



SAIC WIRED

Curriculum Coordinator: Tiffany Holmes, Associate Professor

MAIN CLASS SITE: saicwired.org

Email: [tholme \(at\) saic \(dot\) edu](mailto:tholme@saic.edu)

[Ecoviz.org](http://ecoviz.org) + tiffanyholmes.com

SAIC WIRED: HOW TO PUBLICIZE YOUR WEBSITE (Compiled from many sources) WANT PEOPLE TO READ YOUR BLOG: TRY TO DO ALL OF THE THINGS ON THIS LIST!

SUGGESTIONS BY TONY HUNG

AVAILABLE AT: <http://www.problogger.net/archives/2007/01/11/how-to-market-your-blog-in-2007/>

Get Your Own House In Order (edited by Tiff)

1. Register your blog at feedburner.com (newly acquired by Google so you need a gmail account to use). Subscribe to your own blog via an aggregator like Google Reader.
2. Design is more important than you think: Your mother's right — first impressions count, and they can count for cash money. If you're serious about blogging, don't stick with an unaltered top 10 Wordpress theme no matter how cool you think it is. You want to separate and elevate yourself from the blogging masses, and its impossible to do if you look exactly the same as them. At the very least make your own header image.
3. Do interviews with other bloggers: Score interviews with newsworthy individuals (who may be linked to newsworthy content), to create link worthy content, but more importantly, create news on THEIR blog to get back to YOUR blog.
4. Break important stories: See the post on how to find news. Long story short: if you have an interest in an area, it is still possible to do this as long as you're willing to put in the time and energy to find stuff. Benefit: being picked up by A-list blogs, mainstream news outlets and more.
5. Have a contest: Or, have regular contests, which encourage participation and buzz in your corner of the blogosphere.
6. Publish original research: If you've got the time, start with a question, try and figure it out with the data available, and "publish it". For fun, I asked myself "How many of the Top 30 Diggers actually blog?" And I just went through their profiles and created a table of how many blogged. I then talked about what it meant, and tried to answer the question "why?" [answer: not many do blog, its because being a top 30 digger requires a huge time investment]
7. Put out Press Releases: Particularly if you have something new, unique, or particularly important to say (such as an important story, or research)
8. Answer your comments, in your comments, and off blog: Of course you have enabled comments on every post, right? So, when you do get comments, answer as many as humanly possible, and if its an interesting enough issue or question, contact the poster directly for a friendly follow up. Treat every potential poster as a potential subscriber to your feed, and a future friend and contact. (Note: try to make at least one comment on everyone's blog in this class-links posted on portal)
9. Spend time to create links and trackbacks: In every post spend as much time as you can to create outbound links to relevant and high linking blogs; many blogs automatically have trackbacks enabled, so in their comments section they will have a link back to your blog. If its a highly trafficked and ranked blog, this can mean traffic BACK to your blog, and it can draw notice from the author themselves — because, let's face it, we're all vain in a fashion, even A-listers, and we're all interested in who is linking to us.
10. Get Your MyBlogLog widget and work it, work it, work it (in a nice way): MyBlogLog — know it, love it, and embrace it. Since its been acquired by Yahoo, it has the potential to explode all over the blogosphere. The two sentence run down is that it offers a free widget that enables you to build a free community around your blog, and to easily see which other bloggers have been to your blog. You can "add" friends, and generate traffic, but more importantly, your own network of like-minded blogging colleagues in a way that is relatively easy and efficient.

Getting the Word Out

1. Join a blog carnival: Where every blogger who joins one blogs about a topic, then each blog gets promoted. Here's an index of blog carnivals to get you started: <http://blogcarnival.com/bc/>



SAIC WIRED

Curriculum Coordinator: Tiffany Holmes, Associate Professor

MAIN CLASS SITE: saicwired.org

Email: [tholme \(at\) saic \(dot\) edu](mailto:tholme@saic.edu)

