

Start a blog and stand out

Join the few advisors who blog — and connect with clients

By Fiona Collie | January 12, 2012 12:20

A blog is a great tool to help advisors connect and build relationships with prospects, says Loic Jeanjean, director of web marketing with Vancouver-based Advisor Websites.

A blog will make your business stand out, Jeanjean says. Only about 5% of advisors blog; the rest are probably held back by the modest time commitment required or worries about compliance.

Check with your compliance department to clarify what kind of information you can and cannot post on a blog. You will probably find that there is a world of useful content you can provide without violating any rules.

To make blogging a significant part of your marketing campaign, follow these tips:

> **Have fun**

Before starting the blog, make sure it's something that you will enjoy doing.

You need to be passionate about your business and your writing, Jeanjean says. Nobody will talk about a boring business — or a boring blog.

> **Post compelling content**

Choose the topics that interest your target audience.

When advisor blogs fail, it's usually because the advisors spent too much time talking about themselves and their services, Jeanjean says. Instead, you should focus on your target audience, with content that is unique, valuable and interesting to them.

You can discuss things outside of your business, Jeanjean says, like a hobby or an event you recently attended. Focus on seasonal topics and other issues of interest to your audience. If your clients are affluent, active retirees, for example, consider posting information about travel.

> **Engage your readers**

Increase the value of the blog by including content readers can act on.

Your blog should include educational material, says Jeanjean. For example, if you are writing on RRSPs or tax issues, include tips and resources readers can use.

Clients want to be educated and learn something new, Jeanjean says. That's why they would have started reading the blog in the first place.

Using a call to action is also a good way to keep readers engaged with the blog, he says. For example, you might ask clients to respond to your blog or to call you to discuss the content further.

> **Post frequently**

Gain a loyal readership for your blog by posting frequently and consistently.

At a minimum you should post four times a month, Jeanjean says, but it's better if you can do more.

Whether you are blogging on a daily, weekly or monthly basis, he says, make sure you stick to a consistent schedule.

> Invite others to contribute

Give your blog a different perspective by including other bloggers.

Invite guest writers, such as team members and centres of influence to contribute to your blog, Jeanjean says. Each contributor will write differently and bring a unique point of view to the blog, he says. That will help you to attract and retain a wider readership.

This is the first instalment in a two-part series on blogging. Next: Promoting your blog and tracking the results.