

BLOGGING FOR BUYERS

BUILD YOUR OWN WEBSITE, DO IT IN ONE DAY

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW TO GET STARTED!

This is what some of the active member of the Online real estate community [Active Rain](#) had to say about their businesses, the Internet and embracing technology. My only hope is to entice you to read further as I give you the step by step and play by play of how to do this on your own.

Nicki

I'm 60 and have only been a Realtor since 2004. I embraced technology because I saw it then as the best way to earn a living in this business. I got a website, and then another, which brings me 350+ buyers a month. I'm elated and in the top 1/4% of all Remax Realtors in Florida! Technology is where it's at, kid.

David

"I am number 3 in the Akron area on Twitter grader! My last 6 sellers found me on Google searches for "Akron Ohio" key words. (Mostly due to high placement after I post on ActiveRain) I post my listings to all the real estate sites available with all the pictures they allow me to post. I did one sale with 90% texting because that's what my buyer wanted as he was in classes 2 days. It can be done!"

Patricia

"I've been an agent for over 20 years. My website is 85% of my business.....:"

Fulton

"I remember years ago an office meeting. Of course, only the usual suspects attended because we were independent contractors--you couldn't require agents to come--though the promise of FREE food seemed to lure more than normal.

But this fine morning we were taking up the issue of renewing our web site. To make a long story short, the vote was NO. So me and my broker decided to pay for it ourselves. Near 75% of my business came from that site as the years went on.

I've since moved to a different part of the country, but that broker has gone on to syndicate and franchise his original lead capture sites, selling them as lead generators for hundreds of agents.

Things change. Embrace technology as much as you can. The internet is not a fad that's going to go away."

Cindy – Active Rain Member

"This is the way I feel on most days when I read agents lamenting their lack of business. Even if you have "embraced" new technology, are you using it effectively? I may not be the most techie in the bunch but I am listening to those who are successful and picking the pieces that work for me. My sales record this year says its working"

John –

"I have to mention one of the top producers in my office, 69 years young, just finished her e-pro course, has a system (secret) that she is operating where she generates leads, via the computer, and it works for her. You can't keep up with her, a stack of deal folders in her left hand and her I-phone in her right. She is there before you arrive in the morning and there after you go home at night, the hardest working agent I have ever been around. Nothing gets by her and she is relentless in grinding through deals."

Bruce and Sandy

"We are having our best year ever. It is all about the internet and putting yourself out there for people to find you. Embrace change and go for it. If the business is not filling up your typical basket find a new basket and fill it up."

Christine and Jennifer

The thing that really amazes me is that people will ask me about how I get so many internet leads and I tell them about my web marketing and that they may need to spend about \$50/month they freak out. However, they have no problem dropping \$150 a pop for an open house add that will get no response.

As Albert Einstein said "insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results"

I hope what you have read above inspires you to read on and follow through...

This e-book has been created by Nadine Larder of NadineBlogs.com where I hope you will find anything and everything you need to know about *blogging for buyers* and building your own web presence. I know many people don't understand blogging, exactly what it is and why it is so popular and hope this e-book from will help you get started along with understanding the why.

This book is a free download and may be distributed and posted as you wish, so feel free to pass it along to anyone you feel may benefit from reading it. I am giving this information away for free because I know you need it and hope you will remember <http://www.PrinterBees.com> when you order your next set of printed marketing materials/business cards. Please DO NOT change any of the links or edit the book in anyway. For comments or questions, contact me directly by visiting my blog at <http://nadineblogs.com>.

IMPORTANT:

Before you begin blogging, read this book ENTIRELY. It is a short read and the information about how people will find you is at the end...to keep you interested. ☺

Make sure to subscribe the RSS feed on the site at <http://nadineblogs.com> and if you aren't sure exactly what an RSS feed is, that's okay, it is covered in the book and you can subscribe to the feed after you read that section. Subscribing will help you stay updated on the latest and greatest on creating your Internet success.

THE BASICS

SOME INTERNET BASICS

It is important to put the power of the Internet in perspective before getting to what I want to share about blogging. One of my mentors explained the Internet using the analogy of a freeway...a super huge freeway, the super information highway! If you consider that the Internet is the biggest highway on the planet Earth, it really puts things in perspective. The Internet, Super Information Highway has millions and of millions of people that travel it, all looking for the off ramp with the information they are looking for...Yes, there are buyers out there looking for homes! There are people out there in cyberspace trying to find a Realtor, they want to find a home and they need your help! As a member of the Active Rain Community, which is a web community dedicated to Real Estate Professionals, I continually read posts, blogs, comments, etc and they all say the same thing. "A majority of my business comes from the Internet/my Web Site!!!!!" Don't mind the exclamation points, it is just me screaming from the mountain tops hoping to get your attention and more importantly, your follow through on what you read here. Your web site/web presence/blog should be at the very top of your priority list if you wish to keep finding new clients.

