



4 reasons you should blog

Blogging isn't just for millennials. In fact, as **Sandi Martin** explains, it could not only make you a better advisor, but also win you more clients

I CAN'T make it any simpler than this: If you're in this business to help people understand their financial choices and implement their financial plans, you should be blogging.

Oh, and it's also a good way to get new business – that is, if you're patient.

By taking the time to write blog posts, and by doing so with your specific clients in mind as your target audience, you can add value to your existing relationships and cultivate new ones all at the same time, with the added benefit of becoming a better financial advisor while you do it.

Ah, but there's the rub: time. Blogging well requires an investment of your already scarce time, both in researching, developing and writing good content, and in waiting for your work to pay off in tangible ways. Translation: If you're swimming in happy and well-served clients, or you're fending off a crowd of potential new clients every time you go to the office, then maybe you don't need to blog. But if that's not you, here are four reasons why blogging is a great investment of your valuable time.

1. Blogging makes you a better financial advisor

Writing for the public should be a little intimidating. You should be worried about how your audience will receive your blog posts – but just enough that it motivates you to go to greater heights of accuracy and relevancy. Forcing yourself to write well and write often about the ideas your clients are interested in makes you a better communicator – and, as it turns out, communi-

cating is one half of your job. There's very little point in developing a great financial plan or an investment strategy if you can't communicate the reasons why it's so great to the client who paid for it.

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2. Blogging adds value to your existing client relationships

Your clients already get enough financial news. They've already been told that the Bank of Canada didn't raise rates, that the Vancouver real estate market is overvalued, and that 70% of women in their 60s are worried about outliving their retirement savings. What they want to know is what that means (or, more often, that it doesn't really mean anything) for them, and blogging is a way to serve them by helping them think more deeply about the issues that really matter.

3. Blogging warms up potential clients before you meet them

Before you even get a phone call or email from a potential client, you know that they have already checked you out online, and what they found likely played a big part in their decision to get in touch with you. It's pretty rare for someone to retain your

services or transfer their assets on the strength of one meeting. By blogging, you have a chance to get in front of potential clients over the time it takes to convince them of your competence and compare you – hopefully favourably – to their existing advisory relationships. The best part is that you can do all that without leaving your office.

4. Blogging weeds out leads you shouldn't be spending time on

The flip side of writing directly to the clients you serve best is that your writing won't resonate with everyone. Turning non-ideal clients away is a good return on investment for the time you spend blogging. Think of it this way: Would you rather have 30 meetings with potential clients and close 10 of them, or have 15 meetings with potential clients and

close nine? If your time is valuable enough to stop you from blogging, it's probably valuable enough that using it to meet with clients outside of your target demographic is the same thing as wasting it.

My hometown of Gravenhurst, Ont., located two hours north of Toronto, isn't exactly a centre of influence, even (maybe especially) during peak cottage season. Yet I've had a full slate of clients after only six months of opening my (virtual) doors as a fee-for-service financial planner. In that time, I've paid exactly zero dollars for advertising. Every client who has retained me came to me either directly or indirectly from my blog and the resulting online relationships I've developed with colleagues and journalists. **WFP**

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