

# Blogging for Profit

A Collection of Interviews  
with People Who Have  
Found Success While  
Blogging for Profit

Don Nicholas  
Michelle L. Rodriguez  
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**MEQUODA DAILY**  
Helping Publishers Make Money Online

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## **Introduction: Why the Future is Bright for Bloggers**

### **Online publishing success begins with being an enthusiastic expert on your topic**

Bloggers are the new freelance writers and the future profitable multiplatform publishers.

Here's why: I first launched *Writing for Money* in 1993 — about 17 years ago. The writing and publishing community then was comprised of about 10 million people; That's how many people *Writer's Digest* determined would identify themselves as freelance writers. These were people who could write, but most did not have the ability to publish.

Today, in the U.S. alone, one out of five adults would identify themselves as a blogger. That means there are nearly 50 million people who are self-publishing with the help of open-source websites like Blogger and WordPress. These websites created software that lowered the barriers of self-publishing to almost zero cost.

### **The democratization of freelance writing**

The person who today says, "I'm a blogger" is the same person who in 1993 would have said, "I'm a freelance writer."

If you're a freelance writer in 2010, you should launch a blog, add Google AdSense ads to it, build traffic to become credible, and find a co-op like The Deck Network to sell advertising on your site.

Most of today's successful multi-platform publishers began with a single topic print newsletter written by a single, passionate, subject matter expert.

The aspiring publisher in the 1970's was a freelance writer whose goal was to be paid for his expert editorial content. In 2010, the career path to online publishing profits is a little different.

Today, you start out as a part-time blogger and aspire to build a following of readers who will eventually purchase your paid editorial products, click on your site's advertisements, and hire you to speak, teach or consult.

It all starts with being an enthusiastic expert on your topic, publishing your own blog, and eventually progressing along your own profitable, product pyramid.

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## Pottery Making Gets Creative Online with Blogging

**Jennifer Harnetty is the managing editor of CeramicArtsDaily.org, an online community serving active potters and ceramic artists worldwide**



*I feel very fortunate to find myself in a career that combines my interest in ceramics with my skills as a writer. I consider my time working for magazines combined with my work in the studio outside of work to be my “post-baccalaureate work” in ceramics because it really has been an excellent education. Though I am hesitant to use the word “expert” because I feel that one is never finished learning in ceramics, this post-baccalaureate education prepared me for my blogging role.-  
Jennifer Harnetty*

Jennifer Harnetty became the managing editor of Ceramic Arts Daily in February of 2008. She has been involved with ceramics ever since discovering it a quarter before graduating with a BA in English. If she'd discovered it sooner, she probably would have been a double major. After graduating, she continued to take classes in ceramics at local art centers and universities. Then, in 2004, she was hired as assistant editor for Ceramics Monthly and Pottery Making Illustrated. Harnetty eventually became associate editor of the two publications and, in 2008, took on her latest position as managing editor of Ceramic Arts Daily.

**Mequoda** - How many blogs are you currently writing for?

**JH** - I am just writing for the main Ceramic Arts Daily blog. Other sections of Ceramic Arts Daily are updated nearly every day, however, with content from our magazines.

**Mequoda** - Which CMS (ie: WordPress, Typo) are you using?

**JH** - We have a customized Mequoda WordPress system.

**Mequoda** - Are you blogging for your company as part of your job (ie: corporate) or is this a personal passion?

**JH** - The Ceramic Arts Daily Blog is part of my job and, lucky for me, also a personal passion.

**Mequoda** - Has your blog enhanced your professional reputation? How?

**JH** - I think it definitely has. My blog posts reach about 53,000 registered subscribers, all of whom have strong interest or involvement in my field. It is

flattering to hear people praise the website/blog at workshops or events, before they realize that I am the editor.

I was recently invited by Etsy to be a guest curator on their blog – also very flattering!

**Mequoda** - How often do you post a new blog?

**JH** - The main Ceramic Arts Daily blog is updated three times a week and the updates are sent out in our newsletter. Other content from our books and magazines is added almost daily.

**Mequoda** - Who is your target audience?

**JH** - Potters, ceramic artists, ceramic arts educators, and people who are interested in getting involved in ceramics.

**Mequoda** - What are you doing to grow your audience and to create customer loyalty?

**JH** - We are following the Mequoda model of offering free downloads to our subscribers, but we also realize that website content is king and are continually adding great content in the form of blog posts and new features to the site. And our readers are very vocal in their appreciation.

We also request links in from all of the artists that we feature on our site, so we have a large number of links into the site from other noted people in our field (and other websites with related content).

Other advertising methods include Google Adwords, press releases, advertising in our magazines and paid advertising on Facebook to spread the word about Ceramic Arts Daily.

In addition, we are currently developing a forum, which we expect to quickly grow to be an indispensable resource for potters and ceramic artists with specific technique or technical questions. So far, the closest thing to a forum that exists in our field is a legacy list serv. We are very optimistic about the forum because it is very needed in the field and we will be opening it up to the very large audience that we already have. The forum platform that we are using also features user blogs and galleries, so it will have a social networking component to it. We think this will be another big draw.

**Mequoda** - How are you using social media sites (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn) to promote your blog? Has that changed the way you blog?

**JH** - We are currently using Facebook and Twitter to promote the blog. We have almost 11,000 fans on Facebook and almost 500 Twitter followers. We post and then tweet our new posts and other announcements. These have been a great source for traffic and finding new subscribers.

**Mequoda** - What is your main source of revenue: ads, sponsorships, products sales, or donations?

**JH** - Our main sources of revenue are our product sales (books, DVDs, Magazines), as well as banner advertising, event sponsorships, and sponsorships of our free downloads. We also host ceramic workshops through our member organization, the Potters Council.

**Mequoda** - Approximately what percentage of your overall revenue comes from product sales vs. advertising/sponsorships or other sources?

**JH** - Our revenue is about 80% product sales and 20% advertising.

**Mequoda** - What is your main source of referrals?

**JH** - Our top five referring sites, besides mail engines, are Facebook, Google Images, Survey Monkey, Stumble Upon, and Twitter.

Website	Traffic	Keywords	Pages	Links
CeramicArtsDaily.org	90,243	4,141	13,228	7,398

CeramicArtsDaily.org January 2010 Statistics from Google Analytics, KeywordSpy & Yahoo Site Explorer

**Mequoda** - What key metrics do you monitor to analyze the health of your business?

**JH** - We use Google Analytics and the Mequoda Google Visibility Report to track our website trends and the tools of our email provider (StreamSend) to analyze the effectiveness of our email campaigns.

**Mequoda** - How many sites have you linked to in the last 30 days?

**JH** - I have linked to about 32 outside sites in the past thirty days through my blog, but this doesn't include the links that have been created in other areas of the site such as our two magazine sections (Ceramics Monthly and Pottery Making Illustrated) and the Potters Council, our member organization.

**Mequoda** - What changes have you seen in your market since you began blogging?

**JH** - We have been able to expand our reach beyond the intermediate to advanced level artists, and to the beginners that we weren't reaching as well before. So we now realize that our audience has the potential to become much bigger.

**Mequoda** - Any interesting experience you'd like to share?

**JH** - Over the years, we have discovered that our audience can't get enough of technique-based content. They really enjoy seeing what other artists are doing and how they are doing it. As I mentioned before, there is always more to learn in ceramics, no matter how long you have been doing it. Our readership seems to prove this notion.

Our site really has shown us the desire and need for an online community for potters and ceramic artists. It has really turned into a community already, even before launching the more social-media-oriented features like the forums and reader blogs. Our readers have been using the comment function on the blog as their "forum" and we are really looking forward to having something more robust than the blog comments.

**Mequoda** - What advice would you give a new blogger?

**JH** - I think a large part of what makes my blog successful is that the readers can tell that I am genuinely passionate about ceramic art. Of course we also worked extremely hard to get our name out there too.

My advice would be to "leave no stone unturned" when it comes to using the Internet to spread your message. Combine that with a sincere interest in what you are writing about and great content, and you should be in good shape.

**Mequoda** - What ways are you planning to expand over the next year?

**JH** - We have recently brought on an Audience Development Manager who will be able to make a more concerted effort to monitor our performance and develop plans to grow the audience based on those findings. This will allow me to focus more on adding and improving content in order to increase loyalty.

We are also planning to reach out to our international audience in a variety of ways. We have more than 5,000 subscribers in 117 countries and we are planning to seek out content and products from other parts of the world. We hope to give those subscribers more of a presence on the site so that it truly feels like a global community.

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## Blogging About Successful Healthcare Marketing Strategies

### HealthCareSuccess.com - Stewart Gandolf shares years of real-world marketing experience



Stewart Gandolf has been involved with healthcare marketing for over 15 years and has worked with over 1,500 clients. He has worked with J. Walter Thompson and other Fortune 500 companies. Gandolf has been privileged to speak at numerous professional meetings, including American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeons, Foundation for Facial Plastic Surgery, Pri-Med, Mentor Corporation and Lumenis Corporation.

Gandolf is a founding partner of Healthcare Success Strategies, a full-service marketing company that serves healthcare organizations of all size. He began a company blog in August of 2009.

**Mequoda** - Which CMS (ie: WordPress, Typo) are you using?

**SG** - Wordpress

**Mequoda** - Are you blogging for your company as part of you job (ie corporate) or is this a personal passion?

**SG** - Both, it is for my company but it also raises my professional profile and is a creative outlet free from the constraints of our "how-to" articles.

