

The Ultimate Guide To

TRAVEL BLOGGING

FOR TRAVEL AGENTS, CONSULTANTS
AND TOUR OPERATORS

IN THIS EBOOK:

- Simple Steps To Help Start Your Blog
- Tips To Grow Your Audience and Reach New Customers
- Tips to Get Your Blog Ranked By Search Engines
- Find Your Expertise and Keyword Focus
- FREE: Content Calendar Download



Index

3 Why Blogging?

6 Getting Started

9 SEO: 101

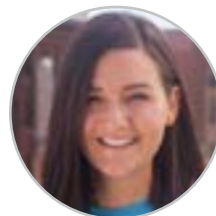
14 Marketing Your Blog

17 Outsourcing Blog Posts

19 Apps & Tools to Use

20 Writing Prompts

21 *Blog Inspiration*



About The Author

Stephanie is the Senior Client Champion and Education Coordinator at Travefy.

Learn more at [Travefy.com](https://www.travefy.com)



1

Why Blogging?

Why Blogging?



33%
Of U.S. Travelers
use travel blogs
for advice

There are many reasons why blogging can help your business grow and thrive by giving your client database a boost as well as keeping your current clients engaged. You're probably wondering how blogging does this. Well for starters it sends traffic to your site thanks to the gift of SEO (search engine optimization) and social media.



70%
Of People Learn About
A Company From
Articles—Not Ads

Every time you write a quality blog post, it's one more indexed page from your website, which in return means more opportunity for your website to show up on search engines and drive traffic to you. Sounds pretty great, right? It is! Each piece of content you create matters and we're going to show you how to start a blog, maintain it, and make it extremely successful.

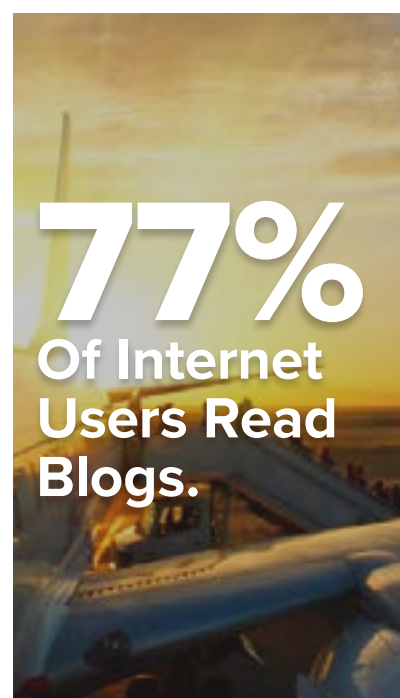


On average,
blogging increases
web traffic by
55%

How Can Travel Experts Leverage Blogging?

Travel Agents, travel planners, tour operators, and concierges can all enjoy what the blogging world has to offer by sharing their expertise with readers. The advantage to blogging about the topic of travel has its perks as well. Traveling is one of those matters that people do their research over the internet. In fact, over 3 billion searches happen every day on Google, Bing, and Yahoo, and a good portion of those people are searching for information about travel.

The amazing thing is, is that you are the experts, so most likely when someone finds their way to your blog, they're going to continue reading other posts you've added and maybe even reach out for your services.





2

Getting Started

Setting Up Your Blog

The first step you want to take when creating a blog is to find the platform you're going to host the blog on. If your site was set up by another person or business, reach out and ask them for suggestions on what platform they would suggest using. Some of the most popular options are [Wordpress](#) and [Blogger](#). With both of those platforms you can create a blog for free. However, if you want to integrate it with your website, you will need to host it on your current site, which can cost you a small hosting fee (typically anywhere from \$3-20/month).

Another option to creating a blog is using a platform like [Medium](#) or [Tumblr](#) where you can create content and share it directly from there. If you decide to use one of these platforms, you can simply link a blog button on your site and it can direct to the URL of your blog hosted elsewhere. Note that using services like this might create more reach to new audience early on, but have less impact on your SEO rankings over the long term. So you have to decide which matters more to you.



How Often You Should Blog & The Power of a Content Calendar

How often you post is one of the most important aspects of running a successful blog. Consistency matters. Did you know that blogs who post four times a week generate more leads than those that post weekly or less? It's important to keep a schedule and continuously push out fresh content. Blogs that are updated regularly give the reader the idea that you are a healthy, thriving brand.

