

by Johnny Ward

BLOGGING BROUGHT ME HERE



HOW I LEFT IRELAND BROKE,
TRAVELED TO EVERY COUNTRY IN THE WORLD,
AND MADE \$1M+ BLOGGING FROM MY LAPTOP

AS SEEN IN: **Forbes**

**BUSINESS
INSIDER**

BBC

**NATIONAL
GEOGRAPHIC**

CNN

lonely planet

CONTENT

- 01 | **My Story**
- 02 | **The Benefits of Blogging**
- 03 | **Ways To Monetize a Blog**
- 04 | **How To Make Your Blog Popular**
- 05 | **How To Reach Out For Free Stuff**
- 06 | **How To Start A Blog**

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Introduction

Hey, First of all, thanks so much for checking out my blog, I hope it helps inspire you to follow your dreams, and live the life you want, not the life people expect of you. And if that involves travelling the world, whether it's just one short trip at a time, or a world-wide adventure, well that's even better!

Secondly thanks for downloading my ebook. I know there are a million blogs and a million ebooks kicking around the internet, so thanks for trusting me. I hope you can see my story is genuine. I'm not faking a lifestyle in order to sell books. I've been documenting my life, my travels and my business online since 2010 and it's all there for everyone to see.

Blogging changed my life, it really, really did.
And it can change yours too.

Not enough money to travel? Not enough time to travel? Blogging can fix it. If you take it seriously, it can change your life. I promise. And you've taken the first step to a more fun, free life by downloading this sexy ebook, so well done.

This ebook will touch the surface on just how blogging has specifically changed my life, and how it can change yours. It'll show you the awesome benefits of travel blogging like:

- **How to make your blog popular**
- **How you can TRAVEL FOR FREE BY leveraging your travel blog to work with big travel brands**
- **How blogs actually make money (something you guys ask me every single day).**

So let's get started and remember: leave your excuses at the door. We don't have space for that here, positive vibes only. The internet doesn't know what colour our skin is, nor does it care what God, if any, we worship, or who we choose to marry, or even what age we are. We are in a truly amazing era, where chances are available to anyone with an internet connection, and it's up to us to use that to our benefit. Don't waste the opportunity.



The next chapter is my story ... from being a broke Irish guy stuck in Ireland, growing up in a poor single-parent family with a dream to travel the world, but with no money to do it.

How I then went from teaching English in Asia for \$750* a month, to travelling to every country in the world, making more than \$1 million blogging and working from my laptop around 10 hours per week.

I often can't believe this is my life, and I can't believe how quickly it changed. I'm grateful every day for the lifestyle I now have, and I want more than anything to teach you guys how to do the same thing.

Even writing this book, I'm sitting in paradise in Kiribati, a country in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, a place I had never even heard of when I started out on this journey.

Blogging changed my life, so if you think you'd like to do something similar, then read on and let me help you.

**note all references to \$ are US\$ in this book unless otherwise stated*



My Story

My name is Johnny Ward

I was born in 1983 in Galway in the Republic of Ireland. Due to some pretty heavy family issues, my mum, my sister and I moved to a small fishing village called Kilkeel, in Northern Ireland, where I lived from the age of one until I was 18 years old.

I'll never forget this comment on one my blog posts, it made me giggle, people are so quick to assume. Anything that allows them to create excuses as to why they are not following their dreams.

During my upbringing, as a single-parent family, we really struggled financially. For more than ten years, we survived on welfare benefits. Ireland is a developed nation, but despite that, we lived on around £50 (\$75) a week for all three of us.

Times were tough.

We had none of the luxuries you would expect as a European family.

No car, so we walked to school every day.

No heating in the house, so when winter came it always went like this:

"Mum, I'm freezing," I would say.

"So put another sweater on then, Johnny," Mum would reply.

And so I did.

"I was frustrated seeing only rich people traveling the world, why can't someone like me do it?"

Growing up, I saw all my friends going to Spain, France, or even the USA with their parents during each school break, but we stayed at home every single summer. It's not so bad, kicking a football around, and climbing trees, but I'd be lying if I said I wasn't jealous. One summer though, we made it across, by boat, to England and I felt like it was the other side of the world. People speaking with different accents, people using different money, it was amazing.

Despite the poverty we grew up in, my mum always was harping on about education, education, education. My sister was a very diligent student, straight As all the way, homework done on time, making sure the teachers knew if someone was misbehaving. Quite the opposite from me, indeed. I'm younger than my sister by a year, and perhaps partially because I was the youngest child, and perhaps also some genetic disposition from my absent father, authority never sat well with me.

I am, however, grateful to have inherited my mum's academic ability. So, despite getting thrown of class, reacting badly to being told what to do, skipping school sometimes, drinking far too much at a far too young age and all round being quite an obnoxious kid, I managed always to score very well with exams, breaking records at 16 years old for the best results the school ever had for a boy.

That didn't go down particularly well with my school or my teachers considering I had managed to piss off pretty much every single one of them during my time at high school. That's one of my biggest regrets, not having respect for my teachers at school. Now that I'm older I see they were doing their job, and aside from a few nasty ones, generally they want the best for us. Bad move Johnny Boy, and sorry to any of my teachers who read this.