**Mequoda** - Has your blog enhanced your professional reputation? How?

**SG** - Thought leaders in my industry are already reaching out to me. Until now we have been very focused much more on impressing clients than marketing colleagues.

**Mequoda** - How often do you post a new blog?

**SG** - My goal is 3x per week, but given my multiple competing priorities, the reality is once a week on average.

**Mequoda** - Who is your target audience?

**SG** - Anyone in the healthcare industry who can help us: doctors, hospitals, pharmas, marketers, device manufacturers, etc. We find readers include both potential clients and strategic partners.

**Mequoda** - What are you doing to grow your audience and to create customer loyalty?

**SG** - I have been growing an audience thru LinkedIn, Twitter, my email newsletter base (8,000 subscribers) and my corporate website. I am happy for it to go organically beyond that.

**Mequoda** - How are using social media sites (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn) to promote your blog? Has that changed the way you blog?

**SG** - I tweet every post and I usually find a reason to post on LinkedIn. For example, I found an engaging headline and promoted both my blog and firm's website. I try to make posts relevant to each of the groups that I post on. We also have a Facebook Fan page, and post through there as well, though we have more traction through the other social media.

**Mequoda** - What is your main source of revenue: ads, sponsorships, products sales, or donations?

**SG** - Ad agency services.

**Mequoda** - Approximately what percentage of your overall revenue comes from product sales vs. advertising/sponsorships or other sources?

**SG** - 0% sponsored advertising, maybe 20% product sales and the rest of our revenue is from services.

**Mequoda** - What is you main source of referrals?

**SG** - Most referrals come from search engine optimization, pay per click, social media and happy clients.

Website	Traffic	Keywords	Pages	Links
HealthCareSuccess.com	10,000+	2,262	367	36

HealthCareSuccess.com December 2009 Statistics from Google Analytics, KeywordSpy and Yahoo Site Explorer

**Mequoda** - What key metrics do you monitor to analyze the health of your business?

**SG** -We closely monitor Google analytics but especially track inquiries, revenue and profits. Everything else is important but frankly, 1,000 new email subscribers is not the same thing as revenue here and now.

**Mequoda** - How many sites have you linked to in the last 30 days?

**SG** - Several.

**Mequoda** - What changes have you seen in your market since you began blogging?

**SG** - We only began recently but I feel that I am much more on the pulse because of the interactive ways I am promoting it.

**Mequoda** - Any interesting experience you'd like to share?

**SG** - We are happy that the more marketing savvy readers seem to appreciate the blog more - they get it. Better still, while I mentioned a moment ago that we don't give our enewsletter the attention as it deserves, we have had some success with it. For example, the President of a Fortune 500 corporation was reading our enewsletter without our knowledge, and "popped out of the box" in response to one of my "point-of-view" enewsletter articles. We later did a deal with him. In fact, that experience convinced me to finally launch the blog, since it is a better forum for emotional posts, as compared to our educational enewsletter articles.

**Mequoda** - What advice would you give a new blogger?

**SG** - Get the look down and have a sense of where you want to go before you begin. Also, I think you have to enjoy it, and be a good writer.

I would recommend writing some articles before you launch with fanfare, so that both you and your audience will know what it is all about. You may find that your articles will evolve into a different mission and feel than you contemplated at the start. Give it a few articles at least to find your voice, before you run into the marketplace announcing your arrival.

For example, when we started I didn't expect to write much about the economy, but it has turned out to be very relevant to what is going on in healthcare marketing. I therefore respond to economic news a lot, but always from a healthcare marketing point of view. Because I am passionate about the topic, I also think it provides interesting reading. Based upon everything I see in the economy today, I believe the economic news will provide plenty of fodder to for me to rant about for the foreseeable future.

**Mequoda** - What ways are you planning to expand over the next year?

**SG** - I will continue to cover stuff that doesn't necessarily fit my website. I love being able to also respond to other people's content, like this piece on baby boomers and social media. I didn't have to do the research, yet I can leverage the information.

**Mequoda** - Is there anything you'd like to share?

**SG** - It is really fun so far, but it definitely takes time. I am glad I can write. This would be hard to delegate to a staffer.

In addition to all of this, Stewart has authored numerous articles on healthcare marketing, including Dental Economics and is co-creator of the most successful healthcare practice marketing CD series.

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Twitter: [@MedicalMktg](https://twitter.com/MedicalMktg)

# Profit by Making Nutrition Science Edible

## Blogging tips from Judy Doherty of FoodAndHealth.com

Judy Doherty has been in the food service industry since she was 15. By the time she was 18, Judy was accepted into the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, New York. She graduated second in her class with scholastic honors.



Doherty attended the Fachschule Richemont in Lucerne, Switzerland, where she studied pastry arts and baking. She has received many awards including the prestigious American Culinary Federation Gold Medal and Bronze Medals, Chef of the Year and finalist for the U.S. World Pastry Cup Team.

She now owns Food and Health Communications, Inc., a private publishing company dedicated to "making nutrition science edible." Judy began a company blog 2 years ago using WordPress.

There's no shortage of new subscribers for FoodAndHealth.com. After a recent website redesign, sales are up 100% and so is membership. The blog notes are included in updates to clients, the monthly members' email newsletter, the subscriber list and listservs. Links to the blog are also posted on LinkedIn and Twitter.

**Mequoda** - Has your blog enhanced your professional reputation? How?

**JD** - It has given us one more way to reach customers and to drive traffic to our site. It gives us an informative way to present more information about what we do in regards to products that we are developing. It's a way to promote them but also to generate buzz and gain ideas. It's more of a live medium than a piece of paper!

**Mequoda** - How often do you post a new blog?

**JD** - 1 to 7 times per week.

**Mequoda** - Who is your target audience?

**JD** - Nutrition education professionals including dietitians, teachers, diabetes care professionals, spas and gyms, weight loss centers, WIC centers, doctors and other health care professionals. We are here for anyone who may need need up-to-the minute wellness information and materials like recipes or food photos for their

website, book, magazine, even recipe nutritional analysis for restaurants, food manufacturing or books.

**Mequoda** - What are you doing to grow your audience and create customer loyalty?

**JD** - We are communicating through multiple channels, providing excellent customer service and innovative materials. We do direct mail and massive email campaigns and are still building an SEO/marketing biased site.

Usually, when we have a few good posts that we know will interest people, we send a link to every contact we have. A good example would be the Portion Control post.

We posted it and then told all of our customers. Plus, we created a more specialized report and handout set for our paid members that got posted at the same time. They can see that their payment for editorial is worth it because they get a lot more (we are in the midst of a digital conversion from a print newsletter so we felt this is important - to put something new in the blog but to show that paid members get even more at the same time). We also promoted a few products in the portion control post.

We use our blog posts to generate buzz, build relationships, promote new products, gather ideas, and to increase traffic.

**Mequoda** - How are you using social media sites (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn) to promote your blog? Has that changed the way you blog?

**JD** - I like to call it the domino effect. Make a blog post and it gets put into Twitter and LinkedIn. Write a tweet - it gets put into the sidebar of the blog as a live update.

**Mequoda** - Approximately what percentage of your overall revenue comes from product sales vs. advertising, sponsorships or other sources?

**JD** - 100% product sales.

**Mequoda** - What key metrics do you monitor to analyze the health of your business?

**JD** - Contactology, Google Analytics, and online sales volume.

Website	Traffic	Keywords	Pages	Links
FoodAndHealth.com	20,943	37	4,397	2,516

FoodAndHealth.com December Statistics from Google Analytics, Compete and Yahoo Site Explorer

**Mequoda** - How many sites have you linked to in the last 30 days?

**JD** - Not many. We currently have a campaign that features MyPyramid.gov.

**Mequoda** - What changes have you seen in your market since you began blogging?

**JD** - The market is more competitive - but we can now go much farther in our reach.

**Mequoda** - Any interesting experience you'd like to share?

**JD** - We were asked to be on the Corporate Alliance for MyPyramid and instead of just running a press release, we made a fun blog post with a poll, asking for comments and posted that everywhere. The response was very good.

**Mequoda** - What advice would you give a new blogger?

**JD** - Be innovative, be patient, be targeted, and have a plan.

**Mequoda** - What ways are you planning to expand over the next year?

**JD** - We just switched to a new webhost with a new shopping cart and the blog is FLYING now with hits because we have added video. We will work on more efforts for better SEO and transform product pages into landing pages that are direct marketing minded. They will include multiple calls for action, more 100% guarantee, more testimonials and more benefits. I have a lot of good direct mail tips and printouts from the gurus of SIPA!

Also, we are going to expand our product line AND we're going to add a consumer product line in addition to being B2B.

**Mequoda** - Is there anything you'd like to share?

**JD** - I do have a shopping cart story - we worked so hard for 2 months and boy did we learn a lot about PCI compliance, shopping carts, improving the online experience, working with India outsources, etc. But boy is it paying off - we are gangbusters - and our membership is increasing. Our shopping cart company loved our site so much we are their featured client of the month. All good stuff!!

Thanks for asking me to participate! I would love to hear your thoughts and learn more!

**Contact Information:**

Judy Doherty, Publisher  
Food and Health Communications  
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# Blogging About the Best Kept Secret in Golf

## Golf Vacation Insider provides free travel tips for golfers



Managing Editor and golf travel veteran Craig Better offers unbiased reviews and insider secrets about the best golf courses, resorts, and restaurants worldwide on the blog Golf Vacation Insider. He has been writing about golf for more than 15 years, covering equipment, apparel, the retail business, general interest, and travel for national consumer and trade magazines.

