

5 mistakes grown-up brand blogs shouldn't make

By [Louisa Douwes Dekker](#)

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You have researched your target market and defined your reader personas and you publish regularly according to an editorial calendar. Your blog focuses on delighting readers not promoting products.



Image credit: Fikret tozak on Unsplash.

It's professionally designed, boasts engaging imagery and looks great on a mobile screen. Winning? Not yet. Here are five mistakes even grown-up brand blogs make.



Are you making these five common blogging mistakes?

Charles Mburugu 21 Jul 2016



Thinking like brands, not publishers

If you want to run with the big boys, you need to learn to think and act like a publisher. Let's face it. These are the people who know how to produce quality content and have done so for over a century.

Don't forget. Your blog doesn't only compete with your competitor's blogs. It competes with every online and print publication successfully writing for the same audience as you. It is your job to ensure that you are doing a better job of pleasing that audience than they are and to do that you need to manage your publication like a publisher.

So, what can we learn from publishers? Read on.

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Boris Dzhangarov, ESBO 22 Sep 2016



Not hiring specialist writers

Journalists have specific beats. These are the areas – for example, health or finance – in which they specialise. They have deep knowledge and understanding of their beat and a black book full of contacts.

They keep their ear to the ground for the latest developments and trends in their field and are passionate about their subject. All of this means that they write insightful, accurate and interesting articles.



Are you making these WordPress blunders?

Charles Mburugu 17 Jul 2017



Take the time to determine what beats your articles fall into and find a specialist writer. Your copy editor and readers will thank you. (A great place to find freelance beat writers is through [the Southern African Freelancers Association](#).)

Not chasing top topics

Editors and writers spend a lot of time gathered around tables deciding what they will write about. Coming up with killer topics is just as important and as difficult as writing great articles. As the editor of your blog, it is your job to work with your writers to generate these topics – although good beat writers should do a lot of the heavy lifting here too.

To earn your clicks and write articles that your readers flock to in droves you also need to understand what makes them tick. What questions are they asking, what are their pain points and challenges and what would they find interesting?

To do this, you need to **be** your readers. Hang out where they do on social media and in the real world and read the publications they are reading. Stay in touch with them with annual reader research. And do your keyword research to determine popular topics.

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A post shared by Zev Gotkin (@zevg1) on Aug 7, 2016 at 8:35pm PDT



Not employing a copy-editor

Publications put a lot of work into producing quality articles and a lot of that work is done by copy-editors. They review copy for flow, sense, structure, grammar, spelling and punctuation.

Writers shouldn't be expected to edit their copy and, no, you can't edit your writers' blogs. That is a job best left to the experts.

Not publishing original articles and research

If you read a lot of helpful articles on the art and science of content marketing (which you should), you would have been told more than once that millions of blogs are published every minute. Google just about anything and you will find an answer. Not always from a quality source, granted, but I can pretty much guarantee you that almost everything has been written about!

As a publisher, you need to write articles and share information your readers can't find online with a simple search. When you have a topic idea you should take the time to Google it. If it has been covered, consider how recently it was written, where it was published and if you can offer any fresh insights.

“ South Africa's leading women designers are building their businesses around a profound awareness of and respect for their customers. <https://t.co/MEhSlnKREW>— Superbalist.com (@superbalist) [August 20, 2019](#) ”

You will write some of your most popular blogs if you and your editorial team take the time to research an original topic for your readers. For example, if you write for cash-strapped consumers, why not research great family holidays for under

R7,000 or compare 2019 food prices with last year's?

Bonus point: Not promoting your blog

To meet its objectives – be they brand love and awareness, SEO or lead nurturing – your blog must have a sizeable audience. You will, with time, build a base of readers who subscribe to your blog alerts or newsletters using the carefully designed subscribe features on your site.

With some keyword research, you should also start to generate, that very lovely thing, organic traffic. Your customers or clients should also receive regular newsletters featuring your articles and will form a very loyal part of your readership. But to generate the volumes of traffic you need, certainly as your blog grows, you will need to pay to promote your blog.



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Your first port of call should be social media and, for some brands, there is content discovery – think Taboola, Outbrain or Oath. To successfully promote your blogs on these platforms you will need to learn how to run paid campaigns – or you can ask your paid media teams to run them for you if you are lucky enough to have access to such a very clever group of people.

Blogging isn't for sissies. Remember the one thing publishers have on you is that their brands are recognised for producing content. Just as you work as a marketer to build awareness for your brand, so you need to work to build awareness for your blog.

This takes time, hard work and perseverance – and, of course, you need to discover your inner publisher. Now, look at you go!

ABOUT LOUISA DOUWES DEKKER

Louisa Douwes Dekker is a content specialist at Comoonicate Consulting. She is passionate about the power of content marketing and helping brands use the channel to make digital magic!

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