I didn't leave Ireland or the UK until I was 14 years old.



By that time Mum was doing better, she had managed to get a job as a social worker of sorts, quit smoking, and with the money she had scraped together we bought a tiny car, and managed to drive all the way to France.

There, we slept in tents and I experienced a truly foreign country for the first time.

It was on the tightest budget imaginable (*great training for the new life I had coming soon*), but it was an unforgettable experience.

I had probably only swam in swimming pools a handful of times in my life until that summer, and then suddenly I could do it every day at the campsite. Living the dream? It certainly felt like it. I savoured every second.

We did the same thing again the following summer, it was 1998, and we were in the south of France the year that France won the World Cup, glorious scenes and even better memories. **My thirst for travel was well and truly created.**

I was 18 before I knew it, school had finished and I reflected on my childhood in Ireland with nothing but positivity.

Our family may not have had much in terms of material possessions, but our house was full of love, and even more importantly, support. My mum was always there for me, no matter what. I'm grateful for that every living moment, to this day and beyond.

Also very importantly, some of the friends I have from home are my friends for life. A few in particular have managed to keep me sane through this journey to every country in the world with regular chats, and occasionally coming to visit me. Thanks for that guys, you know who you are.



Northern Ireland during my childhood, in the 80s and 90s, wasn't the greatest environment to grow up in.

The fall out between the Catholics and Protestants was far from resolved, the IRA (Irish Republican Army – the Catholic side) and the LVF (Loyalist Volunteer Force – the Protestant side) amongst many other factions had created a seemingly permanent divide between the two religions. Protestants could only be friends with Protestants, and Catholics with Catholics. It was, and still is, ridiculous. Police and army patrols were second nature to us, we would see it every day, up and down the roads, camouflage clothing, automatic weapons - nothing strange there. There was even a bomb in my town, in the army barracks behind my house no less. I'll never forget the windows rattling and the echo booming through my bedroom.

With all this in mind, since a young age my mum has insisted that,

- First of all, university wasn't a choice. It was a definite.
- Secondly, we had to leave Northern Ireland and move to England to study.

I can never thank my mum enough for that.

At the time I never appreciated just how difficult that must have been for her. A single woman, pushing her kids out of the door, leaving her alone in Ireland, knowing that she would be lonely and missing us with every breath. But still, she put us first, both my sister and I, and insisted we broaden our horizons and maximise our potential.

So we did just that. It was selflessness from my mum in the most purist form.

As everyone else went to study in Northern Ireland, hanging around with their same school friends, at 18 I was off, completely alone, with a one way flight to England to study for four years, to a university where I knew no one. I never did move back to Ireland, and I'm sure my mum knew that would be the case. That was in 2002.

The four years at university was an amazing period of my life.

I soon made some new, incredible friends at Loughborough University, near Nottingham in England. I studied International Economics, and although I don't use my degree these days, I would always recommend people went to uni. You learn more about yourself, your social skills, how to manage the basics in life; than you do about Microeconomic Theory or the foundations of the Gold Reserve. Not to mention the parties...

Two of the summers at university I spent in the USA, working with 'Camp America'. Camp America is basically an organisation which facilitates young people to go and 'work' on summer camps in the USA during the summer as a Camp Counsellor. The pay is awful, the paperwork is heavy and it's worth every bit of it. Amazing summers, amazing people and amazing memories.

One summer I worked with severely disabled kids at a special needs camp in Pennsylvania. Another summer I worked with disadvantaged kids from New York City, where their parents had been locked up for gang stuff, or died of HIV, or abandoned them for their crack addiction. It was heavy stuff. But every day we had so much fun, and to this day I remember it as one of the best summers of my life.

I graduated from university in 2006.

My last exam finished at 5pm on a Thursday afternoon in May. Friday morning at 10am, with a horrible hangover, I was off. That summer was the New York camp I mentioned above. That start of my travelling life had commenced, and I never rejoined the real world.

Travelling around the USA with the friends I had made a camp was great, then a few university friends joined. New York, Philadelphia, Ohio, Las Vegas (where we pretended to be a boyband to get free entry to a club). Ten years later one of my best friends from that night is married to one of the girls we met, he's now living in the USA with three gorgeous kids, amazing. I soon spent my Camp America salary, and my tips, and I was broke again. The American travels were at an end. So I flew to London to work out how to keep travelling with no money.

With my bank account completely empty, my sister, who had moved to London, let me stay with her. After catching up for a few days, she gave me £20 to take the train to the airport, and from there my mum had bought me a budget flight back to Ireland.

Las Vegas had been expensive, and I needed some real cash to hit the road again.

There was only one thing for it – medical research. Now, I'm not sure if you guys know what that entails, so let me break it down.



I was locked in a hospital in Belfast, the capital of Northern Ireland, for five weeks.

No visitors, no trips outside the hospital, and no exceptions. Each day they would feed me some experimental drugs and take 17 blood samples from my arm to see how I was reacting. Pharmaceutical companies have to go through these 'human trials' before they can release the drug to market.

It was horrible, but the money was good, I was paid around £2000 (\$3000).

I got out of the hospital and headed back home to Kilkeel, to work out the next step. It was November 2006. I knew I wanted to travel, but after paying back my Vegas debts there wouldn't be much left from the medical research payment. My mum was in no position to give me the money required for the 'gap year' that seems such a rite of passage these days.

