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"What social media does is simply allow you to do one thing: communicate. That's it. Social media is not the conversation. It's the room in which you hold the conversation. It still comes down to saying, doing, or producing something valuable for your customer."

- Valeria Maltoni; [Conversation Agent](#)

How To Build A Community Around Your Blog

Special thanks, and in no particular order, to: Daniel Rothamel, Marti Garaughty, Todd Carpenter, Missy Caulk, Jennifer Allan, Jeff Turner, Nick Bostic and Valeria Maltoni

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“Social media is an umbrella term that defines the various activities that integrate technology, social interaction, and the construction of words, pictures, videos and audio. This interaction, and the manner in which information is presented, depends on the varied perspectives and “building” of shared meaning, as people share their stories, and understandings.” Source: [Wikipedia](#)

Blogging Platforms:

[Blogger.com](#)

[Wordpress.com](#)

[Typepad.com](#)

[Dakno Blogs](#)

[RSS Pieces](#)

[Tomato Blogs](#)

“A Blog is a website, usually maintained by an individual, with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video. Entries are commonly displayed in reverse chronological order.” Source: [Wikipedia](#)

We all blog towards a common goal: **to build community**. Why community? Because it matters less how many hits you get to your site and it matters more how many of those visitors remain loyal over time. The thing is, loyal readers take the time to comment, or contact you through your site contact form and engage in any other way they can. Loyal readers allow themselves to be receptive to your message. Think about it, you don't do business with a complete stranger, you do business with someone you've met.

How then do we engage with our readers in a way that ensures they'll be back? How do we create loyalty?

How do we build our community? You know, earn new subscribers?

What do we write about (a.k.a. blog about)? Do we just focus on the market statistics? Or do we write about everything and anything that comes to mind?

What social media tools should I utilize to enhance the reach of my message via my blog?

Do you ever feel like you're writing but no one is paying attention? If you're nodding yes,

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don't worry, **you're not alone**. Even the experienced bloggers will tell you "*been there, done that.*" Which is why I asked them to contribute to this work.

Whether you're new to blogging or thinking of ways to get better, their advice is relevant, timely and insightful in more ways than one.

My advice? Read it once, then read it again and take notes. And when you write, don't forget about the *social* in "**social media.**"

Now without further ado...

Never Underestimate the Power of the Interview

By Todd Carpenter

When real estate blogging first started gaining traction some three years ago, I don't think the few of us that were doing it really had any idea how well Google would adopt our blogs. Today, the love that Google gives to blogs is so well known that most who are drawn to blogging, do it only for that reason. Properly written blogs do perform well with Google, but it's also worth looking at some strategies outside Google's musings to generate business from your blog.

I little history about me. I used to work as an account rep for a wholesale mortgage company. Loan originators were my clients. I started my blog, lenderama.com to network with them. Fast forward a couple years to last summer. I was talking with a local real estate blogger who apologized that she never read my blog. Of course not. It's a blog about being a better loan originator, why would a real estate agent read it? Still, I wanted to meet more blogging real estate agents, and presenting myself as a blog coach wasn't going to set myself apart in Google, and certainly not in the real world either.

So here was my query, how do I build a new blog that would attract my targeted readership (RE Bloggers) without the benefit of search engine results or an established real estate name to trade on? The answer was, "one blogger at a time".

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Instead of spending all my time trying to establish the fact that I'm an expert, I would shine the light on others who were already known quantities. Having been doing this for so long, I was lucky enough to have forged a few key relationships with what were becoming some of the premier real estate bloggers in the industry. I decided to interview them on my new [Blog Fiesta](#).

William James once said, "The deepest principle in human nature is the craving to be appreciated".

You see, the great thing about publishing an interview about someone is that you create twice the good will as a regular post. First, you create great content for your readers. But more importantly, you put the interviewee's name in lights. You endear them to you. If you're lucky, they go tell everyone they know that their interview is published on your site.