When was the last time you "Google" something? You most likely wouldn't have "Googled" something if you weren't looking for information and more importantly, current and accurate information. It is important to note the size of this highway and why people are on it because blogs are often the off ramp people take when looking for answers or education on whatever they have "Googled". This of course leads us to the subject at hand...Blogging!

WHAT IS A BLOG?

According to Wikipedia:

*“A **blog** (a contraction of the term “**weblog**”) is a type of 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. “Blog” can also be used as a verb, meaning to maintain or add content to a blog.*

Many blogs provide commentary or news on a particular subject; others function as more personal online diaries. A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, Web pages, and other media related to its topic. The ability for readers to leave comments in an interactive format is an important part of many blogs. “

In plain English, a blog is simply a diary or in this case a commentary of thoughts, opinions, photos, videos, images, or anything else that you wish to share. A blog can be private, available to only those who have permission to view it, or it can be public and available to the World Wide Web/Internet, meaning the entire world has access to it and can read it. A blog is a commentary of whatever you want to comment about. You will most likely want to focus on a commentary about the real estate market, where it is, where it is going, finding financing and everything else people need to know when looking to either buying or selling a home. This is your area of expertise, so it really shouldn't be all that difficult for you.

LET'S DEFINE “BLOGGING”?

A blog is much like a journal of thoughts and opinions related to a specific subject. Because it is YOUR blog, it contains your thoughts and opinions. In this particular situation, your blog should be a commentary of the market. A place where you can share your expertise with people who are looking for it in the form of short articles or other types of media, which I will explain later.

Real Estate professionals should use blogs to communicate to with the people in their communities about the market showing their expertise as they gain the trust of

readers or subscribers of the blog. The truth is people do business with people they know and like. People can really get to know and like you via your blog, just like people get to know and like (or dislike) reality TV stars or talk show hosts like Oprah. People become emotionally involved because they really get to know you. Generally speaking people appreciate people who “keep it real” and your readers will appreciate the same with you and your blog. Your blog can be about everything and anything you wish to “talk/blog” about or as they say “get on your soap box” about. Keep it real, keep it sincere, be yourself and let people get to know you. It will help you grow your business.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A WEB SITE AND A BLOG

A blog is a website much like any other website, the difference between the two is simple. HTML websites are built, put out on the Internet and for the most part don't change much once they are launched. The benefit of a website built in the format of a blog is that the content is dynamic and changes weekly, daily or hourly in some cases. It really depends on your commitment to it and how often you commit to updating it. The benefit of a blog over a static website is that Google and all of the other search engines are always looking for new and the most recent content. If you did a search and your results included website/pages with old outdated content, you would most likely become frustrated. At some point your frustration would lead you to a different search engine that provided better results. The search engines NEED your fresh and current content to stay in business and when you set up your site/blog properly, they reward you by indexing your site towards the front of the search. You give the search engines good content, they reward you by indexing you closer to the front of the search. It is a match made in heaven!

WHY DO I ALWAYS HEAR THAT I NEED A BLOG FOR MY BUSINESS?

In February of 2008, Technorati (*the authority on tracking blogs*) was tracking over 112.8 Billion blogs and that number is only growing considering a poll I read recently which showed that of 1000 bloggers, more than 2/3 had been blogging for less than six months. Blogging is still very much in its infantile stages and it is definitely not too late to get started. It really is an **online business requirement** in this day and age. If your business doesn't have a website, my recommendation would be to build your

company website as a blog for easier updating and the benefits of dynamic content. If you do have a website, you can usually add a blog to your site with a little help from your web developer.

If your business doesn't have a blog that is updated regularly, you will soon get left behind. [Here is a great place to get started!](#)

DO I NEED TO HIRE SOMEONE TO CREATE A BLOG FOR ME?

Absolutely NOT! If you have more time on your hands than money in your bank account, there is definitely no reason to hire someone, just follow the instructions in this e-book and do it yourself. Don't be scared, it is easy when you follow the step by step instructions included in this e-book. I have even included pictures to make it really easy and keep you from getting confused. You can do it!!!!