Prior to joining Golf Vacation Insider, Better was a freelance researcher, writer, and editor for Golf Magazine, Travel & Leisure Golf, Maxim, and about a dozen other publications. He also co-authored Zagat Survey's book, *America's Top Golf Courses*.

**Mequoda** - How long have you been blogging?

**CB** - This June, it will be four years.

**Mequoda** - How many blogs are you currently writing for?

**CB** - Just one: GolfVacationInsider.com.

**Mequoda** - Which CMS (ie: WordPress, Typo) are you using? What do you like about it?

**CB** - We use Wordpress. Relative to our previous platform, it's much easier and intuitive to use. And combined with the right theme, it makes SEO a snap.

**Mequoda** - Are you blogging for your company as part of you job (ie: corporate) or is this a personal passion?

**CB** - Blogging is very much woven into our overall corporate strategy. Golf Vacation Insider is a frictionless way to build our email file, a file that we, at times, use to market our premium golf travel newsletter, *Golf Odyssey*.

**Mequoda** - Has your blog enhanced your professional reputation? How?

**CB** - First, by conducting "secret shopper" site inspections and not accepting advertising from the types of properties we review, we've established ourselves as the world's only, 100 percent unbiased and objective source of golf travel and vacation advice.

Secondly, our blog is very well optimized for search, and combined with inbound links and re-Tweets, our exposure has grown exponentially. This often leads to

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interview requests from other bloggers, journalists, radio shows, etc. helping to further position us as the authority on golf travel.

**Mequoda** - How often do you post a new blog? Are you the only one posting on your blog?

**CB** - We publish new blog posts once or twice a week at a minimum. I'm not the only person creating posts, but as managing editor, I do most of the editing, optimizing, photo layout, and loading into WordPress.

**Mequoda** - Who is your target audience?

**CB** - Anyone who likes to take golf vacations or who plays golf on business trips can benefit from our expert, unbiased advice.

**Mequoda** - What are you doing to grow your audience and to create customer loyalty?

**CB** - We're currently growing our audience by creating high quality, search-friendly content on our blog, and by giving away free e-books, special reports, and golf vacation guides. As for loyalty, we ensure everything we publish (whether it's on our website or in our email updates) is truly worth readers' time and attention. Editorially, this is usually a priceless piece of advice about a certain golf course, resort, or restaurant. Promotionally, it's often a special offer that isn't available anywhere else.

**Mequoda** - How are you using social media sites (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn) to promote your blog? Has that changed the way you blog?

**CB** - To be perfectly honest, we don't devote much time to social media. We use a WordPress plugin to automatically Tweet our new blog posts, but that's about it. We know this isn't the "right" way to use Twitter, but the alternative seems time intensive; time our very small staff can spend in better ways (or at least we think so). We do pick up a handful of followers and re-tweets each week using this zero-effort method.

**Mequoda** - What is your main source of revenue: ads, sponsorships, products sales, or donations?

**CB** - Right now, our main source of revenue is product sales; our own products and third-party products.

Website	Traffic	Keywords	Pages	Links
GolfVacationInsider.com	21,296	1,495	1,938	14,316

Golf Vacation Insider March 2010 Statistics from Compete, KeywordSpy and Google Analytics

**Mequoda** - Approximately what percentage of your overall revenue comes from product sales vs. advertising/sponsorships or other sources?

**CB** - Product sales is probably 95% of our revenue.

**Mequoda** - What is your main source of referrals?

**CB** - Google.

**Mequoda** - What key metrics do you monitor to analyze the health of your business?

**CB** - For us, our email list is all-important, so we look at the number of opt-ins and opt-outs on a monthly basis. Of course, we also analyze the conversion funnel of individual list-building efforts.

**Mequoda** - How many sites have you linked to in the last 30 days?

**CB** - Very few. Probably less than five. Inbound links are another story. We seem to get a few every week.

**Mequoda** - What changes have you seen in your market since you began blogging?

**CB** - Some independent golf blogs that were around when I started are gone. A few new ones have launched, but my sense is the net number is down. Totally different story with respect to the large, mainstream golf publications, all of which now seem to be devoting resources to blogs and social media. As for the golf travel market, the problems in the overall economy have hurt and helped us at the same time. Hurt, because some people have scaled back on travel, and helped, because those still taking golf vacations are more concerned than ever about spending their time and money wisely.

**Mequoda** - Any interesting experience you'd like to share?

**CB** - We blogged about a little-known method for getting a tee time at this spectacular course (without knowing a member). When we first published it, it received a few comments, but that was it. Well, I received a call the other day from the course's head golf professional saying he was being inundated by people using the method we described. Apparently, when you Google this course's name, our post now ranks second or third. The pro wasn't happy about our post, but after discussing it, we parted friends and he invited me out to play.

**Mequoda** - What advice would you give a new blogger?

**CB** - Bring something truly unique and worthwhile to the table. The better your content is, the faster you'll grow your traffic.

**Mequoda** - What ways are you planning to expand over the next year?

**CB** - We have several strategies for growing our email list. Among them, we'll try to convert a very large group of people who requested, but never claimed, one of our free books/vacation guides. Another effort will likely be to incentivize existing readers to refer their friends.

**Contact Information:**

Blog: [GolfVacationInsider.com](http://GolfVacationInsider.com)

Newsletter: [GolfOdyssey.com](http://GolfOdyssey.com)

Twitter: [@GVI\\_Tips](https://twitter.com/GVI_Tips)

# Content Marketing Solutions from Junta42

## Joe Pulizzi, the leader in the content marketing revolution

Joe Pulizzi is a leading author, speaker and strategist for content marketing. He is the founder of Junta42, a content matching site, and is co-author of "*Get Content. Get Customers. How to use content marketing to deliver relevant, valuable, and compelling information that turns prospects into buyers.*" His blog looks at the trends in content marketing, and how marketers can learn to think and act like publishers.



Back in 2000, Pulizzi started as an account manager for Penton Custom Media, one of the largest producers of trade magazines and media. He ended up running Penton Custom Media, where he produced custom magazines, newsletters, webinars and other media that worked to position their clients as expert publishers.

In 2007 Joe left Penton to launch Junta42. On April 2nd, 2007, he launched the Junta42 blog: The Content Marketing Revolution, talking to marketers about how they need to become their own publishers. He began to use the term "content marketing" at Penton back in 2001, but really began to embrace it in the blog. Today, content marketing is a recognized term for what was once known as the custom publishing industry.

**Mequoda** - How many blogs are you currently writing for?

**JP** - Although I've done many guest posts, I've concentrated most of my energy at the Junta42 blog. I have a few other blogs, like the one at JoePulizzi.com, but that is just to update people on what I'm doing.

**Mequoda** - Which CMS (ie: WordPress, Typo) are you using? What do you like about it?

**JP** - The Junta42 is a TypePad blog, but my favorite blog platform is probably WordPress. WordPress seems to integrate best with social media tools like Tweetmeme and there is a large, diverse group of plugins available for pretty much everything. I've also been getting into Compendium Blogware's offering, which is an interesting model where they compend blog posts.

**Mequoda** - Are you blogging for your company as part of your job (ie: corporate) or is this a personal passion?

**JP** - Both...Junta42 is a business I founded, with the first offering being the blog itself. Junta42 is now recognized as one of, if not the leading website about content marketing solutions.

Blogging is difficult, if not impossible, if you are not passionate about the topic. I evangelize the topic of content marketing, so blogging comes easier with that topic.

**Mequoda** - Has your blog enhanced your professional reputation? How?

**JP** - Two things, the blog and the book, have probably led to more professional success than any other marketing strategy. That said, the book would have been impossible without the blog. I used the blog from the start to begin the chapters for the book. Anyone trying to figure out how to write a book should look into doing it this way.

**Mequoda** - How often do you post a new blog? Are you the only one posting on your blog?

**JP** - I post two to four times per week. I've never posted less than two times in any week - ever. Consistency is key. It's your content promise to your readers. Stop for a minute giving valuable compelling content and you'll soon be forgotten.

I'm the only one who posts on my blog, although we are starting to branch out another blog separate from my blog that will work to position Junta42 as a "how-to" content marketing leader.

**Mequoda** - Who is your target audience?

**JP** - Mostly small and medium-sized marketing and publishing professionals.

**Mequoda** - What are you doing to grow your audience and to create customer loyalty?

**JP** - Consistently create content that is valuable to our audience. Junta42 readers look to us for the latest in content marketing. We feel it's our responsibility.

**Mequoda** - How are you using social media sites (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn) to promote your blog? Has that changed the way you blog?

**JP** - We leverage Twitter the most to promote our posts and drive traffic, but it's more than that. Social media tools like Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn give us an opportunity to get involved in the conversation and spread great content, whether it's from us or someone else. Commenting on blogs is key. Unless you are

involved in the conversation within your niche community, it's hard to get traction on your blog.

**Mequoda** - What is your main source of revenue: ads, sponsorships, products sales, or donations?

**JP** - Junta42 is a lead generation source for custom content providers. We provide leads to them by attracting marketers to the idea of content marketing, and our customers (the content experts) pay us monthly or annual membership fees to get those leads.

We also drive consulting business and, personally, I do a number of paid speeches throughout the year (right now I'm in Slovenia as I type this for a speech in a few days).

We have a number of product launches later in the year, but we're not ready to unwrap that yet. Check back in a few months.

**Mequoda** - Approximately what percentage of your overall revenue comes from product sales vs. advertising/sponsorships or other sources?

