

Increase the Reach of Every Blog Post You Write

We all want every blog post we publish to be the best it can be. Beyond that, we want our posts to get found. For that to happen, we have to increase the reach of every blog post we write. Today's checklist will help us accomplish both purposes.

15 Things to Do *Before* You Hit Publish

- **Determine the main keyword phrase for your post.** Do this by finding the focus of the post and For this post, the keyword phrase is Make Each Blog Reach More People.
- **Compose a title for your blog that contains this keyword phrase.** It will help get your blog found if that title is phrased like something that would be typed into a search engine.
- **Add labels/tags to your post.** These should always include: keywords, the title of the blog post, the name of the author (even if you're the only author who ever writes for your site), the title of your blog site, if it's different than your name (the title of my blog site is The Write Conversation, so that's one of my labels).
- **Make sure there is a byline at the top of the post.** In WordPress, that can be set up to show automatically. In Blogger, you'll need to treat that as part of your blog post. With that byline, include a link to your Twitter account for easy sharing on social media.
- **Read your post out loud.** This will help catch any typos or awkward sentences you may have missed before.
- **Compose an open-ended question or call to action for the end of your post.** This will help engage your audience. And Don't forget to come back and answer the comments.
- **Look at word count.** An ideal length for most posts is 700-800 words. There are exceptions and if your blog is an exception, notice what word-length works best for you.
- **Check for formatting.** Look for clear and concise (and mainly short) sentences. Check to make sure your paragraphs no longer than 50 words. Search for extra spaces or extra blank lines. They are more apparent online than in print.
- **If the blog post is written by a guest, include a bio and headshot.** This bio should include social media links—so readers can connect—as well as an book links.
- **Verify all hyperlinks are working.** There is nothing more frustrating than to click on a dead link. Google actually penalizes sites by reduced SEO if they have dead links. So take time to double-check.
- **Make sure your images are captioned.** Images aren't easily searchable online, but images that are captioned are. This adds extra power to the SEO of your blog post.
- **Check the position of your images.** Pictures and graphics should illustrate your post, not interrupt the flow of the text. Think of it like a magazine layout.
- **Add a Click to Tweet or Tweetdis for easy sharing.** Tweetdis is a plugin for Wordpress and won't work on Blogger, but it's becoming my new favorite for my WordPress sites.
- **Preview your post.** Take an extra minute and preview your post one last time. Especially if you've made changes, this help ensure they haven't caused other issues.
- **Schedule your post.** I know this sounds like a no-brainer, but occasionally I forget to hit schedule and the post ends up as a draft and is late when I discover my mistake.

By consistently checking for each of the 15 things listed above, you'll increase the reach of your individual posts and the overall reach of your blog. I'd love to know what you'd add to the list. Be sure to leave your suggestions in the comments section below.