If you feel like you may be biting off more than you can chew, it may be in your best interest to hire someone to create your blog for you. It is possible to do it without the help of a professional, but there is nothing wrong with making the small investment in your business and having it done for you. There are obvious benefits to hiring a professional to do anything that you don't have the expertise in, but creating a blog is pretty easy with a little help from "*Blogging For Buyers – Everything You Need To Know To Get Started*"!

Let's talk about the advantages and disadvantages of both;

DO IT YOURSELF:

- If you create your own blog, it will take time away from whatever it is keeps you busy now.
- Building your own blog without the help of a professional designer and the assistance of what to include/not include could keep your blog from reaching its full potential.
- If you consider yourself to be pretty "techy" and like this sort of thing, I encourage you to dig in and get your fingers "dirty", if indeed you will actually follow through, the key here being...will you actually follow through and get it done?

- By creating your own blog, you are in control and don't have to depend on someone else to make changes and updates that are often needed on any website. You created it, so you know how to change it, update it or fix it if need be!
- If you *don't* happen to have an eye for what looks good and create your own blog, you may get visitors to your blog that "bounce" the second they arrive because your blog isn't inviting or looks cluttered.

If you do decide to create your own blog, we do encourage you to create a custom look and feel to your web blog and the easiest program to do that is [Artisteer](#). It requires **NO PRIOR** web design knowledge or experience and could not be more user friendly. It is a great program and they do offer a free demo. Visit [Nadine Blogs](#) for a full video tutorial on how to use the program. The tutorial shows you how to build a simple, but completely custom blog site template in 5 minutes! Yes, the video is 5 minutes with no outtakes or secret shortcuts. The whole blog template is built in 5 minutes. [Watch the tutorial now.](#)

HIRE A PROFESSIONAL:

- Hiring a professional to set up your blog in most cases is a one-time fee because once a blog is set up it is done. I have many clients who hire me to do exactly this because they either don't have the time or just choose not to do it themselves. It is not that time consuming for someone like myself that has done it many times and very cost effective if you have the funds available. [Feel Free To Contact Me For a Quote.](#)
- A professional will most likely set up your blog to match your company website or be able to integrate your company logo by using design software that you may not be familiar with. As mentioned above, check out Artisteer and the tutorials to see if this is something you simply wish to take on yourself. It really is easy with a little video training!
- Hiring a professional will require a small investment, but typically when you have some "skin in the game" you are more likely to follow through with the actual blogging.

- Your blog will need to have some structure to it and a professional will obviously have more insight in to creating that structure.

NOTE: If you do choose to hire a professional to create your blog site, make sure that your agreement includes training on how to log in, create blogs, and manage the site. There isn't a lot to managing a blog other than adding "blogs" (content and articles) regularly, but you will need some guidance to get you started. If your designer doesn't include training, you are strongly encouraged to "pass" and find one that does.

As you can see there are benefits to both. You may possible wish to try designing and creating your own blog if you feel you have the time to do so. If you find you aren't succeeding at it, then hire a professional. What have you got to lose!

It is also important to subscribe to my blog because I offer ongoing tips on how to add "widgets" and plug ins on how to make money with your blog and stay consistent with it! [Subscribe now](#)

GETTING STARTED

There are a couple of different options to consider when it comes to creating your own blog. You can create a free blog by using the popular blog sites like [WordPress](#) or [Blogger](#). Creating your blog for free using the above mentioned sites can be a good way to get started, **but** it limits your ability to create income from your blog in the long term because you can't fully monetize the site by selling ad space or creating affiliate relationships. When you have a free blog, you actually agree to allow WordPress and Blogger to post ads on your blog, which is how they generate revenue. Pretty tricky...huh! You also don't have the ability to get creative with your blog because you are limited to the templates provided to you. By hosting your own blog site, you have flexibility and freedom with both the design and how you decide to fully monetize with your blog.

The best advice I can offer is to create your blog using your own domain name, which does require a very small investment. Purchasing your own domain name means you **own the rights** to that domain name and are not dependent or at the mercy of another company or domain name like *www.yourblog.wordpress.com* should your blog really take off, and I am hopeful it does! Purchasing a domain name costs approximately \$10 annually, and is your property as long as you keep up the registration. It is important to mention that your domain name should be as short as possible. It should also be REMEMBERABLE and relevant to the subject of your blog. If at all possible, your domain name should include a word that will help Google to index you. Example, if you plan to blog about mortgages, the word mortgages being part of your domain name will improve your chances of Google knowing what your blog is about. The Google search engine is very smart and does understand synonyms, so if that is your only option, go for it. More on this subject at the end of this e-book.