So, the very evening I got back from hospital, I googled 'how to travel with no money'.

Boom. Teaching English in Asia. I signed up the same night. I was to study a CELTA diploma (that's the most expensive, and most respected qualification to teach English as a second language, and it's run through Cambridge University). That was \$1600. But I could study it in the Thailand campus. WOW!

I used the remaining \$1400 from my medical research payment to pay my Vegas debts and book a one way ticket to Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Here I go again...

I had my goodbye Christmas 2006, and early 2007 I boarded my Thai Airways flight to Bangkok, and then on to Chiang Mai. Little did I know I wouldn't experience another Christmas with my family until 2011.

I studied my CELTA for one month in Chiang Mai. I passed, just about, and then hit the road with my remaining funds. I backpacked through the south of Thailand, the islands, full moon parties, into Cambodia, Angkor Wat, long bus journeys, lots of booze. I was 23 years old, and I was living life.

Money soon ran out though, and it was time to teach English again. Actually, as part of my CELTA course I had signed a contract for a teaching job in rural China, but after two months in Thailand, I had fallen in love with the country. I reneged on my China contract and headed back to Chiang Mai to try to find a teaching job there.

As I had the respected CELTA diploma, it was only two weeks before I found full-time work at AUA, a well-known language school there. I found myself a cheap Thai style apartment (\$150 per month), I bought a battered old scooter from the 90s (\$250), signed up to Thai language classes (free through my school), and a gym (\$30 per month) and that was it.

This confused Irishman was now
officially living in Chiang Mai, Thailand - easy as that.



Each day I worked evenings, leaving plenty of time to explore Northern Thailand.

I was teaching young adults, and although teaching isn't my calling, I really enjoyed my time there. Students are super respectful, there was a nice vibe between the other teachers, the hours weren't punishing, and I was appreciative of the opportunity extended to me by AUA.

One day, I was riding my scooter to work around 5pm, the sun was starting to set, and I was listening to my music, not concentrating on the road. Next thing, a sharp corner and WOAAAH...I nearly crashed into the back of a street elephant. A last minute swerve, the back of the bike wobbling and about to topple, I managed to regain my composure and drive on. That was the moment. The life defining moment. It struck me – here I am, a 23 year old normal Irish guy, from nothing, really living in Thailand, teaching students, riding motorbikes, exploring Asia.

THIS IS LIFE. THIS IS MY LIFE. And I don't want anything else, ever, other than a life like this. And I knew I would never go back to the real world.



My salary averaged to be 22,000 Thai baht (\$650) per month. I ate in local markets, practiced my Thai, went to local waterfalls and mountain ranges and generally just loved life. I stayed in that school for 12 months, but when my contract was up, I knew it was time to explore the world; and so I did just that.



I had scraped together some extra cash from double hours of teaching in the last month. It was early 2008, and while every other young traveller was going back to the Thai islands for yet another full moon party, **I booked a one way ticket to Bangladesh. I wanted to really SEE the world.**

And I did. Bangladesh, India, Nepal, China, South Korea, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and then I looped back to Thailand, all on the tightest budget you've ever heard of, ranging from \$10 to \$25 a day.

Soon I ran out of money, but I was in no mood to go back to the real world. I had been hearing reports from my friends

grinding it out in the office back home, hating life, and I thought there's no way I was subscribing to that. **I'm not selling my youth. I'm going to embrace it. Every single second.**

With an attitude like that, opportunities arise around you. And I heard of a 5 week English teaching camp in South Korea, a country I had just travelled through and loved. Off to Bangkok for the visa: success. I had a few weeks before camp, so my buddy and I scraped the rest of our pennies together, traveled south to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, where the flight to Korea would be cheaper. Add in a cheeky trip to Singapore, then a last minute decision to fly one way to Japan instead. Overland across Japan, boat to South Korea, then five weeks working there. I loved it, young teachers, having fun, cool Korean students. And free food, free board and about \$3000 in my pocket. Travel money.

The Philippines, Borneo, Brunei, Indonesia, East Timor. Money's getting tight again.



It was April 2009, and with a 'Working-Holiday' visa for Australia, my buddy and I, both completely broke, flew one way from East Timor to Australia with the last of our money.

Living in a dorm in a hostel was horrible, but I scored a well-paid job in a conference company in North Sydney, and started a new life there. Apartment, gym, social group but it also included my first ever experience in a 9-5 job, and I hated it. Shirt, trousers, shoes...take off your traveller bracelets Johnny. Nope. Ok. You get the picture.

The company though was great, fantastic people. I was in the sales team and making great money, but I had the Sunday Blues bad. Waking up, dreading a Monday morning. This is not the life for me. Six months in, despite the occasional five figure monthly pay packets, I quit. Because I was making them money, and because they are great guys, they offered me a new job, with a pay rise, and visa sponsorship where I could officially migrate to Australia and live there forever. Wow. I couldn't turn it down.

So back to the routine, back to the Sunday Blues, and five months later I really quit. I had to work my 30 days' notice, but I had no projects to do.

My blog, OneStep4Ward.com, was born during those 30 days.