Ecoviz.org + tiffanyholmes.com

2. Join blog network: Between 9rules, b5media, and others, there is networking potential, income potential, and a link-a-palooza waiting for you (through the linkroll as every member may have to link to every other member) if you're able to get into one. Goes back to tip #1 — don't forget to keep up your blog.
3. Participate in forums: Forums with tons of pages, huge lists of members, and a responsive community are an easy way to not only connect with other individuals, but an opportunity to tastefully demonstrate your expertise and a link back to your blog.
4. Participate on larger blogs in comments: Like number three, except that by participating directly in another blogger's comments you a) get their recognition and b) get the recognition of the blogging community. Also, here's a tip: try and be one of the first few commenters on heavily trafficked sites to get recognized — most people won't read past the first 10-20 comments. Here's another tip for traffic: IF (and ONLY IF) you have posted something relevant that is pursuant to the ongoing conversation and IF the blog has a commenting policy that will allow you to do so, post a link back to a post on your own site ("hey guys, I wrote about how we can solve this problem! — check out the link over here, but let me summarize it for you ... "). Sometimes you'll be surprised at how much traffic comes back.
5. Join Blogburst: Blogburst is a type of "blog network", which syndicates content across American newspaper's websites, such as USA Today and Reuters. That's right, you could get a post syndicated on Reuters. Trust me — it can happen . Highly ranked inbound links + traffic + bragging rights to your mom that your post got featured in a newspaper. Not too shabby. Also on the upside, they have a new revenue sharing scheme. The bad: read their terms of service carefully — you give up certain rights when they republish your content, and the revenue sharing works on the top 100 publishers only.
7. Submit to blog directories: example, subscribe to Technorati: <http://technorati.com/help/faq.html#claimweblog>
8. Submit to Google sitemaps: Really part of "get your house in order", but when you do, Google will be able to find you so much easier; translation — more Google juice, more traffic, higher rankings faster. Tip: for Wordpress fans, this plugin is particularly useful.
9. Submit to article directories: You might want to submit your favourite posts to article directories, where they will enable you to have a biobox / blurb with a link back to your own blog. Again, demonstrating your expertise, and moreover, the article might get picked up in a ezine or another blog, leading to more traffic and more inbound links.
10. Get interviewed: If you've demonstrated your expertise, or have done something newsworthy, or reported on something newsworthy, try and get interviewed. As long as its done in a fair way (doesn't need to be a completely puffpiece) by a site or blogger with some reknown, its more traffic for you.
11. Get listed on a news aggregator, or blog aggregator: Like Techmeme for technews, or Tailrank for blogging news. Hint: some news aggregators will actually accept submissions if you ask them nicely; double hint: try and get listed by linking to a top story within your first 100 words.
12. Create free stuff for yourself and give it away: Like e-books, digests of your favorite posts, pdfs, and so on. Make sure to include a link back in the document, back to your site.
13. Create free stuff for other people: the same, let them distribute it, get a link back.

Connect, Connect, Connect

1. Make friends with other bloggers: Ridiculously simple, but its true. Benefits of "networking" (making friends) include more mentions on other blogs, more requests for interviews, more partnerships in future deals, more "adds" into their MyBlogLog network, more "ads" into someone else's blogroll (and therefore links back to your blog) — it goes on and on. (Tiff: Suggest for this week: Post on a blog that is not a class-member's site. Use the Technorati blog search to find blogs about issues similar to the ones you are interested in)
2. Volunteer, intern, scut-monkey your way into a blogger's graces: Maintaining a highly trafficked site is a lot of work. Offer to volunteer your time with menial behind the scenes stuff (moderating posts, acting as a bird dog for



SAIC WIRED

Curriculum Coordinator: Tiffany Holmes, Associate Professor

MAIN CLASS SITE: saicwired.org

Email: [tholme \(at\) saic \(dot\) edu](mailto:tholme@saic.edu)

[Ecoviz.org](http://ecoviz.org) + tiffanyholmes.com

news) for free and with a smile, and you'll get a foot-in-the-door with the blogger, their network, and future opportunities.

3. Ask the nice folks at FNews at SAIC to link to your blog!

4. Network in person: Find other local bloggers using services like Meetup, and see if they're literally getting together to commiserate about blogging or their topic of blogging. Tiff: <http://www.meetup.com/>

5. Network in person: If you've got the time, there's nothing that makes an impression as actually meeting someone in person. Tip: bring a business card; Another tip: if you don't have any, make some. (Tiff: An absolutely fabulous site, works with photos thru Flickr: <http://www.moo.com/>). Tiff: Tell at least 5 people that you know this week to read your blog and make a comment.

6. Join virtual groups: Through Yahoo Groups, Usenet, and more; then bring the conversation off the group with emails and instant messages. Be friendly, be helpful, and it will pay dividends.

7. Cross promote: Once you've gotten to know people, you can kindly remind them to promote posts that you're particularly proud of; or, vote for your submissions on Digg or your social bookmarking site of choice. Reciprocate.

