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Building an Audience Online - Jen Wilding

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Recommended Resources for Setting up a Simple Standard Website (without knowing html)

SquareSpace.com

Weebly.com

Wix.com

Resources for Blogging

Wordpress.com - WP hosted, free but not for commercial use

Wordpress.org - free download of software and updates but you need server space from a hosting company to host the files

Blogger.com- free hosted blog

LiveJournal.com – free but will advertise to your readers

TypePad.com – monthly fee, 3 package options

Characteristics of a Blog that Builds an Audience

- ✓ Has a niche topic focus
- ✓ Overall visual appeal
- ✓ Easy navigation
- ✓ Is **interactive** (comments enabled and encouraged)
- ✓ Most posts around 250-600 words
- ✓ New relevant content (posts) added a minimum of once every two weeks
- ✓ Use of images, audio and/or videos in addition to text
- ✓ RSS feed option (automatic information about new posts sent to them thru an RSS service)
- ✓ eNewsletter/Mailing List sign up* KEY to building a massive audience over time
- ✓ Contact info listed or contact form
- ✓ Includes links to your pages on other social media sites

Additional Blogging Tips

- A good quality photo of you posted somewhere on the blog is recommended (more personal)
- Make the most of inspiration: develop a collection of posts to use when you are too busy to generate content
- Backup your blog content - draft and save posts on your hard drive before inputting into the blog.
- Consider attending blog conferences and networking with other bloggers.
(Ex: BlogHer, BlogWorldExpo, WordCamp)

Blog Content Ideas

- Write about your writing process
- Write a how-to related to your blog niche
- Write about what book you're reading
- Review films in your genre
- Link to and discuss news stories related to the subjects you write about
- Invite guest bloggers
- Conduct an interview via text with an interesting person
- Create an interactive poll
- Share photos or video clips
- Host a trivia contest or art contest & award a prize

Popular Electronic Mailing List Services:

ConstantContact.com

Aweber.com

iContact.com

BenchmarkEmail.com

Some Top Social Media Websites to Look Into:

www.twitter.com

www.facebook.com

www.linkedin.com (primarily for corporate networking/job-hunting)

*Coming Soon: *Google Me* or *Google Buzz* to rival Facebook

Search Twitter

<http://search.twitter.com> or Twitter *#Trending Topics*

How to Build an Audience Using Twitter

- ✓ Tweet often (set aside time weekly to tweet)
- ✓ Allow your tweets to be public not private
- ✓ Provide interesting links, commentary, and quotes
- ✓ Be interactive: occasionally respond to the tweets of others (using @theirusername). Read the tweets of others and let them know you're listening
- ✓ Retweet messages others tweet that you see value in or want to share with (using RT@theirusername)
- ✓ Follow people who share your interests (audience and experts),
- ✓ Regularly use directories to find new people to follow
- ✓ Use self-promotion tweets sparingly, but do help to promote other Tweeters
- ✓ Follow back anyone who follows you and does not appear to be a spammer

A Few Noteworthy Twitter Tools

TweetDeck.com– free tool to manage multiple accounts in one glance

Twellow.com – A Twitter directory to search people by keywords

WeFollow.com – Directory to find influential / celebrity Tweeters, or top influential Tweeters by city/region

SocialOomph.com – A free tool that lets you schedule tweets in advance to go out at specific times (more features if you update to a paid Pro account)

Untweeps.com – Unfollows people who have not updated their status in a set number of days (ex: 90 days). Good for pruning stale followers so you can keep an accurate count of potential readers.

Build an Audience on Facebook

- Create an Official Page to brand yourself
- Input your business and personal contacts and invite them to “Like” your page
- Be sure your Facebook Page is linked on your webpage/blog, and any other profiles you can list it on so people know it exists
- Update often (set aside time weekly to update)
- Provide interesting links, commentary, and quotes
- **Be interactive:** Respond to comments that people write on your wall
- Self-Promotion is expected on an Official Page, but also use it to be a resource to your fans about anything related to you and what you do

YouTube.com

The next most popular way to be found online, second to Google searches.

Book trailers becoming popular. (See book-trailers.net & bookscreening.com for examples)

Animoto.com – resource to easily create videos

Overall Social Media Strategy

- Start slow, one media platform at a time.
- If you plan to create a blog, start there, then branch out to one other media site at a time and gradually build momentum
- Set aside a regular time, minimum of 4 hours a week to work on developing content and maintaining your social media presence
- Use tools that help you cut corners/integrate updates and save time and keep on the lookout for new tools all the time
- Don't wait until you have something to promote before you start creating your network. Build your network slowly so you have a large audience when you are ready to make important announcements.
- Find ways to have fun with it and it won't seem like work!