



## Getting Started with Blogging

Many successful financial advisors have taken to blogging as a key marketing tactic to generate leads, show their thought leadership, and take a deep dive into topics that resonate with their niche market.

Here are some tips to help you plan and execute your blog:

### PRELIMINARY PLANNING TIPS...

- **Determine who will write your blog.** If writing isn't a strength of yours, or you simply don't have the time, consider investing in a freelancer or delegating the writing to a marketing professional on your team. Find a freelancer experienced in writing for financial advisors, such as [Indigo Marketing Agency](#). You can help get the blog started by sending over thoughts in outline form, or see what the writer proposes for ongoing themes. Or, write your article and then send it over to a freelance editor to enhance it and ensure the final product is free of grammatical errors and typos.
- **Listen to clients' common questions and concerns.** As you meet with clients and discuss hot topics, keep a running list of ideas as takeaways from your meetings to expand on these topics.
- **Target your messaging to speak to demographics you serve.** Pick 1-3 key demographics or niche audiences you have experience working with or want to start working with (i.e. new parents, new retirees, business owners, baby boomers, Generation X, Millennials) and give them information they want to hear. Use the blog to go deeper into topics and provide major takeaways.
- **Don't overwhelm yourself with length requirements.** The recommended length of a blog post is 1,600 words, which equals a 7 minute read. While these posts are considered the optimal length, it's okay to go shorter. Having an article that is concise and highlights key takeaways will usually win over an excessively wordy article.
- **Create a compliant blog page.** Most advisors create a blog section within their monitored company website. This dedicated area is where you will push out your blog articles, and when you promote your blog through other marketing channels, such as social media, you would link to your blog article or blog page. By utilizing an approved Cetera website vendor, your blog submissions automatically route to Advertising Review for approval before they are published\*.

### PLANNING FOR AND WRITING YOUR BLOG ARTICLE...

- **Take advantage of the pre-approved content already available to you.** By repurposing content you already have, you will make your marketing tasks simpler and quite effective. Get ideas or even repurpose content from the [Connect2Clients® Email and Greeting Card Tool](#) (C2C) and/or your website vendor. Go into the C2C library and search by topics, or visit the campaigns section to see a selection of



content you can take and use for your blog. There may be communications you can simply copy and paste as your blog post. Or, combine a few ideas into one. You can expand on the topic from there.

- **Determine content themes.** Consider the time of year to discuss certain topics. Download the [C2C Marketing Planner](#) to take a look at ideas. If you need help with brainstorming, check out [HubSpot's Topic Generator](#). Enter in keyword(s) for what you want to write about to see suggestions.
- **Be authentic.** If you plan to write your blog, write as if you are speaking to your client directly. Incorporate your personality to channel the best version of YOU into print.
- **Mix it up.** Create informative and entertaining articles that are sharable and meaningful to your audience. Address a multitude of topics to cover the bases of the many interests of your clients and prospects, for instance cash flow management, personal finance tips, tools and technology, the market and economy. Don't be shy about adding in some lifestyle articles, too!
- **Consider also vlogging.** A vlog is a video blog. You can create a short and engaging video which can instantly show your audience the personality of you and your staff, your expertise, and it can help build trust. You'd cover similar topics to a written blog, but the video should capture the interest of your audience within 8 seconds because attention spans are short. Keep in mind that you don't necessarily need fancy video equipment to accomplish this and even a smartphone can do the job.
- **Always include key information and a call to action.** Each blog article should include a few sentences describing who you are, the services you provide, your contact information, website, and a reason to connect with you. Calls to action should vary. For instance, you can offer a way to sign up for your newsletter, schedule a consultation, download a whitepaper or subscribe to your blog (which you can email to them on an ongoing basis). Your website provider can also provide you with CTA ideas and may offer graphics to include on your page.

## ONCE YOU HAVE CREATED YOUR BLOG...

- **Repurpose your blog in many channels.** When the article is completed, think about how you can then use it for other types of content. For example, you create a blog in January talking about the new tax laws and explain how and why your niche audience is impacted and how you can help. Then, you can use your blog as a reason to email your target groups in C2C, linking to your latest blog. You can also share it on your social media sites. Then, for the following month you can expand on a certain aspect discussed in the previous blog and create a checklist on how to prepare for the upcoming tax year.
- **Keep posting on a consistent basis.** A blog should be incorporated into your marketing plan as an ongoing tactic. Be consistent with when you post, whether it's twice a month, monthly or bi-monthly. Blogging is one of the most effective ways to improve your search engine rankings because SEO increases when you continuously post online and you are able to optimize the search by peppering in



important key words throughout your article.

- **Save your blogs.** Know that your blog is a long-term strategy because it will keep working for you. It helps increase your search engine optimization, so be sure to keep an archive of your blog posts within the blog section of your website.

*\*Two-way commenting is not permitted on any blog page since this activity cannot be monitored. Use of a site outside of an approved vendor would require monitoring by the Website Watch supervision tool and manual submission to Advertising Review for approvals. Your Advertising Review department can assist you if you have questions on Website Watch.*

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