Before long, real estate bloggers were telling me what an "honor" it was to be featured on the site

Now look at this from your own perspective. Being a great real estate agent is all about growing your sphere of influence and referral base. When you've closed a home, and the client is super happy, it's pretty easy to ask for referrals. But most agents only close a few deals a month, often less. One way to create a referral stream is to endear other small business owners to you by putting up their name in lights.

The next time you're walking your prospect farm, stop to think about how the people in this neighborhood live. Where do they eat? Where do they get their shirts laundered? Where do they buy their coffee? These businesses are the ones you want to feature on your local blog. Ask to interview them. Tell them you want to do a "review". Take an interest in their business and reflect that in a post.

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Once again, you're providing good content for your readers. But you're also opening up the possibility that the business owner will drive traffic to your blog, or even better, refer some business to you when someone within their sphere of influence needs to buy a home.

Todd Carpenter is the founder of mariah.com, and a web tools coach for the real estate industry at bizomi.com.

Social Media: You Don't Need ALL the Tools, Just the RIGHT tool

By Daniel Rothamel, The Real Estate Zebra

Define your goals, and then choose the proper social media tool to help you reach them.

You've probably had to make minor repairs or improvements around your home. You know, that door with the loose knob, the window that sticks a little bit, or that drain that is just a bit too slow. Chances are, the first thing you did to fix the problem was go that place we all have with our tools and household supplies. You had to make sure that you had the right tools to do the job.

What you didn't do was go to the hardware store, buy a bunch of tools and supplies, and then *hope* that you would one day find a use for them. That wouldn't make much sense, would it? Of course not.

You started with a goal in mind, and then you used the appropriate tool to achieve that goal.

You must adopt the exact same approach to social media. Define your goals, and then choose the proper social media tool to help you reach them.

Social media is not an end in and of itself. It is merely a collection of tools that will help you reach a goal. Don't use social media tools just because you think everyone else is doing it, or because it seems hip or cool; doing that will only lead you to waste valuable time.

The first thing you need to do is define your goals. Maybe you want to reach members of your community, maybe you want to establish yourself as an expert on your farm area, maybe you want to establish relationships with other professionals for business networking, or maybe you just want to learn from others. Social media tools will help you achieve all of those goals, you just need to choose the right tool for the job.

Want to reach members of your community? Try Facebook or Myspace.

Want to establish yourself as your farm area's expert? Try blogging.

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Want to establish relationships with other professionals? Try LinkedIn.

Want to learn about your industry from others? Try Inman News and Twitter.

There are social media tools that can help you achieve just about any goal you can think of. If the choices seem overwhelming, that might be because you haven't nailed-down what your goals are. Once you do that, the rest is easy.

Social media isn't that much different from your trusted toolbox. All you have to do is decide which tool you need for the job.

Daniel Rothamel is a real estate agent in the Commonwealth of Virginia and author of realestatezebra.com.

For more about Daniel, please read [The Zebra Manifesto](#).

Building a Community Around Your Blog... Don't be DORKY!

By Jennifer Allan

DORKY: A style of writing, primarily used in self-promotion, which is predictable, boring, boilerplate or just plain blah.

I know you aren't DORKY. I'll bet if I asked a dozen of your friends if you're an interesting, personable, caring, creative kinda guy or gal, they'd confirm that you are. So, why is it that those in our profession insist on creating written promotional material that screams "I'M BORING AS DIRT AND HAVE ABSOLUTELY NOTHING INTERESTING TO SAY!"

You know what I'm talking about. The corporate-inspired announcement letters we send to our friends and family when we go into real estate. Our business cards with sappy, meaningless tag lines. Our online profiles that might put the reader to sleep if they actually get past the first paragraph. Where did all that personality go? Where are YOU?

When you blog, don't be DORKY, be YOU. If you're sappy, blog sappy. If you're sarcastic, blog sarcastic. If you're funny, blog funny. If you wake up one morning frustrated as heck about something or other, blog about it.

