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Dear Pam,

GemORama owner Carl Sarney sells [beads and gemstones at wholesale prices](#) and asked me to come in and take a look at their new website and offer them some tips to maximize their marketing. It took them a year to get their shopping cart website up and running and it was worth every minute - the site is GREAT! The bulk of the work has been done by Suzanne in his office and she has taken wonderful photos of beads, pearls, crystals and other products with excellent detail and color.



I spent over an hour talking about what would enhance their site. They have a newsletter and we talked about frequency and content. Carl got especially excited about writing a blog. This is a family owned business with a close-knit staff. They love to talk to their customers and the out-reach of a blog will not only keep customers thinking of them, it will also attract the search engines to the site with Carl's wise use of keyword phrases in the content.

I can't wait to see Carl's first blog posting. He'll be able to write about buying trips and new products that he and his wife Joyce bring back on a regular basis. This fits right in with "Week 3" of our 12 week Marketing Challenge - BLOG!

It only takes a minute to find a new marketing idea ~ Let's Get Business!

What is a Blog??

According to Wikipedia, A blog (a contraction of the term "weblog") is a type of website, usually maintained by an individual with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video. Entries are commonly displayed in reverse-chronological order. "Blog" can also be used as a verb, meaning to maintain or add content to a blog.

Many blogs provide commentary or news on a particular subject; others function as more personal online diaries. A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, Web pages, and other media related to its topic. The ability for readers to leave comments in an interactive format is an important part of many blogs. Most blogs are primarily textual, although some focus on art (artlog), photographs (photoblog), sketches (sketchblog), videos (vlog), music (MP3 blog), and audio (podcasting).

Micro-blogging is another type of blogging, featuring very short posts. Twitter is the most well know micro-blog with posts no longer than 140 characters.

Blogging Software

The good news is that blogging software is generally free and there are many to choose from. Our favorite, and the one that we use with our clients is [Wordpress](#). It's easy to use and integrates well with our websites.

Others include, in no particular order:

- [Blogger](#)
- [Typepad](#)
- [b2evolution](#)
- [Tumblr.com](#)
- [Xanga](#)
- [Weebly](#)

Blogging Tips by George Whitcher



Blogs are naturally set up for search engine optimization but it requires the use of keywords and interesting content to actually get results. Here are a few tips I suggest you keep in mind when writing your blog:


Keywords - Keywords are words and phrases that best describe what people use to find you on the internet in search engines like Google. These are the most important thing to keep in mind when writing a new blog entry. Make sure your entry's title includes your best keyword phrase. This is because it includes a header tag which says to the search engine I'm really important, index me. For instance, if I were to write a blog article about "web design" I may want to name my title "South Shore Web Design" for someone looking to find a local web designer. Whenever you mention a keyword in your blog entry or anything regarding a page you may have on your site try to link to a page on your site as it brings an "inbound text link" to your website which is very valuable.

Categories and Tags - Categories are where you place your blog entries in a section that should be named one of your best keywords. Tags are where you can enter keywords specific for which you think people may search.

Advertise - Just like your website, you need to advertise your blog and not just on business cards or to friends but to other blogs and other community based websites. If you don't advertise your website or blog they have little chance to work for you. It is very important to go out there and get your website's link on other websites. The best thing you can do is find a message board or forum that would be welcome to you posting your link about something relating to the website at hand. When you make this link, use keywords and not just "click here".

Interesting Content - Writing interesting content gets people to come back and increases the possibility of someone linking to your blog or one of your blog entries. Content is not necessarily just text though. Most people, when viewing long sections of text, are intimidated and navigate away no matter how well informed your blog entry is. Things like images and videos can be added to your blog entry which takes the user's eye off of the text and makes them more likely to stay longer. The more interesting and visually enticing you make your blog the more likely someone will be likely to link to it. Keep your text conversational, like you were talking to a friend rather than lecturing from a podium. The friendly nature and easy to understand content will make your blog a pleasure to read.

Design - There are many styles of blogs and we suggest that you have yours look similar to your website in color and style so a visitor feels familiar when going from your website to your blog; they know they are in the right place. It also helps with "branding" and if a visitor finds your blog first and then goes to your website, they again feel familiar and know they are in the right place.



Take the "12 Week" Marketing Challenge with us. Set aside a few hours to work on your marketing uninterrupted. Last week you wrote a 450 word article and submitted it to ezinearticles.com

Week 3: Add a blog to your website or make a pact to blog at least once a week. If you do not currently have a blog, call George at 781-834-9208 Ext 207 and he will set up a blog and give you a blogging lesson for only \$99.

George and I are also talking about presenting a Blogging Seminar. If you are interested, [email us](#) and we'll send you more information as we develop the course.

We're on our way with our "12 step program to marketing health"
Have a Happy, Healthy, PROSPEROUS week!

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