For registering your domain, I always recommend [Name Cheap](#), they are cheap, offer free private registration and are so much easier to deal with than companies like "Go Daddy", which I myself find difficult and confusing to maneuver around. You can see how easy it is to register your domain and set up the *hosting* here – [quick video tutorial](#)

To make sure you understand what hosted means, let me explain. Your blog must be located on a computer, also known as a server out on the internet. There are companies that offer services called “hosting” where you basically rent space on their servers/computers. Hosting companies have the “set up” you need for your blog to be accessible on the Internet. I was once in a networking class taught by a bunch of network engineers and they explained this part of the Internet as “magic”. To keep things simple, lets stick with “it’s magic” as well.

For beginners, there are certain hosting companies that I would steer clear of due to user interface and ease of use...NOT being easy. I won’t mention the ones NOT TO USE...bad karma, but I will tell you which one I find to be the easiest and very cost effective. My favorite hosting company is [HostGators](#), and I have tried many. HostGators is the easiest I have come across when it comes to the “back end” user interface, which you will need to interact with from time to time. As promised, I have created video tutorials to show you how to set up your account in HostGators along with your blog, etc.

More about hosting and step by step instructions in the next section!!!!

Again...I want to stress that making the small investment of \$10 annually for a domain name **that is your own** is highly recommended and will give you the most freedom to create income, and monetize your blog. With your own domain name, you also have your own email address that is yours and follows you and your business wherever you go, because it is yours...you own it! Make sure you read all the way to the end of this e-book to make sure you choose the right domain name. It is important!

HOSTING

I know I sound like a broken record, but I am trying to save you from being totally frustrated and overwhelmed by technology that is confusing when you set up your hosting and your blog. I will have to assume that if other hosting solutions frustrated the heck out of me (a total computer geek) by being confusing, it will most likely have the same effect on you, and we don't want that to happen. BY FAR the easiest company to work with when it comes to hosting your blog site or website is [HostGators](#).

Follow these easy steps to set up your hosting:

There is a link with pictures following these directions...so don't panic...I tried to think of everything.

- Register for your [HostGators Account](#), make sure to note your "Name Servers Address", which will be sent to you in an email message from [HostGators](#) after you register(trust me on this). You will need this information shortly.

If you used Name Cheap, click on DNS servers and choose, "point my domain to another server". Type in the two domain server addresses emailed to you and you are done! If you register with another company, find where you "point your DNS Servers", you will need to point them to the TWO addresses provided to you by [HostGators](#), when you signed up for hosting and they emailed the information to you.

- Once you have pointed your domain name to the proper DNS server, you are just a few clicks away from setting up your blog.
- Go to your websites cpanel by typing your web address, followed by /cpanel.
Example:
`www.yourwebdomain.com/cpanel`
- You will be prompted to provide your user name and password, click enter. **YOU ARE IN!!!!** *Your username and password, you picked and they were emailed to you as well in the same email with the domain server information, just in case you can't remember.*
- Once you gain access to your cpanel, scroll to the bottom of the page and you will see an icon that says "Fantastico". Click it.

- Once in Fantastico, on the left you will see a list of services available. Click on WordPress.
- You should now see WordPress information on the right side of your screen and under the words “installations”, it should say “none”.
- Click “Install” WordPress and follow the prompts. Make sure you make note of your user name and password as well as the link you need to visit in order to access your WordPress Blog. You will be given the option to receive an email message with the user name, password and where to log in...I STRONGLY recommend having it sent to you for safe keeping.
- That’s it! You’re done and ready to log in to your WordPress blog start blogging.
- To access your WordPress blog and log in, go to your admin by typing:
www.yourblogsite.com/wp-admin/
Enter your user name and password that you chose when you installed it.
- To customize your blog, [watch the video tutorial](#) on how to upload the custom template you designed with [Artisteer](#), if you chose that method for your custom design.

[Wordpress Theme Generator. Instantly create great looking and professional Wordpress Themes.](#)

I know some people need visuals to help them find buttons, links, etc when it comes to doing things like this, so I have created a post “with pictures” that also includes the step-by-step instructions listed above.

[Click here to view the directions with images to help you.](#)

WHAT TO BLOG ABOUT

So, we have gone over the basics of what a blog is, where to host it and how to set it up. If you are reading this e-book, chances are extremely high that you are looking to increase the amount of buyers and sellers you are working with by exploring the Internet.

The big question is... "what will you blog about?"

The answer is simple.... "You should blog about a subject you are an expert on."

