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### When You Should Unpublish a Blog Post



Advertising is one of the biggest pitfalls MSPs have when attracting leads is that many small businesses don't know what an MSP is, let alone what it does. Your MSP blogs are crucial because not only do they answer the questions potential leads have, but they also introduce them to what an MSP does.

We have written in the past about the importance of incorporating blogs as part of your SEO strategy. The reason is that unless you give Google...



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### MSP Marketing: When an MSP Blog Goes Wrong



If your blog is attracting the wrong type of traffic, the best option could be to unpublish it. Read on to learn why deleting traffic-generating blogs may be the best thing you can do for your SEO.

#### An Off-Brand Blog Goes Wrong

We often write about the importance of your blogs as a traffic generator. In a perfect world, every blog that catches on would be directly related to selling one of your services.

Unfortunately, that isn't always the case, and an 'off-brand blog that isn't directly related to your service, can drive traffic to your site. When this happens, you can find that your website has seen a dramatic influx of traffic. This is excellent news if the blog is about a service you want to promote, such as managed IT or cybersecurity. However, this is a best-case scenario. More often than not, the blog can be only tangentially related to your service. For example, you may have written a blog about the ten ways to make your computer faster.

The problem is that most of this traffic will never convert; they are there to read your blog and leave once done. One thing to understand is that this isn't necessarily a bad thing because

*(Continued on page 3)*

### 5 Items to Prioritize When You Update Your MSP Website



Websites, particularly older websites, can be outdated to the point where it hinders an MSP's ability to attract customers. If your MSP website has been around for some time, it probably needs a refresh. The underlying structure may make it challenging to adhere to current best SEO or marketing practices. Here are five mistakes you should avoid when you change your website.

#### First, How To Know If It's Time To Change Your MSP Website

When was the last time you redesigned your website? Five

years, ten years, never?

Your website shouldn't be treated as a static entity. Your MSP website is, in many ways, a living document, reflecting the changes in your business and things that make you stand out from your competitors. Despite this, the reality is that most companies treat their websites as if they were trapped in amber, forever unchanging, despite the changes in the business environment.

One way to determine if it's time to update your website is by putting your customer hat on and looking at your competition. Are they modern and follow best practices? How do you feel when you use your competitor's website instead of yours? User experience is essential in determining whether or not potential leads will stay on your site long enough to convert. If you feel your user experience is lacking, then it may be time to consider an update.

### 5 Things To Prioritize as You Update Your MSP Website

#### 1. An SEO Audit of Your Website

While it's tempting to migrate all of your content to your new website, now is the time to

*(Continued on page 2)*

## 5 Steps to Reduce Your Bounce Rate



If you've ever received an SEO audit or looked at your analytics, a portion should measure your bounce rate. Your bounce

rate can reflect engagement, and if it is too high, it may mean that your content is not resonating with your audience and they are leaving your website before they have a chance to convert. Here are five things you can do to reduce your bounce rate.

### What is "Bounce Rate?"

There is quite a bit of confusion as to what a bounce rate is. It's not surprising that most people assume that based on the name, it has to do with visitors leaving the website. While this is, for the most part, an accurate assessment, there is some

nuance that needs to be understood. For this, let's use Google's definition of bounce.

Google describes it as when a visitor leaves or "bounces" from a webpage, they have not just left that page; they have left the entire website after viewing that page. Every single user bounces eventually. Nobody stays forever.

In other words, a bounce occurs when a visitor hits a particular page and then completely leaves the website. With this definition in place, it should be fair to say that a high bounce rate isn't something to ignore. It can indicate a more significant problem, the inability to retain or attract qualified visitors. Keeping visitors to the site is vital because the longer a person stays on the site, the greater the opportunity for them to be converted. If you have many visitors leaving the entire website after one page,

you will have no chance of converting them.

Note: while the most focus is on a bounce rate that is too high, don't assume that a very low bounce rate is beneficial. If your bounce rate is low, around 20% or lower, the chances are that your Google Analytics isn't configured correctly. Most likely, you have duplicate sets of code on your site, which can distort how Google collects your data.

A good place to be is around the 40% to 60% mark. A little higher is okay too, as long as you feel like you are getting phone calls. It's also worth noting that some MSPs will often set their website up as the default browser homepage for their clients. That's fine, but keep in mind...



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## 5 Items to Prioritize When You Update Your MSP Website

*(Continued from page 1)*

evaluate which content you should bring. An effective way to determine which content to keep is by deep diving into your analytics. Despite your best efforts, some content may not have jived with your audience. Instead of bringing underperforming content to the new site, use your analytics to filter out underperforming content and leave it behind. Doing so can allow you to streamline your content, focusing on the pages most likely to convert.

### 2. Real Changes to the Design of the Website

It's normal to be comfortable with the familiar; however, modernizing your website requires more than changing colors or renaming menu items. These are superficial changes to your website, fundamentally retaining the same design and problems a redesign is supposed to address.

A redesign should be a significant change in the look and feel of your website. Believe it or not, there can be significant

changes in web development even after only a few years, and your updated MSP website needs to reflect them.

### 3. A Focus on Usability

While the occasional facelift is important, it's also important to not get yourself stuck on the flashiest visuals and graphics you can find. Even if your competitors have some super unique look, it doesn't mean their users appreciate how hard it is to navigate their site.

Don't rely on scrolling banners to convey important information (users tend to ignore them), and don't try to hide away important pages just to organize the menu in a way your users won't be able to figure out.

### 4. 301 Redirects

A redirect is just what it sounds like: an old URL from your previous website is redirected to another URL on your new site. In other words, the unpublished URL directs searchers to a new page. Ideally, you will want the new page to "make sense"—for example, if you're

unpublishing a low-performing blog about spam, you would like to redirect the URL to a recent spam-related page instead of a random page.