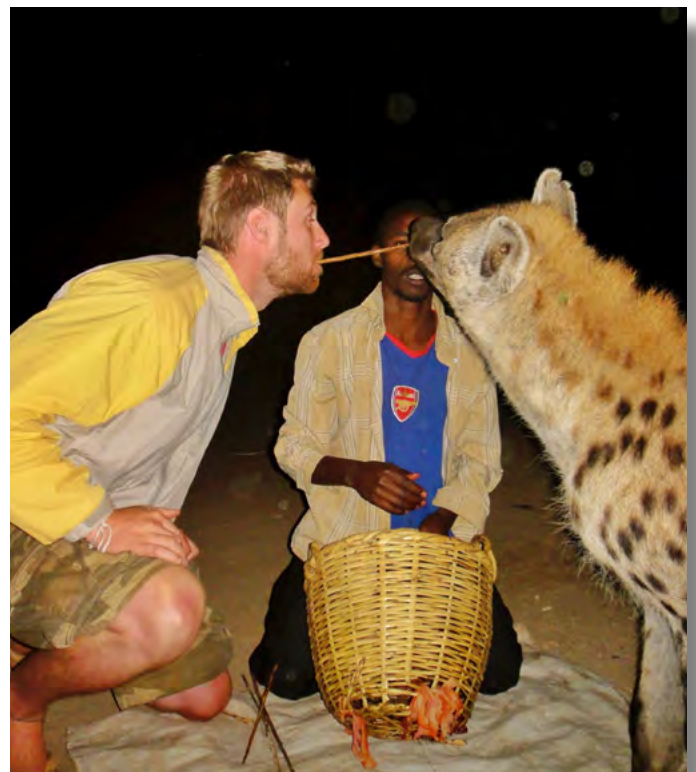
I had no idea how to start a website or a blog, so I thought to myself 'what countries speak English, but are quite cheap?' The Philippines. Perfect. So I emailed about 30 Pilipino bloggers and said: "Can you build my blog for me?" Eventually, one said yes. \$100 later and I had a basic blog online.

My 30 days were up and I booked a one way ticket to Zimbabwe. It was May 2010. Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana, South Africa. World Cup. Blog. Blog. Blog. Swaziland. Mozambique. Malawi. Tanzania. Kilimanjaro. Blog. Blog. Blog.

My Cape Town to Cairo trip was fully underway. I had banked a lot of money from my Australia job (AU\$25,000. I had never seen numbers like that in my bank account before, wow!). And I was free. My blog was slowly gaining some readership, and I was travelling on a tight budget. I was hoping to make the \$25,000 last two-to-three years of hardcore travel.

Uganda. Rwanda. Kenya. Safari. Ethiopia.

STOP THE PRESS!



“How much is it for us to publish an article on your blog?”

Life changing moment. I was in a grimy internet café in the centre of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia's dusty capital, when I get an email from a gentleman who I now love, called Baba Bojang. The email said something along the lines of: “How much is it for us to publish an article on your blog?” I had no idea what this meant, how much to charge, or anything. I replied “\$100,” faking confidence. “We'll give \$65,” was the reply. DEAL.

So I published their article, and the whole time I was expecting my friends in Australia, or Thailand, or Ireland or London to email me with: “Hahaha, just kidding, now give up the dream and come and get a real job.” But that message never came, instead it was: “What's your PayPal address?” Followed by: “Your PayPal account has been credited with \$65.” HOLY SHIT.

That \$65 was gone that night on celebratory drinks, but this meant a lot more than \$65, this meant it was possible. **I had officially made money 'on the internet'.** All those stupid Google ads where a girl with huge boobs holds an over-sized cheque saying 'Google pays me \$150 an hour, and they can pay you too' suddenly didn't seem so fake.

I travelled on. Somalia. Djibouti. Sudan. Egypt. More emails. \$100 here, \$150 there, by December 2010 I was making about \$700 a month, the same salary as I was making teaching English. Unbelievable. I moved back to Asia to think about things.



At this point I wasn't confident about this blog stuff making money. I had begun my master's degree application through Nottingham University in the UK, they had a campus in Kuala Lumpur. They accepted me on their BSc Management, so I set up my life in Bangkok, and every three months I planned to spend a week in Malaysia to do my lectures and then head back to Thailand. January. February. March. April.

I was studying, but not loving, the regimented nature of education again. What's more was that my monthly income from OneStep4ward.com was constantly increasing.

I cracked \$1000 per month for the first time, then suddenly \$2000, then \$3000, \$4000 and \$5000. This was going somewhere. I jacked in my master's, sad to have wasted a few thousand dollars on it to be honest, but I was excited about where the blog was going.

2011 was a big year. I thought I had cracked it. I was making a western income, but only working a few hours a week, 10 hours maximum. It was too good to be true.

I travelled a bit too, to Myanmar, to Cambodia, around Thailand, to Hong Kong and Taiwan. But truth be told, I was in party mode. I got a nice apartment in Bangkok, and was out late four or five nights a week. I did that until the autumn of 2011, when I had a bit of an epiphany. Firstly, all this booze, all these dates, these late nights and even later mornings weren't the answer to a fulfilled life. I was out of shape, and I was wasting opportunities. **Secondly, if I can make this much money from ONE blog, imagine if I had two? Or five? Or 100?!**

I sorted my head out, and began to expand. I started three new 'blogs' all about travel, then every time an advertiser came to me with an offer, I would say: "Sure, but I'll do you a cheaper rate if you buy on all three/four/five of my websites." Six websites, seven, 10.

