

Want to add a digit to your blogging income? Here's how

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Blogging is a great way to substantiate your income and perhaps even do it as a full-time profession of choice. While social media and mass media is quick to position bloggers as social influencers and promote this profession to aspiring bloggers; the reality is that cutting it in the industry is downright difficult.



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The norm is to use the same renowned bloggers over and over as brand ambassadors, paid/sponsored bloggers and for whatever opportunities are out there. A lot of free resources are available to help one set up a blog and hit the ground running. Yet if many are honest, you'll be lucky to receive a free product to review or make a buck here and there from it.

Here are some tried and tested tips to up your chances of adding an extra digit to whatever income you are making from blogging.

1. Have a press kit

It took me nearly five years of blogging to finally compile a press kit. This is like a CV for bloggers. When you approach a well reputable brand or they are thinking of working with a blogger, the make or break it factor will be what is contained in your press kit.

It speaks on your behalf. It contains information about you, your audience, unique visitors, visits, hits, readers' demographics, brands you have worked with and so forth. This is what your prospective employer is interested in.

2. Diversify streams of income

A few Google searches are quick to highlight stories of how bloggers generated six-digit incomes from blogging. The reality is that it is not the norm. Don't just rely on sponsored blog posts to generate income.

If you may – within the ambit of the contracts you engage in – simultaneously also incorporate affiliate marketing links, Google ads, e-commerce opportunities, YouTube videos and various other potential income avenues.

3. Move with the times

You need to see yourself as a business. Take your blogging seriously. Set up a blogging schedule and timetable. Look into setting up newsletter subscriber forms (yes, that means producing a newsletter). Incorporate a pop-up chat on your blog's strategic places, such as where your press kit or your "let's collaborate" page is.

4. Get personal

Remember that there are laws regarding contacting users. So you need to first get their permission. So assuming you have all that in place (and are within the ambit of the law), send a birthday SMS to subscribers or an e-Christmas card to your top clients.

Post flowers to the brand managers your work with when you hear they have a new-born baby or are in the hospital. Send a thank you note after a campaign. Forging and nurturing relations on social media, the blog and so forth is important.

5. Follow your heart

Without your heart, it is difficult to sustain this blogging passion. Instead of joining web influencer/blogging PR companies and waiting for a brief that may or may never happen, believe in yourself. Take that step and also send your press kit out to the brands you have always dreamt of working with.

6. Learn to say "no"

Your heart will affirm your worth and toughen you up to say "no thanks" to exploitive collaborative deals. Some beauty bloggers get into contracts where you are expected to write up to five product reviews in exchange for a lipstick.

I've had international travel blogging invitations where I was expected to pay for my flights, accommodation, car rental, food, activities... Plus being expected to blog and punt it on social media. All in exchange for a 30-minute "media tour" showcasing the hotel's offerings. Had they been nearer and at least offered me accommodation and a meal, it could have been a different outcome.

7. Identify opportunities vs expenses

The same goes for the many "free" conference speaking opportunities bloggers get from time to time... Learn to differentiate between an "opportunity" versus an "expense". Knowing that will help you focus on activities that are productive and can add real value as opposed to acting out of desperation, simply to make a quick buck or to get a freebie.

ABOUT PHINDIWE NKOSI

Phindiwe Nkosi has a decade of experience coupled by a Masters Degree in Communication Management from the University of Pretoria, South Africa. Her experience ranges from working as a journalist, international news anchor, travel writer, speech writer, marketing and communications manager, editor, blogger, foodie and ghostwriter. She is also the founder of Travel Anthem and freelances for clients across South Africa, UK, Australia, Canada, Germany, India, Zimbabwe and more. Email her at phindiwe@communicationanthem.co.za for your writing and blogging needs.

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