Don't get discouraged if you don't have enough time to create a new blog every day, that's okay because having a blog is better than not having a blog at all. So shoot for at least two new blogs a week and promote the heck out them (promoting tips in the next section). One of the easiest ways to maintain consistency is to have a content calendar!

We created a content calendar that you can start using today! It's a simple calendar designed to help you keep track of important dates like holidays and make sure that your blog is setup to generate content that makes sense at the right time. For example, people start planning their summer vacations in the winter, so the month of January is a perfect time to share ideas for a family vacation. It's also a great way to keep track of what topics you are presenting when.




Keeping a content calendar will save you time and help keep your blog flourishing with new posts.



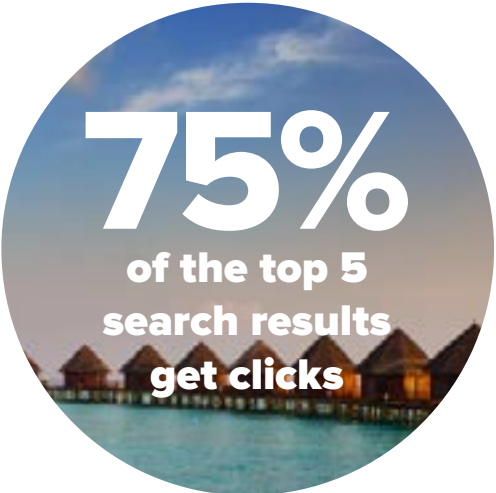
3

SEO: 101


The Power of SEO



91%
of U.S. Internet
users search
every month



75%
of the top 5
search results
get clicks



Organic search
drives consumers
to websites

51%

The reason for blogging for a business is not just to engage current clients, it's to increase traffic to your site and find new leads. Blogging can do this for you because of the power of SEO, also known as search engine optimization. SEO is the process of proving the relevance of your article and value of your website for a particular search term to move your content up in the search engine rankings. They look at backlinks, domain age, traffic, fresh content, and of course, words. For example: When you search "caribbean cruise", the top results that appear have dominated the SEO terms matching to your search. That's what you want to try and do when blogging. There are many different ways to drive SEO and we'll share how on the next pages.

SEO: Photography

SEO QUALITY

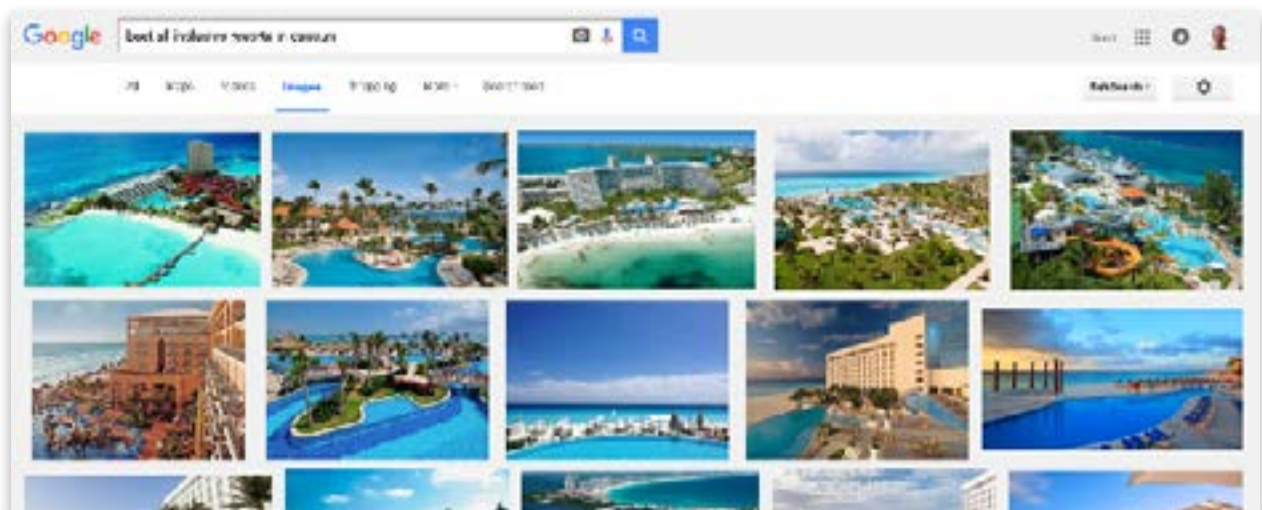
The images you use on your blog are just as important as the words you use to build your post. When possible, use your own photos – not only will these give your knowledge credibility but will also look great for SEO because it is original content. If you are sharing a photo found elsewhere, no worry. Just be sure to credit the photo's original source.