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When you blog, don't be DORKY, be YOU. If you're sappy, blog sappy. If you're sarcastic, blog sarcastic. If you're funny, blog funny. If you wake up one morning frustrated as heck about something or other, blog about it. Conversely, if you're tickled pink by a recent encounter at the health food store, write about that. If you have a brilliant AHA moment standing in line at the post office, there's a blog in there somewhere!

(Oh, one caveat. If you're a sloppy writer, don't blog sloppy! Use your spell check, capitalize appropriately and be sure to use your <enter> key on a regular basis.)

Don't try to write about topics you couldn't care less about. Not a political type? Don't try to write about local political issues. Don't know much about the economy? Leave the economic outlook blogs to someone who does. Not into cultural events? Don't bother trying to write intelligently about the new opera in town. Me? Among other things, I love dogs, sushi, rollerblading and old houses. That's what I write about.

But don't worry too much about speaking to any particular audience. YOU do the talking and the right audience will find you. And you know what? If your blogs come from YOUR voice, you'll stand a much better chance of enjoying the process enough to keep it up. Blogging for dollars is a long-term prospecting project, so enthusiasm is critical if you want to see your efforts pay off. Once your audience discovers YOU and starts to tell you how awesome YOU are (how insightful, how funny, how creative, etc.), well, that'll be some serious inspiration to keep at it! But blog with someone else's voice and eh... you'll probably throw in the towel within the month.

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To summarize, to avoid being a DORKY blogger:

1. Write from YOUR voice, that real person who has a terrific personality
2. Write about topics of interest to YOU
3. Proof-read, proof-read, proof-read

Now, go get 'em you UNDORKY blogger, you!

Contributed by Jennifer Allan, one of real estate's most popular bloggers and author of *Sell with Soul: The New Agent's Guide to an Extraordinary Career in Real Estate*. Jennifer has written several books on the art of selling real estate and is a trainer, coach, speaker and a top-producing real estate agent in Denver, Colorado. She encourages real estate agents to succeed by being competent, confident & respectful, while enjoying the heck out of their real estate careers. You can read more about Jennifer's soulful philosophies at <http://www.SellwithSoul.com>.

How To Build A Community Around Your Blog

By Valeria Maltoni

This may sound extremely simplistic - you build community through conversation. How do you do that?

The first step is listening. Before I even started publishing [Conversation Agent](#), I joined many discussions by commenting to the posts of others. In fact, I had been reading other blogs and joining those conversations for months. A way to let others know about you, and establish your brand (the essence of who you are) is to do what you say you do. In my case, being the Conversation Agent, every time I joined a discussion, I engaged with other commenters, built on the topic, took the conversation to the next level.

The second step is engaging. This means as much being engaged with the other, as it does actively attracting readers by being a good host. I welcome all new commenters at my blog with a personal email message that begins to address their comment and them personally. I take the time to follow their trackback link to their blog or publication to learn more about what interests them. That also makes me smarter when I publish content.

The third step is providing value through content. If you've been listening and engaging your readers, you have a great base from which to continue building content that is valuable to them. I write about business through a marketing and communications lens - I am passionate about social media and how it is transforming the way we not only do business, but how we choose what business to be in, what products and services to offer.

The fourth step is being a good host. In my case that means fulfilling my brand promise, which is that of connecting ideas and people. As I get to know my readers and their interests, I begin to understand what they are working on and who they know. That makes me a more effective connector and host. I don't keep count of the introductions I made for people - and I generally share very specifically what the professionals I help connect have in common, or an idea of what they might want to collaborate on. That makes for very strong ties.

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The fifth and final main step is paying attention. It's fairly easy to become too prescriptive or formulaic - resist the temptation. To grow both yourself and the community you are building, it's important to continue to expand your thinking, reach out to new readers, include new topics, and deserve your community's time.

Seth's [advice for Real Estate agents was: quit now!](#) What that means is unless you are willing to do what it takes to become best at being who you are, there's no point to it. Best may mean something different to each of you. And that is good because with a blog, you have the opportunity to help your community start a conversation. You can become the hub.