Redirects are essential because when you remove a page (internally) linked to others, you break the attachments (links) to the other pages. This broken link will count as a 404 error and can result in a poor user experience, as searchers click on links searching for information, only to find it's not there. Additionally, Google monitors 404s. If there are enough of them, Google can reduce your page rank because your website is not delivering the information searchers are looking for, resulting in a poor user experience.

### 5. An Effective Way to Announce Your Changes

The basic tenet of marketing is that if you don't let people know what you're offering, they won't know that you're...



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## MSP Marketing: When an MSP Blog Goes Wrong

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Google loves to see websites receive traffic, especially websites they have chosen to “promote,” by making it a featured snippet.

We have discussed methods to make the most of these types of blogs; however, there are times when the off-brand blog is so well-received that it overshadows the message you are trying to convey and your brand.

Here’s a perfect example for us. Before the pandemic, we would build some fun content about Crockpot Thursdays (we would make lunch for the team and would sometimes build a fun little video about it or do a skit). This was, by far, our most

popular content on social media. No, it didn’t sell any of our services, but it made it far easier to get our content out. Going “viral” (*we’re using this term as a way to represent sudden growth of a small portion of content, not necessarily to mean that your content is reaching global audiences*) isn’t a bad thing, even if it’s for content that isn’t 100% about selling your services. In fact, you will probably never “go viral” for a piece of content that strictly tries to sell or promote something.

Back to the blog about speeding up a computer: while there is a technology theme, some people who read the blog aren’t interested in MSP services. This means once they read the blog, they leave the site. How could one blog generate

hundreds, if not thousands of visitors to your website? There are a couple of reasons why this could happen:

**Your Blog Is a Featured Snippet:** A featured snippet is Google’s way of letting searchers know that your blog is the best answer to a question. A featured snippet is often called “position zero,” meaning it is above the ads and the first thing a searcher sees when looking for an answer. A featured snippet implies that Google vouches for your level of expertise and feels that your blog is the best answer. When this happens, your blog becomes...



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## Is Your MSP Attracting Local Leads?



Is your MSP having difficulty showing up for searches in local locations? Instead of adding

keywords of cities to your website, let Google and local searchers know your MSP is serving their area. Here’s how.

### How Does Google Determine Which Business to Show as a Search Result?

A primary complaint we hear from new prospects is that they can’t seem to rank on page one for their location. When asked what steps they have taken to increase their page rank, the usual response is that they added their city in their keywords or titles. While this is a fundamental first step, over the years, keywords have become less valuable as a signal Google and the other search engines use for page rank.

Current page rank is now governed primarily by whether or not your MSP content provides solutions to problems potential leads are interested in solving. It might be cliché to say so, but the content remains the driver of SEO success.

Unfortunately, there remains a strain of MSPs who still treat content creation as an afterthought. Moreover, they believe that all they need to do is have a website, and the leads will pour in. However, unless you tell Google and, by extension, potential customers where your business is, then they won’t be able to find you.

As with most things related to SEO, there isn’t a single metric that Google uses to determine your rank, but instead, it is a combination of things. According to Google:

*“Local results are based primarily on relevance, distance, and prominence. A combination of these factors helps us find the best match for your search. For example, our algorithms might decide that a business that’s farther away from your...”*

We often talk about the importance of relevance in satisfying user intent. However, of equal importance is the searcher’s proximity to your business. This makes sense as most of your customers will be local to your business, and it...



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## Thinking About the Future: Plan Out Your Marketing Strategy



There are several options available to MSPs to market their business and services, from social media to blog content to direct mail. With so many options available to

your MSP, you may find it hard to know where to begin with your marketing. We recommend developing a *documented marketing strategy* to make sure your marketing has a clear purpose and a schedule with time and resources to execute the initiatives.

### You Need to Establish SMART Goals for Your Marketing

The idea of **SMART** goals is used in every industry. It's applied to business operations, sales, and marketing. The only way to know if you're successful is to set clear goals and track their progress from beginning to end.

You may be asking what it is that makes a goal SMART:

- **Specific:** Are your goals clearly defined?
- **Measurable:** Goals should be measurable to ensure you are able to track the effectiveness.
- **Attainable:** Your goals need to be relevant to your marketing demographic.
- **Realistic:** Does your goal fit within your timeframe, does your budget work, and has the best resources available?
- **Timely:** You should have a deadline. Do you have a reasonable timeline to work towards the goals?

### You Also Need to ALWAYS Be Aware of Your Situation

You absolutely need to do a situational analysis

to evaluate your MSP's marketing efforts, and consider your strengths and weaknesses, if there are any marketing opportunities to take advantage of, and how your marketing compares to your competition and if they or any other circumstance you may have to deal with are a threat to your MSP.

A great method of analyzing your company is by using a SWOT analysis. SWOT looks at your Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. It's critical because you ask yourself what you're doing, what you could be doing, and what you **SHOULD** be doing. A SWOT Analysis is a good way to get a picture of where your marketing is.

### You Need an Audience to Target

The vast majority of MSPs will tell you that they target small and medium-sized businesses in their area. By analyzing your target audience, you'll have more insight into what they are looking for, giving you yet another advantage.

The best way to go about this is to look at what type of companies you already have a successful relationship with. Ask yourself what the characteristics of your ideal client are. Once you've identified the ideal business you'd like to target, all that's left to do is to generate a list and begin marketing to them. If you need help generating a lead list there are tons of ways for you to get some, the best being to come to us and allow us to help you find your MSP some leads to market to.

### You Need to Establish a Budget

Planning your marketing must include...



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