaging. It's a nice box with pretty colors and pictures on it, things like that. Well, our content is the same way. You've got the guts of the content but the packaging is what it's going to look like from the outside with somebody just skimming by.

So, elements of packaging are going to be your headline, any images that pop out when somebody visually scans the blog post, bullet points, and things like that. Another thing about packaging is that sometimes you need to hit their button; where they're at... And then on the content you give them what they need.

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So for example, when it comes to my market of getting a successful blog, there's a lot of work about that. But I know where people's buttons are like, "I want more traffic", things like that. So, I can write content that exteriorly are going to say, "Here's how to get traffic", "The traffic formula", things like that. But then in the content, I'm going to give them what they actually need to build traffic. So, there's the exterior look of your content and then the interior; what it actually is. And you definitely have to pay attention to that packaging because it's going to help you stand out and get noticed.

The other thing about marketing is that you need to be very much in tuned with "Who Your Audience Is And What Their Profile Is". It's basically a buyer profile (some people call this a customer avatar). But you need to know exactly who that is. So, I would definitely recommend that sometime early on 2014, that you actually get really in tuned with who your audience is. I would actually recommend that you hand pick a few of them and schedule phone conversations.

I know that a lot of us tend to hide behind our computers but talking to people is the absolute best way to go. And if you have an email list, just email maybe ten of them randomly and be like, "Hey, I'd love to just chat on the phone with you for a little bit and find out about you, and what you're looking for, blah, blah, blah"... and by talking to them you can learn so many things that you can never get when you're trying behind an anonymous survey. So, I definitely recommend that you do that. It's going to help you perfect your content substantially for the upcoming year.

Okay, the next point that I want to talk about is "The Importance Of Building Your Own Platform".

Now, a lot of people focus on these platforms that are owned by other companies namely, Facebook, Twitter, things like that. Now, if we would look at Facebook, it's obviously, you have to pay now, more so to get your message out there. And there's nothing wrong with that. It's they're site, they can do what they want, they need to make money. But from your perspective as a content creator, it is a paid up play environment now. And it's harder and harder to reach your stance without actually ponying up to do that.

And the same thing with Twitter. Twitter is now a public company which means that their pressure for profit is going to be higher and they're going to be doing things to make that happen. They need to make money. So, it is getting to be "a pay to play" environment in most places so this is why it really is important that you build your own platform. I'm not saying that you ignore the social media, but you need to make sure that you're not focusing so much on building up your Facebook page or your Twitter following or Google+ and all that at the expense of your personal home on the internet which is your blog.

The other thing is, make sure that you're putting people on your email list because that is a community that you can control and own. It's not something that Facebook can turn off on you anytime they want. It's not something that other people set the rules for. It is your list; it's your way of reaching out to your community and bringing them back whenever you want. So you definitely need to work on building your

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email list. And if you have been taking it "un-seriously" in the last year or so, you need to take it on much more seriously as we move forward.

Now, even with email marketing, things are changing. Engagement is extremely important now. Just like with Facebook where you have these things like EdgeRank and things like these which is going to determine how many people see your updates. The same thing with email; if you're going to have people who are dismissing your email and not reading it habitually, well, guess what... it's going to affect your overall rate of delivery on your emails. The less people that see the emails' the more people that you have in your list that are not engaging with the email.

And what do we mean with "engaging" when it comes to email? Well, replying to the email, clicking on that email, opening that email. So if you are sending emails to people who are not doing anything with it or they're just filtering it and saying, "Well, maybe I'll read it someday"... well, you're actually shooting yourself on the foot and your lowering your delivery rates. So you need to pay special attention to engagement. Ask people to reply to the emails that you send to your list. Make sure that you test subject lines and things like that in order to get people to click on them.

And lastly, I would recommend that you periodically "trim" your list. Anybody who is not clicking on things in say like, 3 to 6 months and they just haven't done anything with your emails, just purge them off the list. You don't need them there. Why are you paying for them to be on your list if they're not doing anything? And it's actually going to help increase your delivery rates as well. So that's very, very important; you need to be thinking about engagement not only in your email but on your blog, because it's going to follow through your search engine rankings. The whole thing is all about quality content with engagement. And if you do that, you're going to succeed. You're going to stand out.

And also, the last thing would be just to keep in mind that it's not like we're dealing with a "fine knife" pie here... we can all do this at the same time and it's not that in order for you to succeed somebody else has to do worse. I don't want anybody getting into that scarcity mindset. But if you are going to do well in the upcoming year, you definitely got to bring your game when it comes to marketing, increasing engagement and building that community and also reaching your audience where they're at and not focusing so exclusively on written content that you alienate your readers.

Okay! I think that pretty much sums it up... and as usual, if you want more details on the things that we talked about in this episode, you can download [The State Of Blog Marketing Academy In 2014](#) at blogmarketingacademy.com/2014.

Alright, I want to thank you for listening to this episode of The Blog Program. As usual, the show notes are going to be found over at blogmarketingacademy.com/episode15. And with that you will find many links to several information. I'm actually going to link to a few blog posts in other people's websites that I found. They have some interesting stats and predictions for 2014 that I think you might find interesting. I'll also link to the report that I'm talking about here and you will find the transcript to this episode if you'd like to download it and take it with you.

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Lastly, as usual, I would appreciate it if you would go over to iTunes, find [The Blog Program](#) on there and post a star rating and a review. An honest review of what you think of the show. This is my second episode of the year, and like I said in the last episode, I'm intending for this to be a weekly thing and I think we're going to have a lot of fun together.

The last thing, and you can just simply email me on this, but I have a little question for you... I'm really curious to hear if you would prefer just me talking, like I'm doing right now on a particular topic every single episode or if you like the interview model which is kind of something I'm playing with. I know that a lot of people out there who do podcast, they do interviews. And obviously, there's something attractive about that and a few different factors. But I don't want to just sit there and do interviews only because everybody does. I'm not one of these kinds of people who just want to do what everybody does just blindly. So I would rather just ask you. What would you prefer; do you want a mix, like a 50/50 mix of me talking and then the rest, interviews? I certainly know some people... I can bring some guests. But I want to do what you guys would like to have me do here. So you can email me your answer at david@blogmarketingacademy.com and I'd like to hear from you what you'd like to see in the upcoming year here in The Blog Program.

Okay! Thank you very much and I will see you next week. 😊