You can reinvent how you interact with your community and how to be a Real Estate Agent. How? Take a look at some of those steps I outlined above and at Seth's post.

Lather, rinse and repeat!

With New World attitude and Italian style, [Fast Company expert](#) blogger and [Conversation Agent](#) Valeria Maltoni demonstrates her unique talent for synthesizing marketing, public relations, and communications. See how customer relationships are always conversations, and why this knowledge is essential to doing business in the Information Age. Valeria also blogs at the [Marketing Profs Daily Fix](#) and [Marketing 2.0](#).

Blogging from a marketing junkie's point of view...

The one question you should ask before writing your next post!

By Marti Garaughty

Before I begin I have a confession to make. I look at pretty much everything I do from a marketing point of view. It's a habit, sort of like the industry strength coffee I need to speak English in the morning.

No matter who you are or what business you're in, something most of us are struggling with these days is how to get attention on a very crowded Internet.

If your typical day is anything like mine, you see a zillion blogs asking you to subscribe to their RSS feed, websites entice you with freebies to sign up for their newsletter and you get dozens of social network invitations from "friends" you never knew you had.

Sounds familiar? Well guess what? We're pretty much all in the same boat. Not just you and me but your clients, potential clients, visitors to your website as well as anyone who happens to stumble across your blog.

Probably the biggest challenge most of us face right now isn't so much getting someone's attention, but keeping someone's attention.

A few days ago I decided to unsubscribe from 20 blogs in my RSS reader. Why? Because it was becoming too time consuming to sort through the avalanche of posts each day.

Aside from the normal daily stuff like business, family, friends, working out, etc... I have so many things that compete for my limited time and attention so I've become much more selective about what I do online and...

This is something I think we all have to keep in mind, especially when it comes to blogging.

Something most of us are
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For example, a real estate agent isn't just competing with other agents for the consumer's attention, they're competing for attention with everything from twitter and spam to YouTube and kids waiting to be driven to soccer practice.

Since we all seem to be dealing with the same time and attention challenges, every time I post something to my blog, I ask myself one question...

“Is this post interesting enough to make my readers want to come back and read my next post?”

That's it, simple enough on the surface but like a good chess strategy, I try to look a few moves ahead to see where the post might lead.

Maybe to a series of posts? Will it generate comments and feedback? Am I giving enough value and sharing enough insight to make it worth your time to come back and read me again or even better, to subscribe to my blog?

With so many things competing for our time and attention, only the most interesting, engaging and relevant content will get and retain attention.

So the next time you're about to blog, maybe you should also ask “is this post interesting enough to make my readers want to come back and read my next post?”...

Marti Garaughty is the President and Marketing Strategist of The Art of Marketing You.

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Artwork: <http://garaughty.com> | Graphics: <http://TheBlogArtist.com>

How to Build A Community Around Your Blog or the Do's and Don'ts of Blogging

By Missy Caulk

The most important thing I have learned is to **BE YOURSELF**.

I have learned many things these past 17 months of blogging. Not sure if there is a "most important" thing, but two of the most important things I have learned is to **BE YOURSELF**... Don't blog for search engines, don't blog to be popular, just be yourself and blog who you are and what you know about your business.

The goal is to establish yourself in the eyes of the community as a professional, knowledgeable about Real Estate in your locality. When people go to the search engines and put in a question, they are looking for help an answer to their question. By blogging answers to questions the consumers might have about real estate you are more likely to be found.

I'm not saying to ignore good search engine rules, but don't write for the search engines. Here is an example:

- 1) Moving to **Ann Arbor, Mi** is like moving to 24 miles surrounded by reality.
- 2) Moving to **Ann Arbor, Mi** is like moving to **Ann Arbor**, known for 24 miles surrounded by reality in **Ann Arbor**.

The first sentence flows, the second one is trying to get the key word **Ann Arbor** in too many times.