I was pumping my earnings into expansion. Then there was another watershed moment. I knew a girl with a well-respected blog, but she was disillusioned with the blogging world and was going to become a lawyer, so the rumour was that she was going to sell up. I knew I could make money from blogs now, but this was a gamble. The price was \$8000. A lot of money. I had about \$8000 savings from this new blogging stuff I was doing, could I blow it all on one website? Aaaagh.

I called my mum, my sister, my mates. "Should I do this?"

Of course, they didn't know. My mum being my mum said: "If you think it's the right thing to do, then do it, I'll help you fifty-fifty if that helps at all." Amazing woman. She essentially was going to take half the risk for none of the profit. Then I decided, 'fuck it, I'm gonna do it'. So I did. Within six weeks I had made the \$8000 back, and more.

Now the business was up and running. I hired some content writers and a tech guy. I hit the road again. China. North Korea, another English camp in South Korea. Back to Thailand to get things in order and try to expand for a couple of months, then a mammoth trip from Beijing to Ireland without flying, through every country in Europe, starting in March 2012. With my plan to travel but all the while managing my business from my laptop. I was ADAMANT that I wouldn't let my burgeoning business dampen my travels. **Lifestyle first, business second.** The mantra I continue to live by to this day.

"Lifestyle first, business second."

Soon I was off. I took the Tran Siberian train across Russia, Mongolia, China and Kazakhstan with two friends. We would be sight-seeing all day, then when they went to bed or to the bar, I headed to the internet café from 9pm to maybe 2am. We joked about me working too hard, but two months after leaving Thailand, I was now easily making \$10,000+ a month, while travelling at the same time, amazing.



They left me, and I continued my quest: every country in mainland Europe, inter-rail-ing.

It was during this trip that I started to get free trips, sponsored by the train companies, sponsored by the bus companies, five star hotels all for free in exchange for a mention on the blog. Suddenly I'm making more money than ever before, AND I'm getting about half of my travel for free.

I remember when I set out from Thailand, I thought to myself, 'I have managed to save about \$20,000, Europe is expensive, so as long as this blogging stuff doesn't die too badly, I will

have enough to get me home for Christmas. Then I'll work out the next step.' Things didn't work out like that.

That November, I made \$38,000. December, I achieved my 'every European country' goal and made it home for my first Christmas since 2006. It was 2012 and I couldn't believe how my life was changing.

I now had the confidence to publically state the goals I had been thinking about for years, namely 100 countries before I'm 30, and every country in the world before I'm 35. I was 29, and on 92 countries. This was doable.



2013 arrived and I flew back to Bangkok, but things were different.

After taking a couple of months break from my travels and working from Bangkok my current account, for the first time in my life, showed over \$160,000. Imagine withdrawing \$20 for dinner and seeing that? It blew my mind every single day. I had fallen in love with a Thai flight attendant, and my life was looking rosy. Every month I was making a minimum of \$30,000. I was working maybe 15-20 hours per week, studying the Thai language four hours per day, gym for two hours per day, nice restaurants, great nightlife, things were good.

I saw an ad for a new two bedroom apartment in a really nice, upcoming area in Bangkok, I could buy it off-the-plan for around \$120,000. One month later, paperwork done, I bought it. Outright. No mortgage, no finance. All mine. I went straight to the department store and bought everything I had ever

dreamed about as a kid. The most expensive TV, best surround sound, PlayStation, best fridge, microwave, don't care how much it costs. I furnished it in one-and-a-half days. It's really mine. I couldn't believe it, I still can't to be honest. No matter what happens with this crazy blog stuff, no one can take this place away from me. I couldn't get my head around it. Sexy pool, nice gym, 24 hour security. 'How did this all happen?' I thought.

My girlfriend got a new flight attendant job in Malaysia, so I moved to Kuala Lumpur with her. The irony of studying my master's degree there 18 months previously in order to secure a well-paid job somewhere, only to return with all this blog money, wasn't lost on me. I was, and am, very grateful at how things turned out.



Living with Jaa in Malaysia, my social group was lost. So I lived in the gym, and on my laptop for 100 days. I grew the business even more, cracking my first \$50,000 month, I hired more people, sales guys, writers. I made more than \$100,000 clear in those three months, and thanks to my personal trainer I was in the best shape of my life too. This was how I always dreamed my life to be, but to actually be living it? Unreal. I celebrated my 100th country by flying my girlfriend and myself to the Maldives, to celebrate at the Niyama resort, a water bungalow on stilts, private pool, the lot. All the while thinking, 'blogging changed my life'.

The rest of 2013 was more business and more travels.

Some of the Pacific islands: Tonga, Samoa. Papua New Guinea. Vanuatu. Solomon Islands. Then I followed the Silk Route: Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan. Uzbekistan, through Iran, Azerbaijan and on and on, meeting up with some of my employees, road-tripping across Turkey, hot air balloons in Cappadocia, this is what life is all about.

