

INTRODUCTION. Having a **personal website** or **blog** (*I use them interchangeably*) is perhaps the most important TODO on your content marketing plan. To have a strong online brand image, you need a personal website. It gives you a place to write blog posts, and a place to put other content such as videos or images with commentary.

BLOG GOALS. Commonly, a blog or personal website has a few important goals. Check and describe the goals that are most relevant for your own personal website.

Validate you as a “helpful expert” (**trust indicator**) yes no

Optimize for **SEO** (Search Engine Optimization) / get to the top of Google yes no

Provide collateral to “**share**” on social media marketing yes no

Other **blog / personal website goals:**

WEBSITE / BLOG SETUP. If you don’t already have a website or blog, the best platform is WordPress. I recommend GoDaddy’s “Managed WordPress,” but you can also host on Hostgator, BlueHost, InMotion, or WPENGINE. After you choose a domain and do basic setup, make sure to choose a “theme” or “look and feel” that is in accord with your desired personal brand image.

Blog set up on: _____ **platform / provider.**

If you already have a blog, that’s great, too. Be sure to set up Google Analytics and Google Webmaster tools, as well.

Google Analytics Set up **Google Webmaster Tools Set up**

Alternatively, you can use Tumblr, TypePad or proprietary systems like Squarespace. Google's Blogger (<http://www.blogger.com/>) is also very good, and free.

WEBSITE AUDIT / STRUCTURE. Next, make sure you have conceptualized the most important structural elements of your personal website / blog, and what will be on each of them:

Home Page: Your home page, will focus on the following keywords / phrases / Ideas:

Landing Pages. For SEO purposes, you should have landing pages that correspond with your main keyword groups. For example, a person seeking a career in photography, might have landing pages for "Weddings," "Corporate Photography," and "Videography."

Landing Page #1 will focus on: _____

Landing Page #2 will focus on: _____

Landing Page #3 will focus on: _____

Be sure to identify the goals of your landing pages; usually these are that the reader contact you with a job offer / promotion offer / connection request, but if you have an email newsletter, getting email sign ups could also be a goal:

Goal #1: _____

Goal #2: _____

Goal #3: _____

About You Page. Remember to create an "About" page that has your photo, detailed information on you, and a link to a PDF copy of your resume. Be sure to have your phone number, email address, and even a "contact you" form. Jotform (<http://www.jotform.com/>) is a good service, for free, to install feedback forms.

- Be sure to link “from” your home page “to” your landing pages.

Keyword-heavy Footer. For SEO purposes, write a keyword-heavy footer. This should be no more than a very short paragraph, include your keywords in “natural” language, and link from those keywords to your main landing pages. For an example, see <https://www.jasonmcdonald.org/> at the bottom.

Social Media Icons. Be sure to link “from” your blog “to” your social media accounts, such as your Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Instagram, etc. If those accounts are very important to your personal brand image, be sure to make these links prominent. Also be sure to link “from” your social media accounts “to” your blog as well. (Back and forth).

SEO Audit. Audit your website for “on page” SEO elements, namely:

Title tag on every page should reflect your keyword themes:

Title tag audit done not done

Meta description tag on every page should reflect your keyword themes and be lively.

Meta description tag audit done not done

Each page should include an **H1** tag, as well as an **IMAGE** alt tag that reflects your keyword themes.

Header tag audit done not done (optional)

Image ALT tag audit done not done

Each page should have well-written, grammatically correct **visible text** that also touches on your keyword themes.

Visible content contains target keywords yes no

Visible content is well written, at least 3 paragraphs in length

yes no

OFF PAGE SEO AUDIT. Now that you have a blog or personal website, with a strong home page, strong landing pages, and a lively blog being written at least four times per month, you need to pivot to “off page” SEO. Google likes links!

Link-building. Inventory who might link to your website, and make sure to contact them. This might be friends, family, business colleagues, worksites, etc. Inventory who is out there who is an “easy” target to get a link from:

Easy link target audit done: yes no

Directory / association links. Inventory available directories, such as your school alumni association, organizations to which you belong (e.g., Texas Association of Hispanic Businesswomen, Fort Lauderdale Rotary Club members, etc.) and any and all organization / associations to which you belong that also have websites.

Directory / association link target audit done: yes no

Other link ideas. Links are incredibly valuable, so brainstorm other websites that might link to you. Consider creating “link bait” such as a super informative blog post, the “ultimate” guide to an industry topic, etc.

Other link ideas audit done: yes no

Describe other link-building ideas:

Social Mentions / Authority. Don’t forget social media! In addition to setting up your own social media accounts, identify “important” people on social media who might be interested in your content and might share it with others.

Social media influencer audit and list done: yes no

BLOG POSTS / TOPICS. Now that you have the basic structure of your website, make sure that it has a “blog” on it, namely a place to put timely blog posts on industry-related topics: Outline a few of the keyword “themes” of your blog here:

Keyword Theme #1: _____

Keyword Theme #2: _____

Keyword Theme #3: _____

Keyword Theme #4: _____

Keyword Theme #5: _____

Commit to blogging on a **regular schedule**, namely:

“I will blog” **daily** **weekly** **monthly**

How many times per day / week/ month: _____

“I will share my blog posts to” **Twitter** **Facebook** **LinkedIn** **Other** via Hootsuite.

OTHER BLOG ISSUES. Generally speaking, a personal website is the most important element of an online personal branding strategy. It is THE place where the Internet You becomes a reality. Identify other opportunities, problems, or ideas that concern your blog or personal website, here:
