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**The Simple Blog Business Plan**

## **The Simple Blog Business Plan**

I want to share with you a simple blog business plan that I have been using to become twice as productive. This blog business plan is a combination of several different ideas that I have adopted into one simplified plan. There are many important components to this plan that are important for you to understand. Each step is specifically orchestrated and designed to fulfill a certain business or productivity principle. Once you understand the steps to this blog business plan, you will find that maintaining it is not difficult at all. While I will be writing this guide as it applies to blogging, the truth is that it can apply to most any home based business. Please understand. I am not suggesting that this is the only effective method that you can use. This is just what has worked for me. I hope that it will at the very least cause you to begin to think through your goals and how you spend your time.

If you currently do not have any business plan or goals that are pulling you forward, my hope is that you will at the very least have a better strategy moving forward. Feel free to adapt where you see fit in order to make this process work for you. That being said, carefully consider the principles and be sure that there are a part of your plan in some way. For example, I will be talking about monthly goals and maybe you would rather have quarterly goals instead. That is fine, as long as you understand the importance of short term goals. That being said, let's dive I and get started.

## **Why Most Business Plans Do Not Work**

Most people are so relieved when they finish a traditional business plan that they want to file it away somewhere and consider it an accomplishment. They are ready to move on to something else. Sure, it may have helped them to think through some things but oftentimes traditional business plans just are not practical for everyday use. A sound business plan should be a road map for reaching your goals. It will answer the questions why, how, when and what. Most business plans do not work because there is no concrete action steps that are broken down into monthly, weekly, and daily actions.

## **The Importance of Having a Simple Blog Business Plan**

Do you have a business plan for your blog? Do you need one? In my opinion you need to have a business plan at some level. Personally, I have received several benefits for having a business plan in place.

***It gives me focus.*** By having a visual, simple business plan (more on this later) I have been more focused on what I should be doing. It is almost like having a boss over my shoulder. When I get off track my business plan is staring at me as an accountability tool that I need to get back on track.

***It gives me direction.*** It also feels good to know that I have a direction I am heading. When you can see the path a little more clearer, it is easier to get to work. I take a moment and visualize what it will feel like to accomplish the goal I have set for myself.

***It gives me accountability.*** There is nothing more frustrating then writing down weekly goals and then get to the end of your week and you haven't even got started on most of them. While it is discouraging, it sheds light on the fact that you lost your way somewhere in the course of the week. As you know, in blogging you can spend your time doing many different tasks. Have you figured out that not all tasks are created equal? You can spend a lot of time doing things that ultimately do not pull you closer toward your goals.

### **Why Your Business Plan Needs To Be Simple**

I am a big proponent of keeping things simple. I just think that we often complicate things when they do not need to be. Most business gurus take new entrepreneurs through a process of creating a detailed multiple-page business plan that begins to get really complex. I understand that certain investors want detailed plans like this. However, I think a business plan ought to be actionable. It should be a map and a compass for you. It should be something that you review often because it is where you

want to go.

## **Why Your Business Plan Needs To Be Visible**

I also believe that a business plan ought to be as visible as possible. Ever heard of the phrase "out of sight, out of mind." That is exactly what happens when we create a traditional business plan and file it away somewhere. It is almost as if we find satisfaction in the fact that we are done with the business plan and we can check it off our list. I know for me if something is not visible, I forget about it. I need that daily visible reminder in place.

My business plan is on a [medium sized whiteboard](#) that hangs above my computer. That way, I have visible goals that I can see at all times. It is like a business plan and vision board all wrapped into one. I see the goals that I have listed and I also get inspired each day by visualizing the accomplishment of these goals.

It also helps me to get back on the wagon when I have fallen off. We all have times when life gets busy and we get off track. There is no need to live with self pity. Instead, just look at your whiteboard and get back on track. Freshen up some of the short term goals and get moving again.

## Your Set-Up

I am going to share with you in a little more detail about my set-up. Feel free to adapt to meet your needs and space that you have available.

***First, you need a whiteboard.*** If I had to guess, my [whiteboard](#) is probably 2 feet tall and 3 feet wide. I have several other larger whiteboards that I use for brainstorming but this size is perfect for my business plan. Try your best to hang it somewhere within clear visual sight of where you work. When I lean back in my chair, it is hanging up just above my computer monitor. [Click here](#) to see an example of the whiteboard that I have.

***Divide the whiteboard into six sections.*** I will be explaining these sections in just a moment, but for now either take a marker or buy some marking tape and divide the board into six equal sections. Just to be clear the entire whiteboard is divided into these six sections. In a way, it almost looks like a big tic tac toe game.

***Lastly, consider using different colored markers.*** If you are focused on building just one blog, then you probably will not have a need for multiple colors. At this point in time, I have several blogs that I maintain. I use a color coding system to help me to easily see what goals are attached to which blogs. For example, everything in the

color blue is connected to goals with the [Blogging Your Passion Blog](#). I can also see if I am out of balance in my overall blogging business plan. If I want to be, this is okay. However, if I am trying to spend an equal amount of time on each I can see that clearly on my whiteboard. Get some [multi-color markers](#) for your whiteboard.

## **The Simple Blog Business Plan in 6 Steps**

Now I am going to cover each of the six sections on your board and how you can use them to establish a simple blog business plan.



### ***Step 1. Your Yearly Goals***

The best place to start is by thinking through what your big yearly goals should be. On my whiteboard this is the top left box. I simply write a heading that says "yearly goals." What are the big goals that you would love to accomplish within the next 12 months of your blog. These should be specific goals that you have control over. For example, setting a goal like having 25,000 unique visitors a month by this time next year is a bad goal. This is not something you can control. Sure, there are things you can do that can contribute to that goal, but traffic numbers are not a good goal.

Establishing a publishing goal is something that you can control. Maybe you want to

add 240 new blog posts in the next year on your blog. That is a goal that you can control. Maybe you want to launch a membership site, a new product for your niche, or write a book. These are all yearly goals That you can control through your own efforts.

I hope that you can see the difference. Traffic and income goals are bad goals in my opinion. While those types of goals are the most motivating and exciting, they are not practical because you have no control over them. This was a freeing experience when I first set yearly goals in my business plan. I had them in my head, but it is different when you actually write them down. It is important to get as specific as possible here because we are going to break them down as we move forward.

Let me just put a plug in here for a second. There is nothing more rewarding than crossing a goal off in the yearly goal section. It is probably one of the most satisfying things you can do when it comes to blogging. To know that you tackled and accomplished a big goal related to your online business is incredibly energizing. I even leave the yearly goals on my whiteboard even though they are crossed off just as a reminder of what I have accomplished. That doesn't mean that you only glory in your past accomplishments. You should always have new goals that pull you forward.

Lastly, set a time of completion for each yearly goal. I initially did not do this. I saw all the yearly goals as things I wanted to accomplish before the year was out. What I discovered is that a few months later new yearly goals would come to mind that I



wanted to get on my whiteboard. Some of these goals would not be completed until later but I was ready to begging to work on them now.

Now, I place a date after each yearly goal so I have an established deadline for myself. Sure, at times you may need to adjust your finish date. I know I can have a tendency to be overly optimistic at what I can accomplish during any given point in time. That being said, we are all capable of accomplishing more than we think. I have proven this to myself over and over again. You need to always be pushing yourself when it comes to productivity.

*Video #1: [Click Here to View](#)*





## ***Step 2. Your Monthly Goals***

At the beginning of each month, you need to have a business meeting with yourself. Take some time to set specific goals that you want to accomplish in the next 30 days. I always like to write the specific month I am in at the top of this section. This is the top middle box on the whiteboard. Once I establish the monthly goals, I have something very specific to shoot for. I first start by reviewing my yearly goals. Is there a specific short-term goal that I can make from my yearly goal? Let's use a sample yearly goal that we used earlier. The yearly goal that we created earlier was to contribute 240 new blog posts over the next 12 months. In order to do this, I need to set short term goals along the way. So, for the current month I am in I will write: "create 20 new blog posts this month."

Once I have established this goal I could even take it a bit further. I could use an editorial calendar either in my wordpress admin area or using google calendar and write out the 20 topics I am going to cover and the proposed published date. Now, when I am ready to work, I have everything thought through and established. This helps you to distinguish the difference between wearing the "Blog Owner Hat" and the "Blog Worker Hat." As I am sure you know, you wear many "hats" as a blogger. One of the best things you can do is to understand which hat you are wearing at any given time.

Wearing the "Blog Owner Hat" is critically important but if you spend your whole day there you are not getting much done on the actual assembly line. By establishing this editorial calendar for the month, the "Blog Worker Hat" is reading to go without distraction. That does not mean that you squelch spontaneity or creativity if you think about a topic you want to cover. It just means that you when you sit down to write, you are ready to actually write. The problem comes into play when you sit down to write and you have to wear many different hats at once just to write a 400 word blog posts.

Lastly, take some time to think through monthly goals that might not be directly connected to a health goal. For example, maybe you have an idea for an ebook that you could produce that would be helpful to your niche. A 15-30 page ebook might be a good monthly goal to establish. By placing something like this in your yearly goals you might actually delay the accomplishment of this goal.

Remember the Parkinson's Law? A task will often extend into the allotted time it is given. That is my paraphrase of course. Basically, if you think an ebook will take you a year to write, it will take you a year. If you see it as a 30 day goal, there is a good chance that you can make it happen in 30 days.

Video #2: [Click Here to View](#)



### *Step 3. Your Weekly Goals*

Following the [Getting Things Done model by David Allen](#), I have an established weekly review time that I do every Sunday night. For the sake of not getting too far off track, I won't go into all of the details here. Part of that time I spend looking over my

whiteboard and deciding which monthly goals am I going to write in the weekly section. The weekly goals section is in the top right hand box of my whiteboard.

I review these every evening to be certain that I am working on the right things. I will go over this in detail in a little bit.

Having weekly goals help me to have a very specific focus of what needs to get done by Friday. It is important to put this level of demand in yourself. Now, you might be thinking: "why should I be placing so much pressure on myself?" I believe it is important to have this level of personal accountability. Most people who move from a corporate environment to a home based business environment experience a culture shock.

While they do not want a boss telling them what to do, they quickly discover that zero accountability is not good either. Most bloggers fail because they do not have a plan or accountability system in place. It is critically important to establish this. If you are not committed, it is not going to happen for you. There are so many casual players the blogging world that wonder why things aren't working for them. I believe it is because they have no idea how to work in this new working environment. Set those weekly goals that you must get done by Friday.

Video #3: [Click Here to View](#)



#### *Step 4. Today's Focus*

Here is where things happen. This is the assembly line for your blogging business. You can do all the planning and thinking you want, but nothing happens until you start to

take daily action. Developing the proper daily habits as it related to blogging is essential to your success.

There is a major problem that we all face. There is so much to do in blogging, how do we know what is most important. First of all, there are routine blogging tasks that you should do just about every day. We will talk about these in more detail in just a moment. In our "today" section on the whiteboard, we will focus only on the top 3-4 most pressing priorities. This section is the bottom right box on my whiteboard and it is labeled "Today!" Right under the title, I have written this:

***"If this is the only thing I accomplish today, will I be satisfied?"***

The answer to that question is where you want to spend your time. Also, narrow your focus when you ask this question. While you may want to accomplish 10-12 tasks today, only choose your top 3-4. Then, put all your energy into those tasks as soon as possible in the day.

I wake up at 5:00 am most days to get started on my most important tasks. I enjoy waking up early for a number of reasons:

- ***There are no other distractions at that time.*** My kids are still sleeping, the phone is not ringing, and no one is searching me out during the hours of 5:00-8:00 in the morning. I can work in the quietness of the morning without interruption.
- ***It gets my day started off right.*** There is also something incredibly rewarding

about crossing off some of my most important tasks before 8:00 am. I still have a whole day ahead of myself and I already feel good about what I have accomplished.



- *It keeps me moving forward toward my goals.* Have you noticed yet that a lot of things can come up in a day's time. Meetings change, priorities get re-arranged, new items get penciled in to the agenda. I have rarely had my early morning routine interrupted (even when I am on vacation). Maybe the early morning routine doesn't work for you. Regardless, do your best to find a block of time that you can focus on your 3-4 goals for today.

Video #4: [Click Here to View](#)





## *Step 5. Inspiration*

In the bottom middle section, I have a place for inspiration. I think it is important that you surround yourself with inspiration as much as possible. Especially as bloggers, you need this. You spend so much time in the beginning working hard for little profit and you are constantly having to remind yourself that it is worth it. My wall is surrounded with vacation pictures with my family as well as bible verses and quotes.

I also use this “inspiration” section as a place for me to write inspiring words. I typically change this weekly on the whiteboard, but if I read something that really hits a deep connection with me, then I will place it on the whiteboard while I am thinking about it.

***Place inspiring quotes.*** As I come across inspiring quotes, I normally send them to my Evernote account. I have a whole folder of quotes that I have collected. When I am ready for a new quote, I visit the folder, select one that I like, and write it under the inspiration section on the whiteboard. I will end up reading that quote several times in the course of a week and it keeps me motivated.

***Write down meaningful Bible verses.*** Obviously, all of us have varying degrees of where we are on life’s spiritual journey. I share this with you because it is such a vital part of who I am. While I am far from perfect, I draw strength from reading the Bible.

As I come across a verse that applies to where I am in life, I write it on the whiteboard as a reminder to me. I hope that you will take the challenge as well to write down inspiring verses and quotes.

*Video #5: [Click Here to View](#)*





## *Step 6. The Daily Checklist*

As you have probably figured out by now, there are many repetitive tasks associated with blogging. In fact, some bloggers begin outsourcing some of these repetitive tasks once they have a decent income coming in. Still, for now you will have certain tasks that you may need to do daily that you do not want to mix in on the "Today!" section of your whiteboard.

The "Daily Checklist" section is the bottom right hand section on the whiteboard. I also include things outside of blogging here as well. Maybe I want to include exercise, journaling, a daily review of the whiteboard, or reading my Bible. What are those daily habits that you want to establish in your life? Maybe you want to post in a new blog post every day on your main blog, then you can add that task here. Maybe you want to email 3 fellow bloggers about potential guest article opportunities then add this to your daily checklist. Other ideas might include: sign up for at least one blog carnival every day, place 5 blog or forum comments everyday, and so on.

The important thing to understand is that goals are reached through the choices and habits we make every single day. By writing them on the whiteboard, you are focused to look at them and review them several times throughout the day.

Video #6: [Click Here to View](#)



## *Making it All Work - Your Review Process*

So, how do you take all of these sections on your whiteboard and make them work? While I did briefly mention how and when I review the items on my whiteboard, I thought it might be helpful to walk you through the review process step by step.

**Reviewing Yearly Goals.** It is good for you to occasionally review your yearly goals. If things have changed, should the goals you have set still be what you should go after? Is there something new that needs to be added to this section? It is okay for you to review this section more often than once a year. Typically, I will look at this monthly as I consider my monthly goals as well.

I also spend a 24 hour time period once a year to review my life plan. This is a personal time for me that I usually do at the end of November or early December. My Life Plan is something that helps to govern everything that I do. During this yearly review time, I will brainstorm potential ideas and projects related to blogging.

Lastly, I will occasionally review my “Someday/Maybe” file to see if there is something I want to add to my goals. The “Someday/Maybe” file has a list of ideas that I recorded at various times of inspiration.

**Reviewing Monthly Goals.** At the end of each month I will typically erase the monthly goals section and think through what goals I want to accomplish in the upcoming month. This is incredibly energizing especially if I “fell off the wagon” somewhere along the way this past month. I try not to get discouraged about the past, but just get re-focused on the future.

As mentioned earlier, I also review my “Someday/Maybe” file to see if there are any ideas that I am ready to give attention to. Lastly, take some time to brainstorm some ideas of products you could create, services you could roll out, or content you could produce this month that might be helpful for your audience. I like to use another larger whiteboard in order to do this (can you tell I like whiteboards? My kids like my whiteboards too!)

**Reviewing Weekly Goals.** As mentioned earlier, I always do this on Sunday evenings during my typical weekly review process. I will also look over my yearly and monthly goals and see if there is anything that I can specifically do to move those goals forward. I also brainstorm about potential short-term projects that I can tackle in a week. This document and video series was made in 48 hours from an idea I had a week earlier.

Having a weekly focus is incredibly energizing because you have a 7 day deadline you have imposed on yourself. By having a good number of weekly goals listed, you will be able to have plenty of tasks to work on every single day.

**Reviewing Daily Tasks & Checklists.** Lastly, I review my daily tasks & checklist every evening. I like to do this the night before because in the morning I want to hit the ground running. I do not have to think about what it is that I should work on. I am ready to wear the “Blog Worker Hat” the moment I sit down in my chair in the morning. I don’t even view my email until after I finish my initial work session between 5:00-8:00 am. Establish my daily work tasks and priorities is a “Boss” activity and it is something I want to have done the night before.

Lastly, take a moment in the evening and evaluate how you did as it relates to your daily checklists section. If you like to journal, you could even use this section as a way to journal through your daily successes and challenges. If one of your daily habits you are trying to form is jogging 30 minutes, then evaluate and journal why you didn’t go jogging. If journaling is not your “cup of tea” at the very least, take a moment and do a mental evaluation of your daily checklist.

Video #7: [Click Here to View](#)



**Conclusion:**

If anything, I hope you have been able to pull out some of the principles presented here to begin to develop and “actionable” business plan for yourself. This simple blog business plan has been revolutionary for me. If you have done any kind of goal setting in the past, then you understand the importance of writing your goals down. The next level of goal setting is to review them on a regular basis. To take it even a step further, break down your goals into sub-projects that can keep you motivated. Lastly, what specific actions and habits can you do today to pull you closer to your goals?



A simple whiteboard, markers, and a little bit of thinking on your part can give you all of the things above. If you have any questions about this process or you would like some input on how to set things up, feel free to reach me at [Jonathan@BloggingYourPassion.com](mailto:Jonathan@BloggingYourPassion.com). Thank you so much for being a follower of our blog, we appreciate and value the time you spend with us.