I myself am passionate and feel my life's purpose is to teach people how to do things I feel will add value to their lives. I have spent the last few years of my life learning anything and everything I can about the Internet, how it works and how to increase my business with it. I have become a bit of a guru and now spend my time blogging and educating people about "blogging". It isn't difficult to come up with content, when you blog about what you live and breathe daily.

When you present yourself as the "resident expert" (pardon the pun) you will need to take responsibility to keep yourself educated and up to date on the real estate market in your area. I encourage you to find your favorite real estate market related websites and subscribe to them via RSS Feed to keep yourself educated. (RSS Feeds will be covered, so not to worry)

You will most likely find times that you aren't sure what the heck to write about and when that happens, read some of your old blog posts, update them put a new spin on them and link back to them talking about those posts again.

It is also a great idea to have guest bloggers write for your blog whenever possible. If you are a Realtor and have a Mortgage Broker you partner with, have your Mortgage Broker write articles about financing. If you are a Mortgage Broker, invite a local Realtor to write a market update for your blog. Invite local appraisers to give their take on the market and how values are changing. "Google" a topic you want to blog about and see what's hot and put your spin on it. If you stumble upon an article which is a "must read", give credit where credit is due should you wish to commentate on it.

By keeping a high standard of ethics, you will gain respect by other people in the industry who may in turn quote you from time to time.

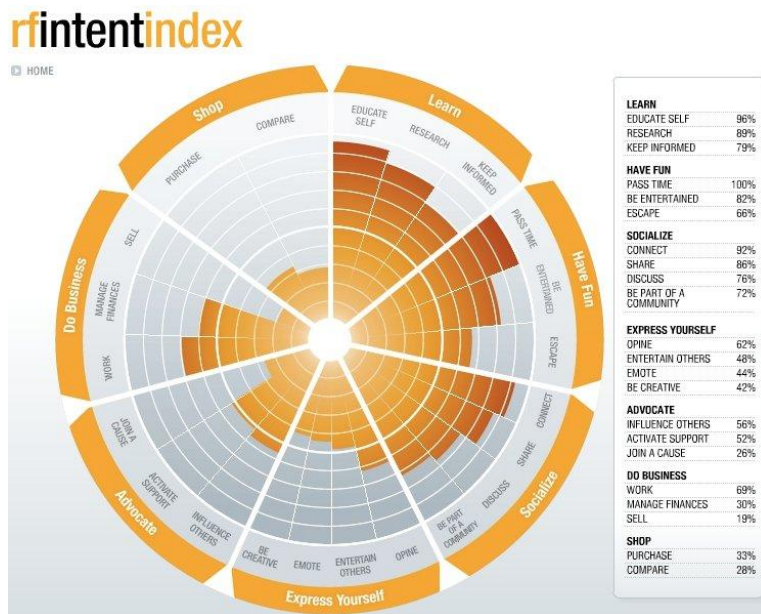
You should also make sure to stay on top of current events by including yourself in the social networks like [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Digg](#), [Active Rain](#) and many others listed at the end of this e-book. To keep things simple, I haven't included "social networking" and encourage you to visit my website to learn more about social networking, it too is very important to your Internet success.

NINE HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE BLOGGING

It is important to talk about how to build a blog that will have success and what you should expect of yourself before you get started. I say “*expect of yourself*” because you will need to make some agreements with *yourself*. I started working from home in 1996 and made agreements with myself regarding my work ethic, working hours, work schedule and you too will need to do the same. It takes a little discipline at first, but once you get used to it, it is easy.

1. **You must be committed you must blog consistently.** Before you start with the list of excuses, consider this; Creating a blog post is not exactly a full-time job and can be completed in as little as 5-10 minutes. If you recall, I mentioned earlier that you are blogging about a subject you are an expert in. How long will it take you to write a quick article or thought on a subject you are entrenched in daily?
2. **You can write.** It is important to get your message across “*in writing*” without confusing people of “baffling them with bull@#*%!” If you need to work on your writing...take a class, read a book on how to write or hire someone to edit your work. It is highly unlikely first time readers will return if they can't follow your thoughts. I also wish to stress the importance of “Keeping It Simple Stupid (KISS)” when you write. You must appeal to the masses and using *big* words will only frustrate the average visitor who isn't a “walking dictionary”. Everything you write should be easy to read and easy for a 7th grader to understand. I encourage you to pick up this book to help you out and it really will help you out. [CopyWriter's HandBook By Robert Bly](#).
3. **Keep your posts to the point.** Keep your posts from being wordy. When you think you are done writing, go back reread and delete every unnecessary word and sentences wherever possible. The word “*that*” in most cases can be deleted along with many others. [Writing good copy](#) that is short, sweet and to the point will keep your readers interested.
4. **Give your headings as much thought as your posts.** The goal of your heading should be to get potential readers to read the first sentence of your blog post. The goal of your first sentence should be to get them to the second sentence, etc. See Rule number 3!