Today, I was interviewed by the **Ann Arbor News** for a report due out on Sunday. I had written a post on my [personal blog](#) about gas prices. The article the Ann Arbor News is doing is on how the high gas prices are affecting different industries. The reporter had found my blog and interviewed me for the article. She asked if she could point to my blog. Of course.....

Now I didn't write that post for a reporter to call me. But, it just happened she was looking for insight on gas prices in **Ann Arbor** and my blog came up.

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The second thing I have learned is to reciprocate comments. A blog is a dialog, a form of communication. It is important to write back and acknowledge the person commenting on your post. I am always appreciative when people leave ANY comment on a post. When I started my blog outside of Active Rain it was hard to get use to not having as many comments. But, I am blogging for the people moving to or selling in Ann Arbor, not to have a lot of comments.

How often should you post?

I personally would rather read a few posts each week, that are well thought out posts with good content than one everyday, or 3-4 at a time during one day

Finally, be yourself, blog good content, reciprocate comments, and blog for others NOT the search engines.

Missy Caulk is TEAM leader for the Missy Caulk TEAM in Ann Arbor, MI and author of AnnArborRealEstateTalk.com.

Real Estate Blogging Is A Contact Sport

By Jeff Turner

If real estate is a contact sport, then real estate blogging should be as well.

You can't take a step in the real estate blogosphere without finding someone writing about [search engine optimization](#), better known as *SEO*. They'll tell you how important it is to attract Google to your blog, why writing for the spiders is a necessary evil and how doing so will drive more traffic to your blog. And there is no question that this is true. If you write for Google, Google will find you and so will the people searching for the terms you're focusing on.

Some of those same people who are telling you to be laser focused on SEO will also tell you that writing about sensational or controversial topics is a great way to drive traffic to your blog. Again, there is no question about that either. If you write a provocative post on a controversial topic, you will get traffic.

Not all traffic is created equal.

What I'm about to say is not meant to diminish the value of SEO. I think it's value is self evident. The following words are meant to highlight the value of using your blog to touch real people, not just Internet spiders. If I were a real estate agent with a blog, the only traffic that would make me truly smile, would be visits to my site by people I could actually take to breakfast or lunch. A random comment from someone in another state would be nice, but a comment from someone five miles away... that's gold. And I'd want to do everything in my power to try and mine that gold.

It has nothing to do with SEO. It's about YEO. It's about You Engaging Others. If you want to be successful in blogging, you need to understand how to engage others in every aspect of the blogging experience.

It starts before you begin to write a single word... What matters most is the relationships you develop as you go about your day.

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How do you insure increases in local traffic?

It's not by simply writing about local topics. It has nothing to do with SEO. It's about YEO. It's about You Engaging Others. If you want to be successful in blogging, you need to understand how to engage others in every aspect of the blogging experience.

Where Engagement Begins

Of course content is important, but it has to go beyond that. And it starts before you begin to write a single word.

You live in the area you write about. So it's the people that really matter. What matters most is the relationships you develop as you go about your day. It's about meeting real people at new home sites, at local businesses, at association meetings and anywhere else you choose to focus your writing. Those real, live human beings are your ultimate target. **Why wait for them to find you in a search?**

Introduce Yourself & Your Blog

Before you write a single word, make sure you introduce yourself. Tell the people who are associated with your post that you will be writing about them. Explain why you're writing about them. Explain the purpose of your blog and why people want to read it. Explain why you think people will be interested in them, their business or their mission. Ask if you can quote them. Take their picture. More often than not, they'll be more than willing to talk to you and share information you may not be able to obtain any other way. For most, it will be the first time anyone has given them this much attention.

Harness The Power Of Their Relationships

Obtain their email address and phone number, then send them the link to your post. Be sure to use their name in the posts and a photo if you took one. Most people don't get to see their name in print very often, so it's a big deal to be written about by someone else. They WILL remember you for that. Here's something else they will do, they'll forward the link to friends, family and business associates. You

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extend your reach virally. And you don't have to just depend on someone finding the story on Google to make it happen.