**JP** - If you consider our matching/lead generation service a product, then about 50% versus other sources of revenues. We do have a handful of small sponsorships as well.

**Mequoda** - What is your main source of referrals?

**JP** - We do some PPC, but most of our traffic is organic search traffic or from referring sites that blog about our research or other content (including the blog).

Website	Traffic	Keywords	Pages	Links
Junta42.com	29,938	487	18,517	32,866

February 2010 Statistics gathered from Compete, KeywordSpy & Yahoo Site Explorer

**Mequoda** - What key metrics do you monitor to analyze the health of your business? From which sites?

**JP** - We do monitor traffic, but I really look at conversions. Who's signing up for our newsletter, white papers, ebooks and the most important: who's signing up to find a content expert in our Junta42 system.

Although it's nice to get huge traffic increases, if they never come back it does us no good. We want to stay engaged with our customers and prospects. Traffic stats, unless you are selling eyeballs (advertising) are pretty meaningless.

**Mequoda** - What changes have you seen in your market since you began blogging?

**JP** - Everything. Content marketing is now a legitimate industry phrase. Since we began using the term, thought leaders like Seth Godin, Brian Clark, Chris Brogan, Lee Odden and others have embraced the term. I can name dozens and dozens of businesses that have named their group "content marketing" in some way. It's amazing and humbling.

**Mequoda** - Any interesting experience you'd like to share? Or privilege you've received since you began blogging?

**JP** - The fact that we (all of us) can directly communicate with people who care about what we have to say is truly amazing. That fact is changing marketing as we know it. Brands are now publishers and don't need the media to communicate a brand story.

That someone can build an entire business on a blog is incredible. I still talk to people every day that don't believe it. If you are passionate and have a defined niche, all things are possible.

**Mequoda** - What advice would you give a new blogger?

**JP** - Find your passion, identify your niche, and become the expert. The content development is usually the easy part. The hard part is getting active online...be a part of the conversation to make things happen.

**Mequoda** - What ways are you planning to expand over the next year?

**JP** - We are going to expand our educational tools for sure, working on that right now. So much needs to be done in content marketing now so that people "get" it.

**Mequoda** - Is there anything you'd like to share?

**JP** - There is never a good time to start. Do it now. No excuses. I've heard them all and none of them stand up. You are the expert in something, no matter how inconsequential you feel it is....and you can make a business out of it.

## **Contact Information**

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The Blog: [Blog.Junta42.com](http://Blog.Junta42.com)

More about me: [JoePulizzi.com](http://JoePulizzi.com)

LinkedIn: Joe Pulizzi

Facebook: Joe Pulizzi

Find me on Twitter: [@JuntaJoe](https://twitter.com/JuntaJoe)

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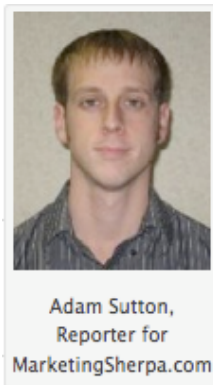
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# Creating Content that Pulls People In

## MarketingSherpa, a guide to marketing research

Adam Sutton regularly contributes articles to MarketingSherpa's *Business-to-Consumer* and *Great Minds* newsletters. He also writes articles for the SherpaBlog. Sutton began his blogging career in 2007 for us at Mequoda Daily, where he maintained the team's email newsletter and blog. He also dabbles in personal blogging.



**Mequoda** - Which CMS (ie: WordPress, Typo) are you using? What do you like about it?

**AS** - We use WordPress. I find it has a wide range of features without hiding the basics. It's very easy to click and start a new post.

**Mequoda** - Are you blogging for your company as part of your job (ie: corporate) or is this a personal passion?

**AS** - Writing posts for the Sherpa Blog is part of my job and I enjoy it.

**Mequoda** - Has your blog enhanced your professional reputation? How?

**AS** - Absolutely. My name, picture, and marketing analysis are available for anyone to find 24 hours a day. If I have an interview scheduled, the person can search for "Adam Sutton MarketingSherpa" or "Adam T. Sutton" and immediately see samples of my work.

**Mequoda** - How often do you post a new blog?

**AS** - Generally, once a week.

**Mequoda** - Who is your target audience?

**AS** - Mid to executive-level marketers selling to businesses or consumers.

**Mequoda** - What are you doing to grow your audience and to create customer loyalty?

**AS** - We supply a steady stream of relevant and useful marketing content that pulls people into the blog. We also link the blog from our Best-of-Weekly email newsletter, which helps drive traffic. Also, the blog is hosted on our website where we feature in-depth marketing case studies and how-to articles. People who come for our articles often browse their way to the blog.



**Mequoda** - How are you using social media sites (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn) to promote your blog? Has that changed the way you blog?

**AS** - Although it has not changed the way we blog, our team uses Twitter to help spread the word about our blog and other company news. We will mention and link to stronger posts, as well as to other interesting content throughout the Internet.

**Mequoda** - What is your main source of revenue: ads, sponsorships, products sales, donations?

**AS** - Our company's revenue comes from our great content. We have several marketing conferences a year, including the MarketingSherpa Email Summit, the largest event in the email industry.

We also have marketing workshops, training, and certification programs, as well as our industry renowned marketing handbooks and benchmark guides. Furthermore, we offer a membership program that gives access to our extensive database of marketing case studies, articles, and research.

**Mequoda** - Approximately what percentage of your overall revenue comes from product sales vs. advertising/sponsorships or other sources?

**AS** - Honestly, as a reporter, I am not given that information. My job is to research and describe marketing best practices.

**Mequoda** - What key metrics do you monitor to analyze the health of your business?

**AS** - Our editorial team monitors our email newsletter program through host of metrics including open rate, click-through rate, time spent, unsubscribe and others. We are strictly concerned with quality and attention, while other business units are more involved in finances.

Website	Traffic	Keywords	Pages	Links
MarketingSherpa.com	105,968	2,380	34,065	1,551

MarketingSherpa January 2010 Statistics from Compete, KeywordSpy and Yahoo Site Explorer

**Mequoda** - How many sites have you linked to in the last 30 days?

**AS** - I would estimate about 12.

**Mequoda** - Any interesting experience you'd like to share?

**AS** - I've found that a professional audience rarely posts negative comments. So if you're afraid of criticism--don't be. The few negative comments I've received helped me tweak and strengthen my craft.

**Mequoda** - What changes have you seen in your market since you began blogging?

**AS** - In the few short years I've blogged, social media--particularly Facebook and Twitter--have become important to anyone trying to connect with an online audience. Blogging is about interacting, and your content is the icebreaker. Social media can be a catalyst for enriching that interaction.

**Mequoda** - What advice would you give a new blogger?

**AS** - First: Be committed. A frequently updated blog with comment activity is a huge asset. A blog that hasn't been updated in a month is a problem.

Second: Be realistic. Realize that every post has to be researched, written, edited, and published. Writing is only part of the work.

Also, have fun. Don't stress over style and grammar -- just keep writing.

**Mequoda** - What ways are you planning to expand over the next year?

**AS** - We will be adding more contributors to our blog this year.

**Mequoda** - Is there anything you'd like to share?

**AS** - If you're considering starting a company blog, first experiment with a personal blog. This will help you figure out the basics and understand the time required without doing any damage to your brand.

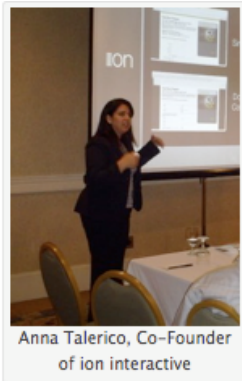
### **Contact Information**

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# Creating Landing Pages that Really Convert

## Anna Talerico creates a software platform that helps Internet marketers increase their landing page conversion rates

*"I don't know if anything can qualify anyone for blogging—but I've done a lot of industry writing throughout my career and so that naturally translated well to blogging." - Anna Talerico*



Talerico has been in online marketing and enterprise web development for about 15 years, really since the dawn of Internet time. Currently, Anna leads the company's client development, marketing and operations. As the executive vice president of ion interactive, she works with both sales and customer service teams to deliver great online solutions to customers.

Anna has worked with top clients in the online marketing and development spaces. Before co-founding ion interactive, Anna led the business development effort at ion, an all-digital marketing communications firm with clients such as Samsung, Siemens, and Bliss Spa. Prior to that, she was the managing editor of *Art Experience* magazine. Anna currently sits on the advisory board of the eMarketing Association.

**Mequoda** - How long have you been blogging?

**AT** - I've been blogging 'officially' for four years. Prior to blogging I was doing a lot of article writing, but when I look back on some of those articles now, I see they were really better suited to be blog posts.

**Mequoda** - How many blogs are you currently writing for?

**AT** - I write only for my blog, The Post-Click Marketing Blog, which is a joint effort between myself and three other bloggers, Justin Talerico, Scott Brinker and Megan Leap.

**Mequoda** - Which CMS (ie: WordPress, Typo) are you using?

**AT** - We use the built in blogging features that are part of our website's CMS, Squarespace.

**Mequoda** - Are you blogging for your company as part of your job (ie: corporate) or is this a personal passion?

**AT** - It's our company blog, and it's definitely a passion. I wouldn't blog if it was obligatory. I blog because there are topics I want to write about.

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**Mequoda** - Has your blog enhanced your professional reputation? How?