- The subject of your blog.** As I mentioned prior, you should blog about what you are an expert on, people want information, good information. As I mentioned earlier, make sure you keep yourself educated by subscribing to websites that have good information for you to pass along.
- Keep it interesting, informative and educational.** According to ruderfinn.com,



people read blogs mainly because they are looking to educate themselves. Your blog needs to be educational and interesting if you wish for your readership to increase. Increased readership, means an increase in business.

7. Add media to your blog when possible. When you visit a website that is only text, it looks uninteresting because it is just a bunch of words on a

page. Humans are visual. When possible include YouTube Videos, podcasts, images, etc. Realtors should add video tours of their listings and you can do it yourself with a little video camera called “The Flip”, which is around \$150. Here is a link to purchase this really super easy to use camera. It also gives you the ability to put your listings on YouTube with the software included.

- MAKE SURE your blog has an RSS feed available.** It is important to make sure your blog has an RSS feed with a FULL FEED available for people who subscribe to your blog. You will also want to make it VERY OBVIOUS that you offer an RSS feed to your readers by placing a VERY LARGE RSS button on your site to encourage people to subscribe. There are many people who still aren’t exactly sure about RSS, what it is and how to use it. The time will come when it is the standard and you need to be ready.
- Don’t overload your blog with ads.** One of the ways you can earn additional income is to display ads on it and I encourage you to do so. Read my free report called “profitable blogging” to learn more about that. It is on the blog. If your

blog is cluttered with too many ads and not enough valuable content as well as disorganized it will most likely discourage first time visitors from actually reading your content because all they see is a bunch of ads. It is kind of like listening to a radio station with too many commercials or reading a magazine that has more ads than articles. I think you get my point.

RSS – WHAT THE HECK IS AN RSS FEED?

RSS is an acronym for “Really Simple Syndication” or as I read recently on one bloggers blog “explained the Oprah Way” RSS stands for: I’m **“Ready for Some Stories”**.

If you are not familiar with RSS, it would be assumed you aren’t using RSS to keep track of your favorite websites. When you come across a website you want to keep track of, you most likely “bookmark it” with your Internet browser so that you can later return to that site and stay up to date on it. What if you didn’t have to return to the site until you KNEW there was new information of interest posted? With RSS technology there is no need to bookmark, you simply subscribe to the RSS feed offered on the website and updates are *sent to you* shortly after they are published! How cool is that?

Another way to explain RSS is to think of it as a subscription to your favorite magazine, newspaper or periodical. When you have a subscription to any of these, they show up on your doorstep or in your home mailbox and you read them or possibly let them stack up in your bathroom! Maybe you read them while in the bathroom! RSS is basically the same, except it is an electronic subscription to your favorite websites, web content, web pages, or weblogs and it is delivered to you via your RSS Reader (*I will get to RSS Readers, not to worry*). The other difference being that you receive updates via your RSS Reader anytime something is updated or changed on your favorite sites.

RSS READERS

Listed below are three easy to use RSS Feed Readers to get you start subscribing to your favorite websites.

- One of the most popular RSS Feed Readers is [Google Reader](#), it is free and very user friendly.
- If you use Yahoo!, for email or frequent Yahoo! and have an account, Yahoo's RSS Reader is also great and very easy to use. You will find the ability to add the feeds in "My Yahoo!"
- Microsoft Outlook also has an RSS Reader included that you have most likely not paid much attention to. If you have Microsoft Outlook, there is a folder that is automatically installed called RSS Feeds and has automatically subscribed you to receive updates from Microsoft. You can add other feeds to your Microsoft RSS reader that are of interest to you.

SUBSCRIBING TO RSS FEEDS:

You have most likely noticed when you visited some websites or blogs an icon in your browser address bar or on the site that looks like one of these:



There are many different versions of RSS icons people use on their various websites, but this should give you a good idea of what they look like.