That's the point. Other people know other people. Connect with them and they'll connect you. This works whether you're writing about a [local restaurant](#) or whether you're writing about a historic building. Put the focus on the people. If you engage the people behind the stories you get two benefits. First, you get truly original content, something you can call your own. And second, there is a good chance that they will actively participate in your success. There is a good chance they will participate in spreading the story. **This is NOT about getting to the long tail!** This is about directly connecting with real people.

Follow Up... But Not Via The Internet

I'm an internet junkie. I love all the [gadgets and goodies and ideas](#). But nothing replaces a telephone call, a handwritten note or a personal follow up visit to say "thank you." Treating them like your customer before they're your customer. Show them, by your actions, how you would work with anyone they might consider referring. If you can execute on the actions around writing the post, engage them and keep them informed, they will rightly assume you'd do the same thing in a real estate transaction.

Meet the people behind the stories and they'll be happy to share. Share the stories with them and they'll share them with their friends and business associates. Go out of your way to treat them with respect and those same friends and business associates will hear about that as well. Your actions will do all of your evangelizing for you.

Real Estate Blogging Should Be A Contact Sport.

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SEO is great, YEO is better.

Real Estate Blogging Should Be A Contact Sport.

Jeff has over twenty years experience as both a successful entrepreneur and a senior executive in a large corporation.

As company founder and CEO he led J.J. Grace, Inc. (dba AdOut, [TheSpecDept.com](#), TSA Design Group) to the Inc. Magazine list of the 500 fastest growing companies in America and the following year won [Cisco's Growing With Technology Award](#) recognizing innovative companies networked for growth. As a senior executive and Group President of [Vertis](#), Mr. Turner brought the needed vision and leadership to a highly diversified corporate Group and integrated the operations, the focus and the spirit of that Group back into the organizational mainstream.

Throughout his career, Jeff has excelled at bringing extraordinary vision, creativity and innovative solutions to challenging situations. In his experience, he has recognized and applied the science and creativity of communication to his organization. It has been instrumental in achieving uncommon successes. His insights and knowledge, both practical and academic are integral to how Real Estate Shows designs and delivers breakthrough sales communication. Jeff earned his bachelor's degree in Psychology from [Grace College](#) (Indiana) and a Master's degree in Educational Psychology from [Ball State University](#) (Indiana). Jeff is married to Racquel (Rocky) and they have six children. (That is not a typo.)

How I'm Building A Community Around My Blog

By Nick Bostic

Blogging is the perfect method of creating a rich online resource while promoting visitor interaction. I have been building web sites with the goal of creating a community for almost ten years. Most of them haven't been successful in this goal, but several have. I have come to discover from both my failures and successes a few key elements that I believe are essential to building a loyal online community: setting realistic goals, making interaction easy and generating valuable, unique content.

Too frequently, in both my own endeavors and those of people I coach, people jump into Web 2.0 technologies such as blogging without a clear goal in mind. Although blogs perform very well in search engines and can generate quite a bit of traffic on their own, it is still important to start out with a relatively easy goal. Achievable goals could be one sale in the first quarter, 500 unique visitors per month, a comment on every article or an average time on the site greater than five minutes.

Setting up a blog and developing content is not quick or easy. In my experience, setting your goal unrealistically high can undermine your sense of motivation – you will feel as though your hard work has been for nothing if you don't accomplish your lofty goals. Setting modest goals is an excellent strategy for keeping your momentum going. When you exceed your goals, it gives you an extra drive to keep going, to keep writing, to keep building your community.

I am a firm believer in encouraging people to interact in whatever way they want to. Some people learn by seeing, some by hearing and some by doing; different visitors are interacting with you and your site

Set realistic goals, make interaction easy and generate valuable unique content... Setting modest goals is an excellent strategy to keep your momentum going.