**AT** - I honestly don't know. I don't think about it. But I suspect it has, because it is another venue for people to get to know me, what I care about, what I think, etc. Maybe it's enhanced my reputation, maybe it has done the opposite. I try not to think about that.

**Mequoda** - How often do you post a new blog?

**AT** - It used to be weekly, but lately I have been posting daily, sometimes multiple times per day if many things pop up that I want to write about. Blogging is a snowball, the more you do it, the more you want to do it and the easier it gets.

**Mequoda** - Who is your target audience?

**AT** - The target audience for our blog is online marketers—specifically online marketers looking to increase the performance of their marketing.

**Mequoda** - What are you doing to grow your audience and to create customer loyalty?

**AT** - That's a great question. The main thing we focus on right now is blogging a lot. That's the best way to grow your audience. We also scan what other people are talking about in our industry and join in those conversations, or ask guest bloggers to contribute to our blog.

**Mequoda** - How are using social media sites (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn) to promote your blog? Has that changed the way you blog?

**AT** - We rely heavily on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn to promote our blog content. That's where we get most of our blog traffic. It's important to build your audience in these social media sites, because it is the easiest way to get your message out there.

**Mequoda** - What is your main source of revenue; ads, sponsor, products sales, donations?

**AT** - Product sales. Our blog definitely supports our bigger mission of getting our products into more customers' hands.

**Mequoda** - Approximately what percentage of your overall revenue comes from product sales vs. advertising/sponsorships or other sources?

**AT** - Most of our revenue comes from product sales, but we also have a book, Honest Seduction, which is a compilation of some of our blog posts, and so of course there is some revenue from book sales as well.

**Mequoda** - What is your main source of referrals?

**AT** - We get most of our traffic from our social media networks. Each blog contributor has his or her own universe of friends, fans and followers, and then the company does as well. It adds up to a nice platform from which we can get the word out.

Website	Traffic	Keywords	Pages	Links
ioninteractive.com	25,558	772	2,202	3,650

ioninteractive.com January 2010 Statistics from Compete, KeywordSpy and Yahoo Site Explorer

**Mequoda** - What key metrics do you monitor to analyze the health of your business?

**AT** - Too many to list, but for the blog metrics, we get an email each morning that shows us page views, referrals and 'engagement' scores. We use a service called PostRank for this, and it's really great. It shows us the health of the blog in some very concise, visual reports.

**Mequoda** - How many sites have you linked to in the last 30 days?

**AT** - Not sure, but probably at least 20, if not more.

**Mequoda** - What changes have you seen in your market since you began blogging?

**AT** - Well, one obvious shift is that when I started blogging, 'blogs' were the flavor of the day. Everyone was launching one, companies were trying to figure out if they were even going to have one, and what that meant, and who would write for them. It's hard to believe that some companies still wrestle with these questions today, so many years later. But I think the value of a blog is now proven, versus years ago, it was still questionable.

**Mequoda** - Any interesting experience you'd like to share?

**AT** - I can't think of something that falls into the 'interesting experience' category really. I think the fun part of blogging is interacting with people who leave comments, having discussions with them, and then when you run into a reader at an industry conference that is always fun. They feel like they know you, so when you run into a reader, it's like you want to get to know them too, since they know you. It's like you have catching up to do to get to know who they are, what they like, etc.

**Mequoda** - What advice would you give a new blogger?

**AT** - Just start writing. Don't think about how you are positioning yourself or what to say. Just write.

**Mequoda** - What ways are you planning to expand over the next year?

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**AT** - We'll continue to invite guest bloggers to share their posts on our blog, and I think we will continue to blog very heavily. There is a lot going on in the conversion rate optimization space, so there is a lot to talk about and a blog gives us the perfect venue to do that.

**Mequoda** - Is there anything you'd like to share?

**AT** - Well, if you are blogging as part of your company's blog, there is always this question of how much opinion you can inject into your blogs, how controversial you can be. The longer I blog, the more I see that people don't want the party line. They want to know what you really think. So, don't be afraid to put it out there.

### **Contact Info**

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ion interactive, Executive Vice President

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Blog: [www.PostClickMarketing.com](http://www.PostClickMarketing.com)

Twitter: [@AnnaTalerico](https://twitter.com/AnnaTalerico) or [@ion\\_interactive](https://twitter.com/ion_interactive)

# Career Lessons Learned from an Entrepreneur's Blog

## Jason Alba shares his entrepreneurial journey through JibberJobber.com

*"I thought I was a career expert, but I think expert is overused, cliché and a title easily given out - so I took the easy road and now refer to myself as a career management evangelist." - Jason Alba*



Jason Alba, founder of JibberJobber.com, has a background in IT and business strategy. He began his first blog in June 2006 as a self-proclaimed "career expert." However, within a month of launching his new business he was laid off from his full time job. So, he began blogging full time about his own experiences, ideas and lessons learned from his own career mismanagement. Within a short period of time he was considered a thought leader in the career space.

**Mequoda** - How many blogs are you currently writing for?

**JA** - At least five - most of them mine.

**Mequoda** - Which CMS (ie: WordPress, Typo) are you using?

**JA** - Wordpress.org.

**Mequoda** - Are you blogging for your company as part of your job (ie corporate) or is this a personal passion?

**JA** - It started out as my only affordable marketing tactic - I had plenty of time and no money, and blogging just seemed to make sense. Now that I have much less time I still make it a priority and try to write daily for my main blog (JibberJobber.com/blog). I don't do any blogging as a personal passion (unless you say being addicted to blogging is a "personal passion" :p)

**Mequoda** - Has your blog enhanced your professional reputation? How?

**JA** - Yes, absolutely - because of the blog I've gotten paid speaking and consulting gigs, have been referenced and referred to in other blogs and traditional media, etc. My blog was my main marketing tactic for over a year and it was a critical, essential component of creating my business and professional brand in a somewhat noisy space (which has only become more noisy with time).

**Mequoda** - How often do you post a new blog?

**JA** - On JibberJobber I take off holidays and weekends but otherwise try and post once a day. On my LinkedIn blog I try and post 2 - 3 times a week but have been

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known to miss weeks at a time. On my other blogs I post when I feel like it, hopefully once or twice a month.

**Mequoda** - Who is your target audience?

**JA** - Each of my blogs has their own target audience - hence, the multiple blogs. My JibberJobber blog gets readers who are in transition (that means laid off and looking for a new job), career experts, and people who are concerned about career management. My LinkedIn blog will get more corporate readers (those not worried about their jobs, but interested in unraveling LinkedIn).

My JasonAlba.com/blog is more entrepreneurs who can accompany my journey of entrepreneurship and relate to what I talk about, and the other blogs have started more as an SEO play... we'll see where that goes.

**Mequoda** - What are you doing to grow your audience and to create customer loyalty?

**JA** - Blogging regularly, with added value content that users can appreciate. I sometimes address tough, unspoken issues, and other times I build confidence and share common-sense ideas a-la-Seth-Godin. I like to share ideas my readers put in comments in a new blog post as I think that highlights their expertise and is a gesture of thanks to them for taking the time to comment. I also reply back to almost every comment people leave.

**Mequoda** - How are using social media sites (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn) to promote your blog? Has that changed the way you blog?

**JA** - Twitter is the one that gets the most traffic to my blog... but the interesting thing is that I get a fair amount of comments from a blog post on Facebook (my posts become Notes in Facebook) than anywhere else. It's really quite amazing how disjointed the conversation can get - which is unfortunate for the readers. I like to use LinkedIn Answers when appropriate to repurpose a blog post and take the idea/question to that audience. All of these social sites are part of what I call a comprehensive/complementary social marketing strategy - the blog is not alone, but I will say, it is the anchor of my social strategy.

**Mequoda** - What is your main source of revenue: ads, sponsorships, products sales, or donations?

**JA** - My blog is used to feed other revenue drivers - for example, the speaking and consulting. JibberJobber is a subscription site with an optional upgrade, which is why I blog so frequently there - to drive more subscriptions... so my blog is not necessarily driving revenue on its own, it supports other revenue streams. I have earned thousands of dollars in advertising and affiliate relationships, but that is not a focus of my current business.

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**Mequoda** - Approximately what percentage of your overall revenue comes from product sales vs. advertising/sponsorships or other sources?

**JA** - Since I developed the DVD "LinkedIn For Job Seekers" (LinkedInForJobSeekers.com) I've found a significant amount of revenue coming from that product alone.... I'd say less than 5% has come from ads and affiliates, 30% from the DVD, and the remainder from speaking, consulting and JibberJobber upgrades.

Website	Traffic	Keywords	Pages	Links
JibberJobber.com	12,369	912	3,581	795

JibberJobber.com December Analytics from Compete, KeywordSpy and Yahoo Site Explorer

**Mequoda** - What is your main source of referrals?

**JA** - Right now it is either people coming directly to JibberJobber.com/blog (probably JibberJobber users), then newsletters and other bloggers (word of mouth), then Google searches, then Twitter.

**Mequoda** - What key metrics do you monitor to analyze the health of your business?

**JA** - It has changed over the years - regarding my blog I monitor the direct traffic (and changes in traffic) and subscriptions to blog post via feedblitz.

**Mequoda** - How many sites have you linked to in the last 30 days?

**JA** - Hmm, that's something I used to care about and monitor but I've kind of not worried about that for a while... in the early months of my business I would spend about 4 hours a day doing what I called "blog marketing" and this was one of the key metrics I measured - but I guess that is one of those metrics I don't worry about as much anymore. By the way, I recorded a webinar called "Blog Marketing 201 - 501" that shares in two hours what I did during those 4 hours each day.... one of my favorite webinars to date :) You can find it at JibberJobber.com/CEO.