When you see this icon in your browser address bar at the top, if you click on it, you will receive a drop down menu asking you which type of feed you would like to subscribe to. Choose RSS Feed, which will then take you to a screen showing what the feed will look like in

your RSS Reader. You will also see a drop down menu asking you where you would like your RSS to be fed to. Choose one of the options and that is it! If you choose Outlook, you will get an email in your inbox which will automatically be put in your RSS Feed folder. If you use My Yahoo!, you will see it listed in your custom "My Yahoo!"

page. If you choose Google, it will display in your “iGoogle” page, this is my favorite method, all article headings in one place make it easy to choose what I want to read. All three are easy and I encourage you to get started on it right away!

By subscribing to the RSS Feeds on your favorite websites, you will soon begin to understand the importance of having an RSS Feed on your own blog.

WHY PEOPLE WILL RETURN AND SUBSCRIBE TO YOUR BLOG

The best thing to consider is asking yourself if you would return to read your own blog. Is it providing value and good information to the reader/visitor or is it just a place where you “spam” offers, sales, promotions and promote your business? Is your blog “all about you” or is it offering something of value. When you provide good information on your blog that will add value to the readers they will return and return frequently and hopefully subscribe via an RSS feed because they want to make sure they stay up to date on what it is you have to say. You become their eyes and ears to what is happening in the real estate market and more importantly, you earn their trust. People do business with the people they know and trust.

One of the tools I like a lot is [iContact](#), which is the program I use to contact my past clients and communicate with them via email marketing campaigns. It is fast, easy and most importantly, CHEAP!!! It gives me a report of who opened my email, who didn't as well as what email addresses are no longer valid. It is a great tool and the price is right at only \$9.99/mo to manage your contacts, including phone, address and everything that is important if you so desire. Use [this Link](#) to get a free trial run and start sending out messages to your database announcing your new and improved website/blog! It is certainly a great way to start and get the word out. Be careful about sending out mass emails from your home computer. If your Internet Service Provider sees you sending out too many emails at one time, they WILL block you for spamming. I speak from experience, so it is best to use a program that is meant and set up for mass emailing. It is a real hassle to get your emails unblocked and you have to prove that you aren't spamming...it is just a mess that you will really want to stay clear of. I have created video tutorials about using iContact to make it fast and easy for you. Check my blog under “Video Tutorials” for lots of video learning and tips.

You now have all the basics of how to write a blog and turn your passions or expertise in to profits without having to invest more than \$10 for a domain name and potentially a small investment in design software ([Artisteer](#)) that will blow your mind because it is so easy to use and create exactly what you want without the help of a costly graphics web designer/artists.

CHOOSING YOUR DOMAIN NAME:

Your domain name is very important to your success and should be taken very seriously. Many real estate professionals like to have their websites be their own name. Your website is not just a website, once it is up and running it is a piece of property. It is an asset and should be considered as such. If your domain name is “www.YourName.com”, it won’t have as much value to someone else who has a different name, now will it? If your domain name is something like “www.realestate.com” and has a tremendous flow of leads coming in, imagine the resale value of such a site when you choose to retire.

Before you choose your domain name, do your homework and find out what people are “Googling” and find a domain name that matches what people are searching for. You may be asking yourself, so how do I figure that out? Not a problem, here is how you do it and one of the secrets I wouldn’t share with anyone for a very long time.

Google, Yahoo!, Bing and all the rest of the search engines will always provide the MOST RELEVANT web sites in the results they provide. How do they determine what is “most relevant”? There are many, many, many factors, but one of the most obvious would be the domain name.

Let me give you an example. Google the word “Xerox”, which is more than just a brand, it is definitely a term people use even when they are not being brand specific. When you Google that term, the number one result is www.Xerox.com even though there are many sites out there (over 32 million) that are also optimized and match the term Xerox. The reason Xerox is #1, isn’t because they are a huge company, it is because their web address is an exact match to the search term, making it the most relevant. There is much more to it than just having the right domain name, but the domain name is definitely the first step. I hope this makes sense.

There are a couple of different approaches you can take when doing your “keyword research” to figure out what your domain name should be, the quickest and easiest is “Wordtracker”, it is free and pretty easy to figure out. Simply type in the key word you think people may be searching and it will tell you how often it is searched. Very straight forward. Once you find a term that is heavily searched, see if you can

purchase a domain name that matches it. I always use Yahoo! to research my domain names because they offer great suggestions. I don't buy my domains there, but I definitely use them for domain name research. [Here is a link to start looking for domain names.](#)

The more effective approach is to use the keyword tool in Google "Adwords" to figure out what is being searched on Google AND the words that Google feels are related to those keywords.