My business was still growing, and I was casually making more than \$1000 EVERY SINGLE DAY. I made it home for Christmas once more, and headed back to Thailand for the start of 2014.

I spent the first two or three months of 2014 getting back into shape and studying Thai, as had become my habit, before spending the rest of the year overlanding from Mexico all the way down to Antarctica, trying not to take any flights (*I ended up breaking that rule when I got a ticket to the World Cup Final in Rio, so I flew there immediately!*).

Central America was beautiful but the internet was tough. **But still, I would never duck under that \$30,000 monthly benchmark.** If I ever got close to it, I'd put in a few extra hours, but never at the expense of my world travels.

By this point it was getting ridiculous, I had hired a full-time personal assistant, and she was responsible for organising all my media stuff, so almost all my hotels and activities were now sponsored in exchange for my growing social media presence.

I was now staying in luxurious five star hotels at least half the time, and staying in 'free' accommodation 95% of the time. The old cliché of 'As soon as you can afford it, you don't have to pay for it' came to mind almost every single day.



South America was an even bigger adventure.

Galapagos Island. Angel Falls. Taking my mum to Machu Picchu. Flying my girlfriend to Bolivia, then to Iguazu falls, then to Buenos Aires, and on to Santiago, Chile. Easter Island. Patagonia. Antarctica. Wow.

I was due home for Christmas 2014, but I was getting summit fever, I started to really see the end of this 'every country in the world' mission. So I cancelled my flight and spent December, January and February visiting every country in the Caribbean. Barbados, Bahamas, Saint Lucia, etc.

Retrospectively, I made a mistake doing that, I was burned out from almost a year on the road, I was homesick and missing my partner. The Caribbean is a place to explore with someone, so a Christmas and New Year's alone there was a little tough.

Still, I was proud to reach 144 countries. It was February 2015, I was 31 years old and my goal of visiting every country before I turn 35 was on, just 53 left.

**“I was now staying
in luxurious
five star hotels
at least half the time,
and staying in
'free' accommodation
95% of the time.”**

Back to my very own apartment in Bangkok, loving life back in Thailand.

My relationship was on the rocks though, perhaps all the travels had taken their toll, it's only human really. Not for the first time, I became aware at just how selfish my goal to visit every country in the world was. I was on the road the vast majority of the time, leaving my loved ones 'waiting' at home for me. But I was close to finishing and, to be honest, the only way to achieve something big is to make sacrifices, and it looked like I was doing just that. I'm sorry for everyone that I hurt along the way, but onwards I went.

Less than two months in Bangkok (a mistake looking back), a quick trip to Tibet with my mum, when the earthquake happened, and I was back to Africa for the rest of the year. I was in Tunisia for the terrorist attacks, and then in Algeria for Ramadan.



I cracked the \$1M earnings online just as I was starting my second epic Africa trip, and the media picked up my story.

Coverage in Forbes, the BBC, MSN, FHM, Yahoo, and the Daily Mail sent me viral – every day another country was running my story. In over 100 countries, people were reading about this Irish guy who was travelling to every country in the world and had made \$1M+ as he went.

It was surreal. Inboxes on my Instagram and Facebook accounts and email full every day, with tweets coming from every corner of the globe. I couldn't believe it. Still though, I carried on with my trip, and ran my business quietly as I travelled.



Africa in 2015 was both epic and tough.

I had some of the most amazing travelling experiences of my life, Madagascar, Namibia, Mauritania, Sao Tome. The last frontier of real travel is surely West Africa and Central Africa. There's nowhere else quite like it. But **witnessing people being shot, the sheer corruption in almost every single country, the dodgy policemen, the coups, and the bureaucracy was tough on my mental health.**

I did the vast majority of the year in Africa solo until, thankfully one of my buddies came to join me for the last 70 days.

We had a ball, inevitably that too was difficult now and again, but sharing it with a close friend is oh so much better. And as I finished with Morocco and Cape Verde, 2015 ended up with me on 182/197 countries.

I was getting very close to the goal.
Business though, that's another story.



Google had tweaked their algorithms during 2015, so while the online marketing industry spent time working out the consequences of that, **my revenue dropped by more than 50%. Ouch.**

Rather than moan about it, I was more grateful than ever for my broke upbringing.

I hadn't been flash with my money at all and, aside from travel, I hadn't spent much cash on anything substantial. No sports cars, no fancy watches.

I had invested my money with a second property in London and six figures invested via a fund manager. My Bangkok condo had doubled in value. My blogging game was still doing pretty well, but the crazy \$50,000 a month times seemed to be over. At least for the short term.



Throughout 2015, I was all over the place – both mentally and physically.

Business was taking a knock, I was trying to sort out the paperwork for my London property whilst launching my Hong Kong start up FindaTutor.com.hk, and in the midst of that I was breaking up with my long-term girlfriend (or rather, she was breaking up with me).

Throughout all this I was still negotiating my way, solo, through some of the world's most dangerous countries such as the Central African Republic, South Sudan and Burundi. It was tough, but I was proud to come out the other side with some of the best travel and life experiences of my life.

I feel stronger for all of it, now.



I was burned out from travel and wanted to chill in Bangkok, but I'm a restless soul when I have a goal to achieve. So chilling got put on the back burner and instead I embarked on some crazy travels through Libya, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Eritrea and Turkmenistan.

