

June Retail Tips



Top Tips

Blogs, blogging and new social media !

First up, lets start with a definition of what a blog is, so there's no confusion: A blog is a derivative of the term web – log. Its normally run by one person but it can be run by several with contributions by interested parties. Its updated regularly and can feature graphics or video, as well as quizzes, questions and comments. It runs in reverse order with the most recent articles or posts as they're known coming at the top of the blog.



Many blogs provide commentary or news on a particular subject; others are used more as online personal diaries. There's many different kinds of blogs, personal ones, corporate ones, question answering ones and genre blogs to name a few.

Since blogs are posted online, they're arguably interconnected and this interconnectivity is called the blogosphere. It now has its own rules, communities and search engines. There are also micro blog sites such as Twitter which only allow users to post messages of 140 characters at a time.

So, what's all the fuss about, what's the importance of blogging?

Well, blogging gives people and in our case businesses a voice, they're invaluable for interacting with customers and engaging with and attracting potential new customers. As you control the information you put out you can promote your business as you wish it to be promoted and gain search engine ranking (as content rich sites rise up through search engine rankings)

So should your Business be Blogging?

The answer is pretty much - YES! Whatever product or services your business provides you should be blogging now. Unless you hate writing or have nothing of interest to say. Blogging is basically free, the only cost is your time, but sadly, most businesses are still not taking advantage of this simple, easy and inexpensive way to promote their business.

These are the top five reasons why you should be blogging:

1. **Blogging creates authority:** If you put out good content, then you can brand yourself as an expert in your field. Experts are trusted, which can only reflect well in your sales.
2. **Interaction with customers:** Your customers can read your posts and comment on them, getting into dialogue with your customers builds relationships, and strong relationships are at the base of sound businesses.
3. **Keywords:** Blogging allows you to add keyword dense content to your site – this will attract customers searching for your keywords online.
4. **Branding your business is in your hands:** You can present yourself as witty, personable, humble, expert, intelligent, however you see fit – blogs are a great way for your customers and prospects to see the people behind the business who are often hidden behind walls of minders ...
5. **Content** – adding new content to your site regularly will bring in a steady stream of new prospects or customers, its also a reason for existing customers to check back, to see what's new.... Its one of the mysteries of the human brain – none of us like to miss something we think we should know about.

The most used excuses for not blogging are lack of knowledge or time.

So for a quick knowledge burst head over to blogger to sign up for a free blog site that you can customise with your own template.

As for time, if you're already issuing press releases, or writing a newsletter then this shouldn't be a giant leap for you... Just re-write the piece for your blog and post it online.

There's also a host of free resources on line about almost any kind of industry you can imagine, so if you read things that are interesting to you, and you think they'd be interesting to your readers too, then you can share them...

Don't be put off, it sounds much more complicated than it actually is – Have a go, in the words of a famous sports brand – just do it !

You'll be surprised, you might even enjoy it !