If you recall, I mentioned that Google is very smart and understands synonyms, by doing your research on Google, you will see your keywords how Google sees them and know what Google sees as a synonym to your search.

You will need to establish a Google Adwords Account, which you aren't required to use even though I do recommend it as well to help you get started. I don't recommend spending a lot of money on Pay Per Click marketing and encourage you to limit how much you spend. My monthly budget for Pay Per Click is around \$30, because it isn't necessary when you are coming up organically.

I have created a full series of lessons to help you learn how to use the Google tools including videos, which I can't include here. When you visit the blog, visit the video tutorials section. The best way to teach you this part is to show you, which is why I created videos. It's easy, I promise...and more importantly, it's worth it! Your website/blog should become an asset that can be sold.

IMPORTANT!!!! You NEED To BACK UP YOUR BLOG

Lesson I learned THE HARD WAY...**BACK UP YOUR BLOG**. My blog was hacked and completely down and frankly I wasn't sure how the heck I was going to fix it! New experience...never been hacked before and hope it never happens again.

Obviously we worked out the kinks and the blog is now back up and running, but there was some definite panic when I paid a visit to my site only to see a huge banner on the front of it "tagged" this site has been hacked...with a logo! The person who hacked the site, has their own logo saying they hacked it along with proud link to their website and blog.... Are you kidding me!

Thank goodness, Wordpress had an upgrade and this is what I did to get our site back up and figured I would share in the event this "special" person/bot pays a visit to your site.

- I upgraded our WordPress because there was a new release available. This is one of the many reasons I LOVE HOSTGATORS!! Hostgators makes everything so easy and automated. I went to Fantastico, clicked on WordPress, it showed there was an upgrade available, I click it and upgraded. It automatically created a back up for me as well...[which is highly recommended](#).
- I found that most hackers attack your wp-blog-header.php, which I checked and nothing obvious there. I am no "technical wizard" so if there was something there, I am pretty sure I wouldn't have noticed it anyway....probably the case!
- I read that you should immediately change your user name and password as the friendly hacker who tagged your site may have created an additional account as well, which is what happened in my site.
- Make sure to check your your User Administrator Accounts. My friendly hacker, was kind enough to set up his own administrator account. Wasn't that nice of him??? Delete the user account immediately...obviously.
- I then went to my handy dandy "[artisteer](#)" program, which I ABSOLUTELY LOVE for creating my own templates and exported a new template thinking that if the hacker did something in the CSS or the HTML template file, deleting the old and replacing with a new one may do the trick! It worked and it only took about five minutes because the program is so easy to use!



- After getting the site back up, I made another back up of my blog using the backup wizard in Cpanel...which I just love. It really is so easy when you have hosting with these services...seriously.

This seemed to work for me, I do hope it can help you out of any sticky situations and would love to hear comments about what may have happened to you and how you fixed it if your site has ever been paid a visit and "tagged" by a "hacker".

Check out Hostgators for your hosting, but only if you want something super easy!
[Hostgators hosting](#)

File Back Up Quick Tip: For backing up my files and having access to them anywhere in the world there is an Internet connection available, I use [Drop Box](#). It not only backs up all of my work to ensure my data is safe should my hard drive crash, I can also work anywhere I have access to the internet by logging in to my online [Drop Box](#) account and accessing my files there.

[Self Improvement](#) – I have been reading books from [Hay House](#) since in my late 20's and what I've read has changed by life. Check out the list of books available from Hay House and never stop learning.

I encourage you to simply jump in and do it! The risk is not big enough NOT to do it. With an investment that can be as little as \$20, you really have nothing to lose, so go for it. I also encourage you to ask and post questions on my blog as they come up. If they are coming up for you, they are definitely coming up for someone else and I would love to hear from you. I also encourage you to post your blog on my site to create a link to your site from mine. Read more about why this important with Google on my blog. It is very important to have links that point to your blog site and I welcome you posting your blog on mine as a way to get started.

I also encourage you to pass this information along to anyone who you feel will benefit from it. I wrote it for that reason and hope you will definitely pass it along who are looking to learn more about the internet and how to monetize on it. Happy blogging to you. The next page has all the important links I mentioned earlier

There is much more information available on the blog and I encourage you to check in frequently or as I had mentioned simply subscribe to the [RSS feed](#) so you get the info sent to you.

To make it easy for you, here is a list of links you may find helpful.

[Click Here for the latest and greatest tools, deals and links!](#)

Please keep in touch with me and let me know how your website/blog is coming along. I encourage your questions and feedback and hope you have found the information I provided helpful and straightforward.