One of the most important tools of a blog site is making it easy to email an article to a friend...ShareThis does this beautifully.

in different ways. People continue to adopt new technology as they become more comfortable with it, so allowing them the type of access they want is key. My current site (www.retechcoach.com) allows users to subscribe via an RSS feed or email subscription. At the end of every article, they are again encouraged to subscribe to my feed. I use Google's Feedburner (www.feedburner.com) to allow users to subscribe using the method they prefer. I think one of the most important tools of a blog site is making it easy to email an article to a friend, which ShareThis (www.sharethis.com) does beautifully. I utilize the ShareThis utility to encourage users to email my content, share it on their favorite social networks like Facebook, or submit it to social bookmarking sites like Digg. I use Plugoo (www.plugoo.com) to allow site visitors to chat with me live. I utilize simple contact forms so people can get in touch via email. I have optimized my site for mobile phone browsers - not just the iPhone, but any phone with mobile browser capabilities. I do my best to label all of these tools in an effort to make them as user-friendly as possible.

If you're not currently doing this, you're not alone. Some incredibly large technology-related sites fail at making it easy for users to email their content, which I find absurd. Reuters.com doesn't allow mobile browsers on their site and it frustrates me several times a week.

Beyond creating opportunities for people to interact with and pass on my content, it's important to make the style of your content engaging. I try to keep my articles as concise as possible and frequently use titles, images and other formatting to break up the sea of text. Traditional journalism has used this technique for ages to make a page more visually appealing.

Your point of view can be the hook that brings readers back to your site, and gets them to truly interact

It's important to make the style of your content engaging... I frequently use titles, images and other formatting to break up the sea of text.

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with you and your site. I like to add in a degree of controversy where possible without attempting to anger my visitors. Having a clear opinion that takes sides on a topic is an excellent way to get people to interact. At the end of each article, I try to always ask a question, even if it is as simple as

"What do you think?"

The way blog articles are structured is perfect for this sort of interaction because right after the question there is the comment form. I utilize OpenID (www.openid.net) so users can login more quickly and easily to comment on articles. Tech-savvy users are demanding this feature and many refuse to comment on sites without the feature. It took five minutes to implement, so I had no excuse not to include it.

Generating valuable, unique content is probably one of the hardest parts – and often the most impacting part – of creating community around your blog.

I deal mostly with real estate professionals and they are all provided market action reports on the 15th of every month. On the 16th, every real estate blog in my area has the same charts and graphs directly copied from these reports onto their sites. The information is valuable, but I constantly urge local bloggers to provide their insight into the information. I have no problem copying, pasting and properly attributing someone else's content, but always give a valid explanation as to why.

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How To Build A Community Around Your Blog

Maybe you agree or disagree with the information, but take the time to explain why you do so. Picking something you are passionate about makes it easier and more enjoyable to write content. I use Jott (www.jott.com) so I can call myself when I have an idea for a blog post; that call is transcribed and emailed to me. Another strategy is to subscribe to every other blog that covers the same topics as you. This way, you can see what everyone else is talking about, and either avoid that topic or provide your unique insight. This will help to make your content stand out from the rest.

Nick Bostic has grown up completely immersed in technology and the internet. He has been designing web sites since HTML was the standard. Nick has extensive management experience in the wireless industry with an emphasis on mobile connectivity. His day job is with a title and escrow company teaching REALTORS(R) about marketing and technology. Additionally, he is the creator of RETechCoach.com, a blog designed to help REALTORS(R) better understand technology and how they can use it to market their listings and services. He places his emphasis on understanding generational marketing, green marketing and the power technology plays in such endeavors.

Nick is an experienced public speaker, frequently educating groups as large as several hundred in an easy-to-follow manner about topics such as blogging, social networking and online reputation management.

Nick can be found in the following locations:

- www.retechcoach.com
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About the Authors:

Each of the writers in this work have authored their own blog for over a year. You might go so far as to call them [Social Capitalists](#) in their own right. When you've finished reading, visit their site and drop them a comment or e-mail to thank them for their contribution. Or you can thank them in the comments to the original post where you first downloaded this work.

As for me, you can [connect with me on LinkedIn](#).

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