**Mequoda** - What changes have you seen in your market since you began blogging?

**JA** - There are a lot more bloggers in my space, and new bloggers in niches of my space that people weren't even talking about 3 years ago. There is a lot of noise, and more bots and automated junk posts. This is probably the biggest change I've seen. Aside from that, where the conversation happens is dramatically different - before I would get comments solely on my blog, where now I might get 20% of the conversation in blog comments and the rest on Twitter, Facebook, etc.

**Mequoda** - Any interesting experience you'd like to share?

**JA** - One time, because of my blog marketing strategy, I had a blogger write about and recommend JibberJobber on her blog, which ended up in her newspaper column, which ended up on Yahoo Finance, and finally for a few hours on the front page of Yahoo.com. That was a fantastic, measurable experience that proved how important it is to develop relationships with bloggers - you never know where it could go!

**Mequoda** - What advice would you give a new blogger?

**JA** - Oh I have lots of advice! The first two is to (a) stay on brand (know what your brand is), and (b) blog frequently - not just for SEO but to develop a loyal community!

**Mequoda** - What ways are you planning to expand over the next year?

**JA** - I would like to blog more frequently on all of my blogs, and start to do some of the blog marketing that I did early in my business.

**Mequoda** - Is there anything you'd like to share?

**JA** - Blogging is not a silver bullet, and for many it won't produce much revenue. I love the idea of having multiple products that you can monetize and pointing your readers to your own stuff... I would suggest you understand how blogging fits into your overall business and marketing strategy and then get to work!

In addition to writing for his blogs, Jason has authored the book I'm On LinkedIn, Now What??? Getting the Most Out of LinkedIn and created the DVD: LinkedIn For Job Seekers.

### **Contact Information:**

Jason Alba

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Book Site: [ImOnLinkedInNowWhat.com](http://ImOnLinkedInNowWhat.com)

# Knitting Daily, a Pattern for Successful Blogging

## Insight from Kathleen Cubley, Editor of Knitting Daily

*"I've been a knitter for about eight years, and my job at as the editor of Knitting Daily combines my editorial, marketing, and knitting skills. It's not the easiest skill set to find!" - Kathleen Cubley*



After having her own knitting blog for several years, about six months ago Kathleen Cubley became Editor of KnittingDaily.com. She's been in publishing for twenty years; twenty-three if you count her time on a college newspaper. Until Interweave, she worked in print media, both books and periodicals. Cubley's experience ranges from editorial, production, print buying, and management. She's even done a bit of marketing and catalog work.

**Mequoda** - Which CMS (ie: WordPress, Typo) are you using?

**KC** - We are currently using Community Server by Telligent.

**Mequoda** - Are you blogging for your company as part of your job (ie: corporate) or is this a personal passion?

**KC** - I'm blogging for my company as part of my job.

**Mequoda** - Has your blog enhanced your professional reputation? How?

**KC** - Yes. It's put me in the knitting community as an expert on Interweave and its products, and as a knitting colleague.

**Mequoda** - How often do you post a new blog?

**KC** - Three times a week: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

**Mequoda** - Who is your target audience?

**KC** - All knitters and craftspeople.

**Mequoda** - What are you doing to grow your audience and to create customer loyalty?

**KC** - We put out freemiums several times a year. Additionally, we have a great Facebook fan site, and we post on Twitter as often as possible. We provide interesting, informative and inspiring blog posts, too!

**Mequoda** - How are you using social media sites (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn) to promote your blog? Has that changed the way you blog?

**KC** - Yes, we use those sites, but I don't think it's changed the blogging process for me—although I do try to post things that will translate well on those social media sites.

**Mequoda** - What is your main source of revenue: ads, sponsor, products sales, or donations?

**KC** - Product sales are our biggest source of revenue, but we sell ads, too.

**Mequoda** - Approximately what percentage of your overall revenue comes from product sales vs. advertising/sponsorships or other sources?

**KC** - Advertising is responsible for about 14% of our total revenue goal.

**Mequoda** - What is your main source of referrals?

**KC** - KnittingPatternCentral.com

Website	Traffic	Keywords	Pages	Links
KnittingDaily.com	194,423	4,771	114,018	13,419

KnittingDaily.com December 2009 statistics from Compete, KeywordSpy and Yahoo Site Explorer

**Mequoda** - What key metrics do you monitor to analyze the health of your business?

**KC** - Delivery rates, open rates, click through rates, total revenue, RPM, unique visitors, opt in 1 and 2, Email Conversion Rate and Google Visibility Index.

**Mequoda** - How many sites have you linked to in the last 30 days?

**KC** - Approximately 30.

**Mequoda** - What changes have you seen in your market since you began blogging?

**KC** - Users have become more adept at online navigation. There's been rapid community growth and participation. We've benefited from the instant feedback we get from the e-newsletters and we've seen a higher demand for free projects, tips, tutorials, etc. (as they can get it elsewhere) and a stronger need for video tutorials (as they can get those elsewhere, too). There's also a surprising level of crossover with our other craft markets.

**Mequoda** - Any interesting experience you'd like to share?

**KC** - Readers seem to respond most positively to video tutorials, even over a free knitting pattern. They love having the video to refer to.

**Mequoda** - What advice would you give a new blogger?

**KC** - Get to know your audience before you begin blogging—it's easy to alienate some of your audience if you assume demographics. It's also important to respond to comments on your blog in a timely manner. I do, however, wait until there are a couple of questions and answer them at one time.

**Mequoda** - What ways are you planning to expand over the next year?

**KC** - We're planning some iPhone apps, more digital product offerings, a wider range of freemium offerings (i.e. video), more work on social networking sites, collaboration with referring sites as well as our own to create more inbound links, implementing specific Knitting Daily branding in the Interweave Store, adding more subjects / definitions to the Knitting Daily glossary, and expanding our keyword universe.

### **Contact Information:**

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## Wide Receiver Turned Sports Blogger

### Lewis Howes turned a career ending football injury into a successful blogging and speaking career

*“I think the combination of being someone passionate about both sports and social media has qualified me to write in this field.” - Lewis Howes*

Bloggers can come from all backgrounds. Lewis Howes has been blogging for about a year and a half at SportsNetworker.com and LewisHowes.com. Prior to that he played football in college and a season of arena football before an injury forced him to retire. He holds the NCAA All-Division Record for the most receiving yards in a single football game (418 yards, the current unofficial World Record).



Lewis Howes founder of SportsNetworker.com

His passion for being an athlete has now translated into a passion for helping others in the sports industry. Howes founded both the Sports Executive Association and SportsNetworker.com. Along with Frank Agin, he co-authored the LinkedIn success book, *LinkedWorking: Generating Success on the World's Largest Professional Networking Website*.

**Mequoda** - Which CMS (ie: WordPress, Typo) are you using?  
**LH** - WordPress

**Mequoda** - Are you blogging for your company as part of your job (ie: corporate) or is this a personal passion?

**LH** - Both. Blogging about social media and sports is both my job and my passion. I consider myself lucky in that aspect.

**Mequoda** - Has your blog enhanced your professional reputation? How?

**LH** - Of course, sharing your writing and gathering a following helps build credibility. When people want to book me as a speaker for a conference it's very easy for them to research my past work. They can read my blog and watch video posts to learn about who I am and if my message fits their event.

**Mequoda** - How often do you post a new blog?

**LH** - SportsNetworker.com now has 14 contributing authors including myself and new content is added almost everyday. I will blog a couple times during the week for Sports Networker and also periodically for LewisHowes.com with social media and LinkedIn tips.

#### Blogging for Profit

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**Mequoda** - Who is your target audience?

**LH** - Sports industry professionals and those looking to break into a sports career. We also attract those interested in sports marketing and social media in general.

**Mequoda** - What are you doing to grow your audience and to create customer loyalty?

**LH** - We look to provide value both online and through live interactions. We are hosting a series of Sports Networker Summit networking events in various cities. Sports professionals can meet face to face and gain a lot from these Sports Networker events.

**Mequoda** - How are you using social media sites (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn) to promote your blog? Has that changed the way you blog?

**LH** - Social media plays a huge role in promoting the blog. If you are blogging about using social media effectively it makes sense to promote using these sites. I don't necessarily think this has changed the way I blog because these outlets work together.

**Mequoda** - What is your main source of revenue: ads, sponsorships, products sales, or donations?

**LH** - Mostly product sales, commissions from affiliate marketing, speaking gigs and hosting events.

**Mequoda** - Approximately what percentage of your overall revenue comes from product sales vs. advertising/sponsorships or other sources?

**LH** - I don't make much from advertising or sponsorships on my sites currently, so almost all comes from product sales.

**Mequoda** - What is your main source of referrals?

**LH** - My websites, my newsletter, LinkedIn and speaking gigs.

Website	Traffic	Keywords	Pages	Links
SportsNetworker.com	11,425	185	693	226

SportsNetworker.com December 2009 Statistics from Compete, KeywordSpy and Yahoo Site Explorer

**Mequoda** - What key metrics do you monitor to analyze the health of your business?

**LH** - I set monthly goals. If I don't reach them then I realize I'm not working hard enough or smart enough and I start busting it from then on out to catch up for the next month. It's that simple for me. :)

**Mequoda** - How many sites have you linked to in the last 30 days?

**LH** - Probably 10 or so.

**Mequoda** - What changes have you seen in your market since you began blogging?

**LH** - A lot of people are trying to compete but have no idea what they are doing yet.

**Mequoda** - Any interesting experience you'd like to share?

**LH** - I have lots of them. If you come say hi to me at one of the conferences this year, I'll be sure to share plenty. :)

**Mequoda** - What blogging advice would you give to a new blogger?

**LH** - Write what you are passionate about and with guidance your audience will grow. I would also advise a new blogger to do their homework and know who the online leaders in their niche are. It will help you be more aware of what is already out there and what you can bring to the table.