SIZE

It's important to pay attention to the photo's file size, as you will want to keep it as small as possible. This will help the image with SEO and send your image to the top when searching for images.

FILE NAME

Another way to send your photos to the top of a search is the name. If the photo's name is D342_15, your photo will likely, not get found. Instead, name it something related to the post. For example, a post about Paris, France's beautiful sceneries could have a photo uploaded as paris-france-garden. TIP: Be sure to use hyphens to separate words in file names and not underscores. Google interprets hyphens and underscores differently.



SEO: Plugins & Backlinks

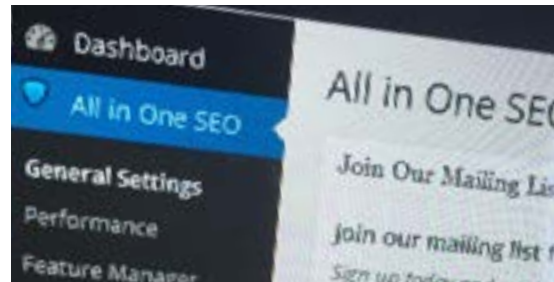
Finding a Plugin

If you are using WordPress, there are lots of plugins out there that you can install to get help with your SEO. Here are some to check out:



Yoast SEO

We use this plugin at Travefy. The plugin helps to give you a green light (literally) if your SEO is good on your blog post. If you need to add a little more optimization, it will let you know with a red light. This is a great plugin for beginner and intermediate bloggers to use.



All in One SEO Pack

The motherload of SEO plugins that will automatically optimize your blog.

Backlinks

Always link to an old article you wrote whenever you can. You can also talk to other blogs or fellow travel agents and see if they will link to your an article or blog.

TIP: Don't try to game the system on this by trading links too much—Google can easily sniff that out.

SEO: Relevant Content & Keyword Targeting

Let's face it, you probably won't be able to rank on the first page of search results for "caribbean cruise". But, you might be able to rank for "Best Family-Friendly 7-Day Eastern Caribbean Cruise"—it's more specific and easier to target with keywords and content.

KNOW YOUR TARGET

Make sure you know your expertise and target markets. Then, target article topics around that expertise and market. So if you sell ultimate ski trip packages for groups, then you want to be writing articles like "The 10 Best Ski Resorts In The U.S. for Groups" or "The Best Ski Lodges for Group Events in Canada".

Make lists of specific things that you want to rank for and plan your content around those. Make sure topics aren't too general. They need to be specific enough that you can get ahead of the competition.

RELATE CONTENT

If you have 3-4 specific areas of keyword targeting, like these:

- Group food tours in Italy
- French wine country trips
- Family-Friendly Mediterranean Cruises
- Mediterranean all-inclusive beach vacations

Then you want to make sure the majority of the content you produce relate or connect to these topics. You can open your focus and it doesn't harm anything, but creating keyword density and content focus tells search engines you are an expert in a specific area.

Create a mix of long form and short form content with shortform being ~300 words and long form being 1,000+ words.



4

Marketing Your Blog

Promoting Your Blog on Social Media

Social media will become your best friend when promoting your blog. It's the easiest, cheapest, and most effective way to get content out there fast. Use an app like [Buffer](#) or [Hootsuite](#) to schedule tweets, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn posts, as well as Pinterest pins.

Best Times to Promote on Social Media
(Times in CST)

Platform	Best Time	Days
Facebook	11 am - 2 pm	Wednesday
Twitter	9 am	Wednesday & Friday
Instagram	11 am & 10 am - 11am	Wednesday Friday
LinkedIn	8:00 am - 12 pm and 5-6 pm	Tuesday-Thursday
Pinterest	8-11 pm & 2-4 pm	Saturdays any day

Thinking Outside the Marketing Box

There are so many different ways to promote your blog outside of social media!