Business was ticking over, still around five figures a month but suddenly, out of nowhere, it began to grow again, and now it is in an upward curve once more. It's been a year since Google's amendments, and not much has changed for me so I'm hoping we're going back to where we were. It's looking possible.

Back in Bangkok I spent 20 days getting my apartment back in order, a few reunions and too many beers.

I realised I was in the worst shape of my life, I guess all the stress of 2015 had me drinking too many beers, eating too much pizza, and not focusing on staying healthy. Not a good move. I'm convinced that people who exercise regularly are much higher achievers, but I'm back in the game now, so onwards and upwards.

I write this as I finish up my Pacific Island trip. Before this current trip I was missing six Pacific Island countries from my quest to travel to every country in the world: Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Kiribati, Tuvalu and Nauru.

With those now visited, I have four countries left: Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Norway and Oman. I've left two nice, easy countries so I can enjoy the homestretch, and not only be hitting war zones as I bring my ten year journey to a close!

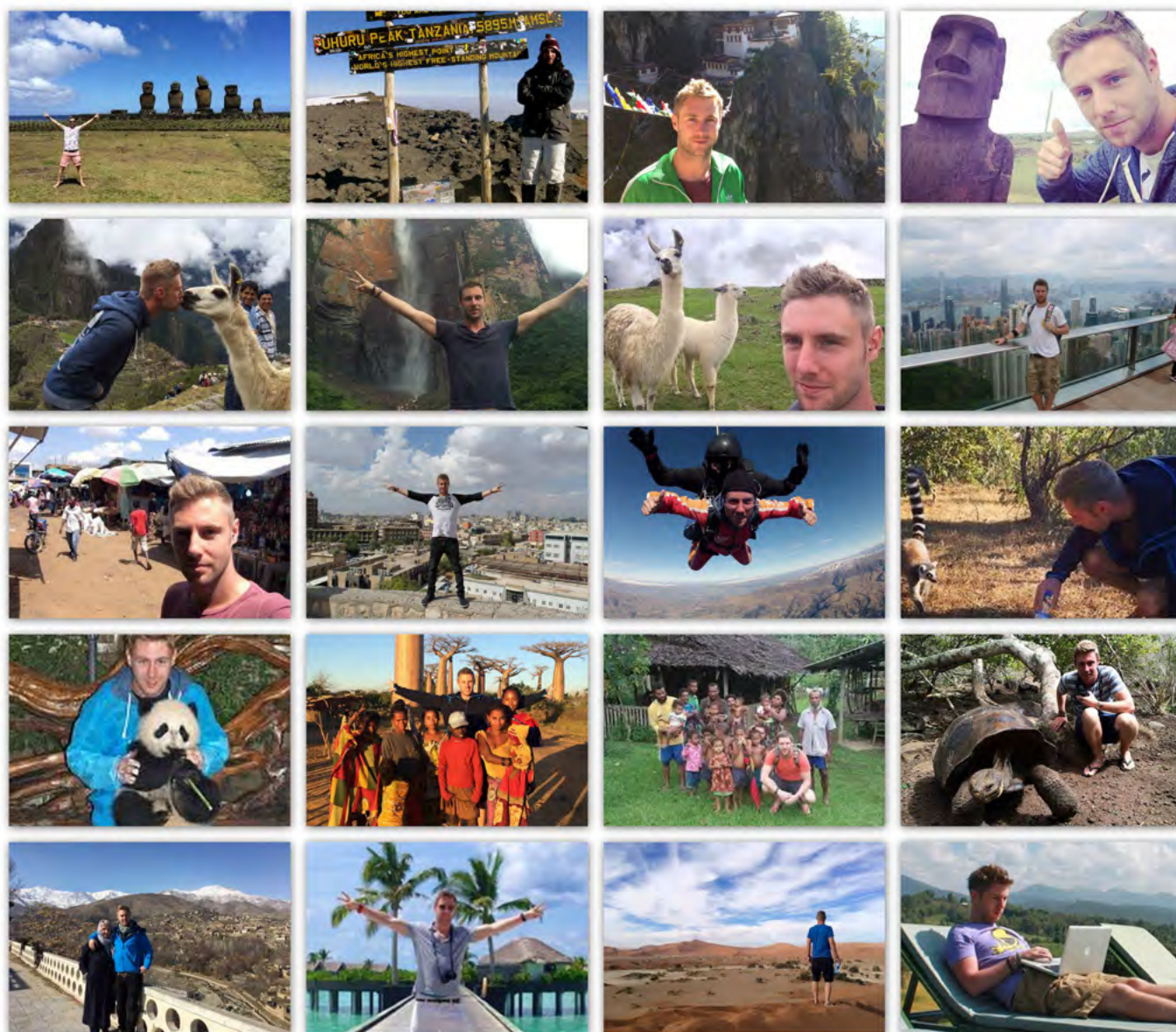


Business? The blog biz looks strong again which is great.

Also, I plan to take my personal blog, OneStep4Ward.com, a lot more seriously too, and I'm convinced it's my role in life to show you guys how to chase your dreams the way I have chased mine. FindaTutor.com.hk will require a lot of my time too, and I am hoping that's the golden ticket.