**Mequoda** - What ways are you planning to expand over the next year?

**LH** - Sports Networker is looking to host more live events and continue to live stream them as they are featured on the site.

**Mequoda** - Is there anything you'd like to share?

**LH** - I'm living the dream because I do exactly what I want to do everyday... I hope anyone reading this does the same thing.

There's much more Lewis would like to share with you, for more information check out the links below.

### **Contact Information**

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Twitter: @LewisHowes

Sports Networker: [www.SportsNetworker.com](http://www.SportsNetworker.com)

LinkedIn Advice: [www.LinkedException.com](http://www.LinkedException.com)



## Blogging for Profit: Copywriting Made Easy

### Bob Bly shares 30 years of copywriting and Internet marketing strategy experience

*"My entire career has been as a marketing writer, and since blogging is writing, I feel like I have the basic skill to do it well."* - Bob Bly



Bob is definitely not a newbie as his writing career began back in 1979 and he began blogging in November 2004. Bob's blog Bly.com focuses on copywriting and marketing as his expertise comes from writing books on marketing and creating marketing campaigns for dozens of companies for over three decades.

**Mequoda** - How many blogs are you currently writing for?

**BB** - Just my own.

**Mequoda** - Which CMS (ie: WordPress, Typo) are you using? What do you like about it?

**BB** - WordPress, which is easy to use. My web master set the whole blog up for me in about an hour.

**Mequoda** - Are you blogging for your company as part of your job (ie: corporate) or is this a personal passion?

**BB** - I blog for my business to promote myself as a copywriter.

**Mequoda** - Has your blog enhanced your professional reputation? How?

**BB** - People read the blog and tell me they are impressed with the content. They particularly enjoy the way my blog deliberately engages them in an online conversation. I view the blog as an opportunity to talk about issues and exchange ideas rather than just to express my opinion or disseminate information.

**Mequoda** - How often do you post a new blog?

**BB** - On average, once a week -- but there is no schedule. I blog whenever I have something I want to discuss. If there is nothing to talk about, I let it alone.

**Mequoda** - Who is your target audience?

**BB** - Marketing professionals and entrepreneurs who must market -- potential copywriting clients, fellow marketers, and buyers of my books and information products.

**Mequoda** - What are you doing to grow your audience and to create customer loyalty?

**BB** - I devote promotional efforts to growing my e-zine subscriber list, not my blog.

**Mequoda** - How are you using social media sites (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn) to promote your blog?

**BB** - I use them to direct people to my blog posts.

**Mequoda** - What is your main source of revenue: ads, sponsorships, products sales, or donations?

**BB** - The blog does not generate direct revenue; my e-zine does. I have had clients hire me to do copywriting who say they got to know and like me through my blog, so in that sense it does make me money.

**Mequoda** - Approximately what percentage of your overall revenue comes from product sales vs. advertising/sponsorships or other sources?

**BB** - For my e-zine, 100% from product sales.

Website	Traffic	Keywords	Pages	Links
Bly.com	20,928	855	209	1,967

Bly.com December 2009 Statistics from Compete, Yahoo Site Explorer and KeywordSpy

**Mequoda** - What key metrics do you monitor to analyze the health of your business?

**BB** - For my Internet business, weekly online sales. For copywriting, monthly assignments and fees.

**Mequoda** - How many sites have you linked to in the last 30 days?

**BB** - One or two. I don't do it as a strategy; I link to blogs and sites that seem of interest to my readers.

**Mequoda** - What changes have you seen in your market since you began blogging?

**BB** - The rise of social networking sites and the paradigm shift of the consumer being influenced by marketers vs. being influenced by fellow consumers via social networks.

**Blogging for Profit**

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**Mequoda** - Any interesting experience you'd like to share?

**BB** - I got a deal with Thomas Nelson Publishing to write a book called *Blog, Schmog* -- it was actually refuting the idea that blogs are a marketing revolution and will replace all traditional marketing, and in fact, that did not happen. The book led to a few speaking engagements and enhanced my reputation as a marketing expert, as do all my many marketing books.

**Mequoda** - What advice would you give a new blogger?

**BB** - Find a way to monetize the Internet and devote your efforts to making it work. For me, it's my e-zine, not my blog. I think blogs are a supporting player in online marketing, not the star.

**Mequoda** - What ways are you planning to expand over the next year?

**BB** - Grow my e-zine subscriber list and create more products and offers. Publish more useful content online, including on the blog.

### **Contact Information**

Bob Bly

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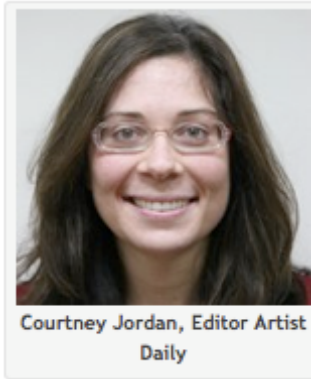
Twitter: [@RobertBly](https://twitter.com/RobertBly)

Facebook: Robert Bly

## Artist Daily has Mastered the Art of Blogging

### Art blogs for all, from beginner painting and sketching to landscape and still life lessons

*"Art is an essential for me, and a career mainstay. My academic studies were in art history, specifically focused on the Old Masters of Spain and Italy. I've also worked in the museum world; as a magazine staffer reporting on the arts and culture, and as a book editor of lifestyle and cultural history books."* - Courtney Jordan



Courtney Jordan has been blogging for Artist Daily since February 2010, but her first experience blogging was when she was on staff at Smithsonian magazine. After she left, she freelanced as their art blogger for about a year.

**Mequoda** - How many blogs are you currently writing for?

**CJ** - Artist Daily is my one and only.

**Mequoda** - Which CMS (ie: WordPress, Typo) are you using?

**CJ** - We use Telligent.

**Mequoda** - Are you blogging for your company as part of you job (ie: corporate) or is this a personal passion?

**CJ** - I'm the online editor for Artist Daily, so it is a key part of my job, and fortunately coincides with my personal passion for all things art.

**Mequoda** - Has your blog enhanced your professional reputation? How?

**CJ** - I've definitely gained visibility in the community (my headshot is in every post). Having people come up to me and say they've seen me on the blog is novel and definitely a first. No autograph requests yet, but I'm optimistic.

**Mequoda** - How often do you post a new blog?

**CJ** - My main posts are twice a week-Monday and Friday-and these go out on our Artist Daily e-newsletter as well. But if something newsworthy or interesting comes up, it can easily find its way onto the Artist Daily blog during the rest of the week.

**Mequoda** - Who is your target audience?

**CJ** - The Artist Daily community is my top priority. We have a readership of some 30,000 people, from beginning artists who've just found us to enthusiasts and professionals who come and share what they know.

**Mequoda** - What are you doing to grow your audience and to create customer loyalty?

**CJ** - We are committed to making a place for artists of all different media and interest. Customer loyalty comes easiest when you think like a member of your community and always remember that they want fresh content from someone with a point of view, and give them a way to interact and share what is happening with them. We strive to engage Artist Daily community members when, where, and how they want to be engaged, plus act as their source for everything art related, whether with instructive demonstrations, new products and books, or introducing them to fellow artists and up-and-comers.

**Mequoda** - How are you using social media sites (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn) to promote your blog? Has it changed the way you blog?

**CJ** - The Artist Daily blogs, special events and promotions, and noteworthy information about what is going on in the community all make their way to the social media sites.

**Mequoda** - What is your main source of revenue: ads, sponsorships, products sales, or donations?

**CJ** - Product sales, for sure. And that's a growing source for us.

**Mequoda** - Approximately what percentage of your overall revenue comes from product sales vs. advertising/sponsorships or other sources?

**CJ** - We have a diverse revenue stream, and ad sales is just one of those. It hovers around slightly less than 20%.

**Mequoda** - What is your main source of referrals?

**CJ** - Google sends us around 70%.

**Mequoda** - What key metrics do you monitor to analyze the health of your business?

**CJ** - We look at pretty much everything-open rates, RPMs on products, ad sales, new visitors, time spent on the site, blog comments, click through rates, and subscriber attrition rates.

Website	Traffic	Keywords	Pages	Links
ArtistDaily.com	27,644	1,421	60,900	489,582
ArtistDaily.com Statistics gathered from Google, Yahoo Site Explorer and KeywordSpy				

**Mequoda** - How many sites have you linked to in the last 30 days?

**CJ** - We link whenever appropriate, from our internal store and online features to websites of artists, events, galleries, and museums. If a site might be of interest to our readers, we want to make accessing it easy through the Artist Daily blogs.

**Mequoda** - What changes have you seen in your market since you began blogging?

**CJ** - Artists and the art-minded community are going strong. For many of us, it is a passion that doesn't really go away, so I've been lucky to see growth irrespective of what's going on economically, etc. The art world as a whole is also steering more and more toward online. That's exciting to see and be a part of.