Make Social Media Work For You

1. Facebook: It's a social network that has opened its doors behind its college beginnings. Anyone can sign up. Start connecting with old friends and colleagues, like any other social network. But, unlike other social networks you can import your own blog's RSS feed, so that your connections can see what you're blogging. Use Facebook's "Notes" application to automatically post new content from your blog on Facebook. If you run multiple blogs, you need to use an application like Yahoo Pipes to consolidate multiple RSS feeds into one for use on Facebook. Each Facebook user can only post one RSS feed on this popular social networking site.

2. Join Helium: Helium is a new site that is actively looking people to head new categories of content. Think a paid "about.com" — for its authors. If you have a particular interest that isn't yet served on Helium you might want to check it out; besides giving you cash for content, it'll also demonstrate your authority in a topic, and you'll be able to leverage Helium's own traffic for your own blog through a linkback on your profile. (Tiff: Pretty interesting, I'm not sure what to make of this, you guys tell me what you think).

3. Yahoo Answers! A similar idea—but this time, you're answering questions that people are posting. Yahoo! is quite careful about spam, however, and including a "signature" is a dicey proposition at times. There is a fairly sophisticated registry and voting system that tries to prevent "gaming", but given how much traffic *Yahoo! Answers* gets, AND its inclusion as a separate result area in Yahoo SERPS (Search Engine Results Pages) it might be something worth looking into.

4. Create a Squidoo Page Lens: On a given related topic to your blog; participate in the Squidoo community; Squidoo has a ton of traffic, and you could funnel traffic and tastefully include links to other relevant sites and perhaps your own blog.

5. Use MySpace Marketing: Far beyond the confines of this post, but in a similar fashion to Squidoo, the idea is to capitalize on the HUGE amount of traffic MySpace gets (some interesting thoughts over here). Create a profile, create relevant content and links back. Start adding friends. Comment on your friends space. Join groups. Start enjoying the trickle back traffic.

6. Get Dugg / Netscaped / Reddited / Stumbled upon: Whole articles (and sites) are written about the intricacies of socially bookmarking. Here's a tip: focus on creating great content, make friends on these sites if they allow you to, and submit your stories judiciously. 'Nuff said (for now).

OTHER STRATEGIES FROM DARREN ROWSE

<http://www.problogger.net/archives/2006/02/28/19-strategies-for-finding-readers/>

10. List your site on Portals, Blog Indexes, Directories and Search Engines - There are MANY places that you can list your blog to help it get more attention. In fact there are too many and you could probably spend all your time



SAIC WIRED

Curriculum Coordinator: Tiffany Holmes, Associate Professor

MAIN CLASS SITE: saicwired.org

Email: [tholme \(at\) saic \(dot\) edu](mailto:tholme@saic.edu)

[Ecoviz.org](http://ecoviz.org) + tiffanyholmes.com

submitting your blog to them all. I'd recommend that you don't become obsessed by this and work on other factors in this list first and then in your spare time add your blog to some of these types of things as you go. Making sure you get listed on some of the bigger sites like **Technorati** should probably be a priority (here's how for Technorati) - but don't make this the first thing you do. In terms of getting into search engines - you can submit yourself but most people believe that the best and quickest way to get indexed these days is to get a link from another site that is already indexed. (A good article about Technorati is here: <http://scribbit.blogspot.com/2006/12/blogging-101-ten-technorati-tips.html>)

11. Search Engine Optimization - While some bloggers don't think much of SEO I think it is well worth knowing some basic SEO principles and keeping them in the back of your mind as you blog. After all SE's are the place that most people go to when they are searching for information on a topic. Don't become obsessed by SEO, but don't ignore it either. (See next section on SEO)

12. Add a signature to your outgoing email - This is an oldie but a goodie. Many bloggers do this. Simply add the domain name to your outgoing email. Most email programs will allow you to do this automatically via a signature option. However be careful with automatic signatures if you don't want your blog to be read by everyone that you email.

13. Offline Techniques - Blog Promotion need not only happen online. Consider how you might promote it offline and you could just bring in some new readers also. Such techniques can include putting your URL on business cards, letterhead, using press releases and other assorted methods. Read more on this here.

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION (SEO)

Blogging 101: Ten SEO Tips

By Michelle Mitchell, Monday, January 08, 2007

1. Make sure the search engines spiders are crawling your blog, or in other words, submit your blog's URL to Google by going to Google's submission page.