Share your own posts or guest posts on other blogs

Be careful when duplicating content, you don't want it to be word-for-word since it could hurt SEO. Google will deem a post not credible if it has been copied from another source, therefore, not allowing it to show up in searches.

Post on Medium

[Medium](#) is a popular story-sharing platform that you can post on for free. You can share your blog post and mention that it was originally posted on your blog and link to it. Also consider giving it a new title instead of using the original title on your blog.

Start a newsletter

Do you have an email marketing list of clients interested in travel information? Send them blog updates once a month on the best articles you create. It's a fun way to engage and supply interesting content.

5

Outsourcing & Guest Posts



How to Outsource Blogs & Offering Guest Posts

Not enough time to write a couple posts a week? Consider outsourcing blog posts or opening up your blog to guest posts. In fact, it has been found that about 63% of people feel that multiple authors add credibility to a blog. So opening your blog up to new authors can be a really good thing!

OUTSOURCING

There are many sites to help connect you with freelancers and writers to collaborate with and pay-per-blog posts. Sites like [Zerys](#), [Upwork](#), and [JournalismJobs](#) can provide a database of writers for you to pick and pitch blog posts to. When outsourcing, make sure to have a clear expectation with the writer about what you want and it helps to find someone who has previous knowledge in what you are selling or promoting.

GUEST POSTS

Opening your blog to guest post submissions is an easy and affordable way to get fresh new content delivered to your blog. Guest writers love contributing posts to other blogs for free because it's an easy way to establish their writing and get their name out there.

The thing to remember about guest posts is that you might not always know what topic you will get. Of course it will be travel related, but it could be about anything. It helps to have the writer pitch ideas to you first before writing an article you don't want to use. You can also create a guest post guidelines with expectations you have before when someone submits an article.

Apps & Tools To Use

Throughout this guide, we have mentioned all kinds of apps and tools to use when dealing with SEO, social media, and guest blogging. We wanted to organize them all here along with some other favorite tools for successful blogging.

CONTENT CALENDAR

Use our content calendar to schedule blog posts and get the most out of your blog and keep it organized.

ALL IN ONE SEO

If you are using Wordpress, you can use All In One SEO to optimize your SEO and increase chances of being seen in searches.

SEO YOAST

For Wordpress, SEO Yoast will help you manage and optimize your SEO for each blog post.

GRAMMARLY

Keep errors and grammars at bay with Grammarly. Install this app and it will correct your grammar mistakes while you write.

CANVA

Create images for your blog effortlessly with Canva. Edit images or use Canva's templates to design masterpieces for your posts and social media.

BUFFER

The easiest way to schedule social media and measure its success is using a scheduler like Buffer.

Topic Ideas

Here is a list of writing prompts to help you get started or keep on hand for when writer's block strikes!

What are the most popular trips that you send your clients on?

Write a post about how to choose a destination for your vacation.

Share one of your client's vacations! (Q&A with customer, share their itinerary)

What tips do you have for new tourists traveling abroad?

Have you ever fallen in love with a destination? Tell the world about it!

A list of the must-see places from a city, state, or country.

What's one common misconception about a destination?

Write about the best food/dishes from a certain country.

What are the 5 best kept secrets about a destination you know well. n you know a lot about?

What are 3 little known facts about a destination you know a lot about?

What are 4 places any travel should be sure to go at a specific destination you know a lot about?

Interview a tour operator, supplier or a local expert on their expertise about a certain destination.

Blog Inspiration

Need a little inspiration, to help get the creative juices flowing? Here are four travel-related blogs that we think are doing an awesome job!



TRAVEL AGE WEST

This blog is a great example of offering current trip deals, where to stay, what to do, and a diverse selection of places to travel around the world.

[VISIT BLOG](#)



FATHOM

Fathom does an excellent job in featuring real travel stories. It's a great place to find inspiration from others and how you can share your client's experience with your blog audience.

[VISIT BLOG](#)



SMITH TRAVEL BLOG

The Smith Travel Blog is a perfect example of specializing in one thing—luxury travel in this case—and writing about their experiences while providing information to it's readers.

[VISIT BLOG](#)



TRAVEL TALK BLOG

Travel Talk is a travel agency who does a great job creating fresh content on their blog. They offer trip ideas, things to do, and deals that are going on that their clients can take advantage of.

[VISIT BLOG](#)

