

# Web Presence for Writers

## Bird's-eye view of how to build an effective web presence

### Your Basic Philosophy

First and foremost, be nice. While being nice, be helpful. You are participating on SOCIAL networks... not FOLLOW ME SO I CAN SELL YOU SOMETHING networks. Don't be overwhelmed by this list. Do what you can; it's better for you professionally than altogether avoiding the Internet.

### At Least be Findable

Own your name online. Open a Google account and create a Google+ profile. Also, start a Twitter account and fill in the profile (more on Twitter later). Ideally, create a blog BUT DON'T use your name as the domain name — make sure you feature your name prominently within the blog (on an About Us page, for example). If you have a common name, express your business interests clearly and often in your profile information (“Jim Smith is a garden writer who writes extensively about gardening in the Pacific Northwest,” for example.)

### Market Research

Identify “winnable” niche key phrases that get a lot of search traffic (see the first few tidbits under “Tweet” as well). For local presence, identify the highest-traffic phrases and build location-specific SEO (use names of local towns in design, content, and maintenance of supporting web sites).

### Tweet

Establish a twitter account using your own name. Use Twitter for market research to learn what people talk about in your niche and to help identify key phrases. Follow people in your niche—both real people and news feeds related to your topic area. Make a list or two to track competitors who you'd rather not follow. Engage other tweeps in conversation. Be personal ~ 50% to 70% of the time. Retweet and tweet links to others' web sites ~ 20% of the time. Tweet links and insight to your business ~ 20% of the time.

### Blog

Bloggging remains the single most powerful tool for building an effective web presence. Acquire appropriate Domain Name. Install Wordpress and establish proper Title and Description meta tags. Maintain a company blog in which you use your key phrase in blog headers and in key places in blog text. Establish a rota of blogs where you visit and participate regularly (see “Linking” below). Mine the blogosphere for content and comments related to your products & services. Respond quickly and with authority to people who comment on your blog. Invite participation; don't present yourself as the expert in charge.



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## **Facebook**

Create a PAGE within your Facebook Profile. Post daily (or more frequent) status updates on your page. “Like” other pages in your niche and add them to your page’s favorites. Use Facebook as your own page and leave comments on other pages in your niche. Invite appropriate friends to “like” your page, and steer traffic to your page from Twitter and from your Blog. Find and join Facebook groups in your niche and PARTICIPATE! If you can’t find such groups, start one of your own in add to it every one of your friends for whom the group’s focus is relevant. Tweet about your group (with links), and mention it (with links) in your blog posts. Don’t put a lot of content IN Facebook. Create a blog and LINK TO IT from Facebook.

## **Pinterest**

Open a Pinterest account. Create pinboards and pin photos that relate to your work. Especially pin your own photos. Understand the copyright issues and tread carefully; respect intellectual property as you want people to respect your intellectual property. A social network is important because you’ll know who in your network is happy to have you pin their work.

## **Trad Marketing**

Continue with traditional marketing in your local market. Include your blog’s URL, your Twitter name, and your Facebook page address on ALL of your trad marketing materials. Create new business cards that include these tidbits. Maybe even do a traditional marketing event to announce that you have finally arrived on the Internet.

## **Mobilize**

Fully 70% of Internet users in the US go online via mobile device at least once a day. Deploy a mobile version of your blog (if this isn’t easy to do or automatic on your blogging platform, switch platforms; the one you’re using is catastrophically outdated). Include QR codes on your promo materials; use codes that link to specific blog posts, to your Facebook page, to your About Us page ... but be sure it’s where someone scanning the code wants to go.

## **Linking**

Submit your blog to blog catalogs and RSS directories. Link to your blog from other blogs using the comments form (leave socially-involved comments). Offer to guest-blog for blogs in your industry (after you get to know the bloggers). Provide links to your blog in Twitter and Facebook. Link all your social media web site profiles to your blog. Participate in forums and link your forum questions & answers to your blog.

## **Raise Your Game**

Create lively and engaging videos; post them on Youtube and embed them in your blog. Create an account on www.flickr.com; upload photos (use your key phrase in the names of some photos); embed them in your blog. Micro-publish on services such as Squidoo, Hubpages, and Weebly; link to your blog from your publications. Create podcasts. Lead webinars. Organize Twitter chats. Start a Facebook group.