- <http://blogsearch.google.com/ping>

-VERIFY your site with Google,

<http://www.google.com/support/webmasters/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=35181>

-Read more here: http://seo-tools.suite101.com/article.cfm/verify_your_site_with_google
(you need a Google account to do this)

2. Make a plan about which keywords you'd like to use in your blog. Go to Google's Keyword Tool (or Digital Point Solution's Keyword Suggestion Tool or View Bids) which evaluates key words by the number of searches performed and type in a word such as "Alaska" and you'll see the various phrases that include the word "Alaska" and how popular each is. For example, you can see that "Alaska," "Anchorage, Alaska," "Alaska cruise," and "Alaskan" are the most popular and the relative price advertisers will pay for those phrases when placing their ads on your blog.

Run through various words or phrases that you feel describe your blog and see what combination gets a comfortable amount of traffic. Be careful, trying to compete against the most popular words is more difficult, so pick words that aren't obscure but that aren't at the top of the list.

Start "optimizing" your blog for those key words. Make sure your page title--or the title you see at the top of your blog page, on this page it says "Scribbit|Motherhood in Alaska"--reflects those key words.

On Blogger you can add this by going into your template and in the first line after the head tag where it says title followed by \$BlogPageTitle\$ type whatever key word phrase you'd like to use. On this blog I've targeted the words "motherhood" and "Alaska" so I added the phrase |motherhood in Alaska after my title. And it's worked. If you go to Google and type in those two words you'll see I'm the first entry.



SAIC WIRED

Curriculum Coordinator: Tiffany Holmes, Associate Professor

MAIN CLASS SITE: saicwired.org

Email: tholme (at) saic (dot) edu

Ecoviz.org + tiffanyholmes.com

3. Turn your attention to other places key words are used in your blog. That means abandoning the cute, fluffy, catchy titles for posts that are so tempting but absolutely useless when it comes to SEO. Short, informative titles with effective key words are what you're looking for.

For example, last month I did a quick little post about getting a new camera. I took a picture, uploaded it and without much thought titled it My New Camera. Makes sense, right? Simple, personal, to the point. However it was quickly pointed out to me that a better title would have been "My New Canon Powershot SD 600." Now perhaps that's a bit long and involved but if I had titled the post "My New Canon Powershot" or "My New Canon Powershot SD 600" whenever someone searches for Canon or Canon Powershot I would be high on the list. The word "camera" is vague enough that I have little chance of finding the first page of Google with that in my title.

So avoid obscure titular references, quotes or phrases and incorporate key words that the crawlers will notice and write posts that will produce titles worthy of search engine notice.

4. Remember this same principle when linking to other sites. Do you notice how in this post whenever I have a link to another site I list the title of the article or site by name? It is common among Bloggers to incorporate links casually by writing click here but every time you post a link that way you've wasted an opportunity for the search engines to notice you.

So not only are nouns key words, proper nouns are key words too and mentioning your links by name grabs Google's attention.

5. This same principle holds true for images. When you have an image on your blog, such as on your sidebar, adding a title to the image is one more way to insert key words into your blog.

For example, on my sidebar at the bottom of that lengthy list of collapsible menus is "Buttons and Awards." Click on the plus sign to expand the menu and you'll see a long list of images. If you allow your cursor to hover over each image, you'll see that a title for the image appears. Now I haven't done this for each image, there are a couple I've forgotten, but most have titles that will appear.

Each one of these titles will be noticed by the search engines and will connect me to anyone searching for those titles.

To do this, use this html and type title="Whatever You Want the Title to Be" alt="Whatever You Want the Title to Be" in between img and src= in the html for the image.

6. Beware of using--for lack of a better word and to refrain from breaking this rule myself--obscene words or phrases. If you use certain words in your posts or titles, however innocently, the search engines make no differentiation and will catalogue you accordingly.

Now this may be fine with you, but then again you may not want visitors looking for questionable content, especially if you have pictures of your children and family posted. Because I discuss my life so openly I try to avoid using words that would bring unwanted visitors and so far my Google analytics tell me the most colorful search I've had is "my husband wears my pajamas." I'd like to keep it that way.

7. Avoid things that can damage your Google ranking. Rather than spend time listing the various things that can hurt your blog, I'll just refer you to this comprehensive article Search Engine Ranking Factors. Scroll down to where it discusses detrimental factors and make sure you're not doing anything so offensive as spamming your blog with keywords, stealing content, hijacking a URL or posting offensive content. All are red flags for the search engines.

8. Build up your links. No one knows exactly how Google sorts and ranks and crawls each site--it's a secret algorithm that is more carefully guarded than the recipe for Coca Cola--but links are a big part of it. The number of sites linking to you and the number of sites you link to are all measured and weighed as is the authority of an inbound link.