**Mequoda** - Any interesting experience you'd like to share? Has the blog led to any other interesting projects?

**CJ** - Blogging takes me one step closer to real-time interaction with the community around me. At Artist Daily, we are gearing up to take another step in that direction with video blogs. I'm in the planning stages, but it is an exciting prospect. We also have a brand new line of Artist Daily instructional DVDs that are coming out in the next few months.

**Mequoda** - What advice would you give a new blogger?

**CJ** - Start with a meaningful conversation. In my experience, it all comes from that.

**Mequoda** - What ways are you planning to expand over the next year?

**CJ** - We are working toward making Artist Daily a true 'daily,' along with video features, new topical blogs, and products that will resonate with our community members.

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## Everyone is a Critic While Blogging at we8there

### Stanley Roberts runs possibly the oldest blog on the Internet

Stanley Roberts is the founder of we8there.com, which offers restaurant, hotel and bed & breakfast reviews to an international market. we8there.com is dedicated to real people (never paid) and real reviews written by everyday patrons. Each month there is also a featured chef profile including a favorite recipe.



Roberts started as a journalist in TV news more than 20 years ago, working in Los Angeles and San Francisco. He is a multi-award winning broadcast news photojournalist who has received several Emmy Nominations. His love of food was so strong he had to create a website about his favorite subject. He founded we8there.com in 1998 and has been blogging ever since.

**Mequoda** - How many blogs are you currently writing for?

**SR** - I only really blog for we8there.com unless you include my daughter's blog. :)

**Mequoda** - Which CMS (ie: WordPress, Typo) are you using? What do you like about it?

**SR** - I use BlogSpot from Google. I find it very easy to use.

**Mequoda** - Are you blogging for your company as part of you job (ie: corporate) or is this a personal passion?

**SR** - My blog is both personal and business related.

**Mequoda** - Has your blog enhanced your professional reputation? How?

**SR** - Absolutely. I am considered a highly respected expert in the restaurant industry by many.

**Mequoda** - How often do you post a new blog?

**SR** - I write a blog named "Stanley's Corner" and John Grabowski writes a blog named "An American in Europe". Both are monthly blogs with a regular following. Actually, both blogs are within we8there.com via a proprietary software, plus I use Blogspot to re-post the original blog.

**Mequoda** - Who is your target audience?

**SR** - We8there.com targets anyone who loves a good restaurant or is looking for a great place to stay.

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**Mequoda** - What are you doing to grow your audience and to create customer loyalty?

**SR** - we8there.com is privately owned, so our resources are very limited but we use everything available to us to get the word out.

**Mequoda** - How is using social media sites like Twitter, Facebook or LinkedIn to promote your blog? Has that changed the way you blog?

**SR** - Social media websites are very useful as they give you a constant audience and they help to improve your business' reputation.

**Mequoda** - What is your main source of revenue: ads, sponsorships, product sales, or donations?

**SR** - Our main source of revenue is premium listings where the business owner can purchase a listing for pennies on the dollar and have complete control of their listings.

**Mequoda** - Approximately what percentage of your overall revenue comes from product sales vs. advertising/sponsorships or other sources?

**SR** - Our overall revenue comes from online advertising utilizing Google ads and private ad sales; about 90% of our revenue comes from these methods.

**Mequoda** - What is your main source of referrals?

**SR** - we8there.com is mostly a word of mouth website. We used to have a "refer a friend" feature on the site until it was exploited by spammers and almost crashed our server. Also, I found that affiliate programs are pretty helpful; currently we use ShareASale to attract smaller business to our website.

Website	Traffic	Keywords	Pages	Links
we8there.com	10,628	5,310	27,184	13,794

we8there.com April 2010 Statistics gathered from Google Analytics, KeywordSpy and Yahoo Site Explorer

**Mequoda** - What key metrics do you monitor to analyze the health of your business?

**SR** - Traffic is the key way to analyze the overall health, since we8there.com does not have a physical product line.

**Mequoda** - How many sites have you linked to in the last 30 days?

**SR** - We have been linking to different sites over the past 10 years. In the past 30 days I am sure we have either added a new link or deleted an old link. It's a constant balance.



**Mequoda** - What changes have you seen in your market since you began blogging?

**SR** - I have seen more and more people getting free perks than blogging about the perks and not exposing the fact that they received the item they are blogging about as payment.

**Mequoda** - Any interesting experience you'd like to share?

**SR** - Since creating we8there.com I have been called by FOX News, 20/20, and other popular food related websites and televisions shows to discuss food and lodging information.

**Mequoda** - What advice would you give a new blogger?

**SR** - Don't give up, keep blogging away. It may seem like no one is listening but trust me, in time you will build an audience.

**Mequoda** - What ways are you planning to expand over the next year?

**SR** - We hope to get acquired by, maybe, Yahoo or Google and expand. We have had inquiries related to selling we8there.com and the first non-refusable offer will not be refused. :)

Visit we8there.com to read or write your own review of any restaurant or bed and breakfast.

### **Contact Information:**

Stanley Roberts

URL: we8there.com

Twitter: @we8there

Facebook: we8there.com "Real People, Real Insights"

# Turning a Passion into Profit with an Indian Cuisine Blog

## Praveen Kumar shares his culture through food at AwesomeCuisine.com

Praveen Kumar started out as a web designer in 2000 and then moved into SEO in 2004. After which, he worked with some of the top dot-com companies in India. Kumar had always wanted to be a chef but since that didn't happen, he turned his passion for good food into a website where he could share delicious Indian recipes with everyone at AwesomeCuisine.com.



Praveen Kumar founder of  
AwesomeCuisine.com

Kumar also enjoys writing poetry, and began writing online at PoetryOfLife.com. It doesn't end there, as he also owns a dot-com company providing SEO services and design consulting while trying to be a full-time entrepreneur.

**Mequoda** - Which CMS (i.e.: WordPress, Typo) are you using?

**PK** - Primarily WordPress, but the Indian recipe site uses Website Publisher from Interspire.

**Mequoda** - Are you blogging for your company as part of your job (i.e. corporate) or is this a personal passion?

**PK** - Started out as personal passion but now it's more of a full-time job.

**Mequoda** - Has your blog enhanced your professional reputation? How?

**PK** - People have started to recognize me and link me, to the writings that I have made. This has helped in acquiring new customers and at the same time more collaborative writing options.

**Mequoda** - How often do you post a new blog?

**PK** - I tend to write one poem a week. For the recipes, it is every single day. I try to keep it updated every day.

**Mequoda** - Who is your target audience?

**PK** - People who have a liking for good Indian food, predominantly in the 15-40 age range.

**Mequoda** - What are you doing to grow your audience and to create customer loyalty?

**PK** - Over the last few months, I have linked up with other bloggers and have sponsored various contests, giving out freebies and cash prizes. At the same time it gives them an opportunity to add their own content to my site and gives them a platform to showcase their culinary skills.

Plus, I find out what the audience wants by checking out various online tools including Google Trends and various research reports. Offline I generally keep up with the newsmakers and give the same back to the audience.

At the same time, most people can differentiate between a good site and a bad site; hence a good looking website is a main element to keep the visitors coming back for more. Ease of navigation with a clean site goes a long way.

**Mequoda** - How are using social media sites (Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn) to promote your blog? Has that changed the way you blog?

**PK** - Not a lot I would say. I have a Facebook page and a Twitter page where I update on what's being posted to the site. Apart from this, my audiences are not there yet.

**Mequoda** - What is your main source of revenue - ads, sponsor, products sales, or donations?

**PK** - Mostly advertising revenue.

**Mequoda** - Approximately what percentage of your overall revenue comes from product sales vs. advertising/sponsorships or other sources?

**PK** - I do not sell products on my website as it is difficult to convince my audience to open up their wallet. Hence the majority of my revenue is from advertising.

**Mequoda** - What is your main source of referrals?

**PK** - Word of Mouth and Organic search.

Website	Uniques	Keywords	Pages	inLinks
AwesomeCuisine.com	191,710	4,810	6,523	7,347

November 2009 statistics from Google Analytics, Yahoo Site Explorer and KeywordSpy.com

**Mequoda** - What key metrics do you monitor to analyze the health of your business?

**PK** - I use Google Analytics to track my numbers. I pay attention to visits each day, the number of ratings, comments and sends to a friend. Mainly visits though.

**Mequoda** - How many sites have you linked to in the last 30 days?

**PK** - I do not keep a track, but it should be about 30-40.

**Mequoda** - What changes have you seen in your market since you began blogging?

**PK** - It has become more competitive and it is a bit tougher to retain people given the amount of alternatives they have.

**Mequoda** - What advice would you give a new blogger?

**PK** - Start out slowly. While making money is important, do not make that as your main goal. Focus on quality and have a good-looking site. Spread the word and everything else will follow. Don't copy someone else, what works for one need not work for another.

**Mequoda** - What ways are you planning to expand over the next year?

**PK** - Go offline and do more strategic tie-ups with big brands. Yes, there are a lot of big brand food companies, eg. Kellogg and Nestle to name a couple. By creating a "landing" page for these companies, it can add more revenue.

Plus, participating (or sponsoring) in various cooking shows and contests. I am planning to get the word out, something like providing a contest prize sponsored by [AwesomeCuisine.com](http://AwesomeCuisine.com)

**Mequoda** - Is there anything you'd like to share?

**PK** - Always stay focused and positive. Whatever others might say, don't give up on your dream. One day, it will be yours. Thank you for giving me an opportunity to share my experience.

### **Contact Information:**

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## **Conclusion**

All of these bloggers have found success while writing about topics they love. Their insight into the craft should be considered while embarking on your own blogging career.

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