As for travels, let me finish my journey first. I know a few people who have completed this quest, but they come from wealthy families, or they fly in and out of countries for an hour or two, count airport stopovers etc.

I've tried to really **TRAVEL** the world and experience the countries I have visited. It's taken me a decade to get here, so I'm in no rush to set another decade long trip just yet. But then again, I do have some plans up my sleeve...



02

THE BENEFITS OF BLOGGING

Why You Need A Blog TODAY

If you're still here after my life story, first of all, well done for putting up with me, and secondly now is the time to get it back to you guys. And how I can help you.

As you now know, blogging changed my life, there are no two ways about it. From being so broke that I had to do medical research, to being truly both financially and time free, and all at a young age.

There are a few ways, all of which are nothing short of awesome. So let me run through the benefits of having a travel blog:

How did blogging change my life? And how can it change yours?

1 - Diary

A blog can be your diary, recording the events in your life. When I say that I honestly believe EVERY-ONE should have a blog, I mean it from the depth of my heart. It's why I built one for my mum, GeriatricTraveller.com, and for my ex-girlfriend: BeMeBeDelicious.com.

GERIATRIC TRAVELLER



It's why most of my close friends have blogs too, because I'm always telling everyone that I care about that they should have a blog.

However, the number one reason people tell me that they can't do it?

They don't have enough time. Hmmm.

"There aren't enough hours in the day". You know this just isn't true.

We all have the same amount of hours in the day, and we all know – or know of – amazing people doing amazing things with their lives. The difference is procrastination, time management, diligence and consistency.

Life is short, and we shouldn't waste it with soap operas and tabloid rubbish, nor should we fill it with endless scrolling of a Kardashian's Instagram. There is space for social media of course, but use it wisely. And Kim's ass on repeat, is not using it wisely.

The first benefit of starting and maintaining your blog is to document your life.

It's your diary. Fill it with what you get up to, your emotions, your advice to yourself and/or others. Even if no one ever reads it, you'll have a record of what happened in your all-too-short life.

I hugely regret not blogging earlier, I was 26 when I started blogging, and I wish it was more like 16. It's fascinating to look back and reminisce about what you did, how you felt. So if for no other reason than that, start a blog, be consistent with it, and record your life. It'll be there for your grandkids one day too, I think that's just awesome.

So even in a worst case scenario, you have a beautiful chronological record of your life. That alone makes it worth it, but there's a lot more you can gain from it too.



2 - Have a voice, be an authority

SEVEN BILLION people in the world – it's difficult to stand out. For sure we all have opinions, whether it's about fashion, fitness, travel, politics, or religion we know what we believe in and we have a right to put it out there. But, I'm sorry to break it to you, no one cares what Jane and John Smith have to say. And that burns.

With your blog, suddenly you have a creative outlet. You have a voice, and you can broadcast it loud and proud. If you stay consistent with your blog, posting regularly within your topic/niche, you will become an authority.

A source where people trust your opinion, and are guided by it. That's a beautiful thing, and it's something that has been denied to all but the rich and famous in every other generation in history. We are bucking that trend. Now we can have a voice, finally. It's our duty to use that.



3 - Free stuff

Ok, Ok, I know you like the thought of having a record of your life (see point A), and it'd be nice for people to listen to your opinion once in a while (see point B), but what about the goodies, right?



Right then. Yes, as a blogger you can get endless freebies. Although I hesitate to call it 'free', because it's a trade. Their goods/services for exposure to your audience. Anyway, the two best blogging niches for this stuff are undoubtedly fashion and travel.

Fashion blogs, once they have even the smallest of followings, get clothes thrown at them daily. I'm friends with a few fashion bloggers, and I own a couple of tiny fashion blogs myself, and it's ridiculous. You couldn't wear the amount of stuff they give you.

Travel though, that's the best of the lot. Who doesn't like free flights, five star hotels, safaris, trips to the Antarctic, and more? I know, it's crazy,

but it's true. If you work hard on your blog, and get up to 10,000 people or more reading it every month (not as hard as it sounds, I promise), and if you're proactive you can travel for free.

Even better, once you get to a higher level still, these hotels and tourism boards will invite you AND pay you a day rate (my day rate is €500 for example) in exchange for your exposure across your blog and social media.

Blogging is considered 'new media', and it's all the rage now. Hotels, tour companies and tourism boards are actively looking to work with bloggers, so there's never been a better time. I can safely say, with confidence, within a year of blogging properly, you could travel around Europe for three months and not pay for accommodation once, honestly. I'll explain more how to do this later in the ebook.



4 - Making Money

The thing that EVERYONE wants to do, make money on the internet. No office, no boss, no set working hours. Sounds perfect, too good to be true even. But it's very, very possible.

Although I should point out, that just because there are no set hours in the blogging world, you will spend a lot of time on your laptop. You can't disappear for months on end and expect the money to keep rolling in.

So yes, it is possible to make money from your blog. Some bloggers these days are making millions of dollars from their blogs, and thousands are making \$10,000+ per month. Register your company tax-free in Hong Kong and that's living the dream right there.

To make money from your blog though, you must take it seriously. You have to treat your blog, and ultimately your future audience, with respect.

Blog regularly, manage your social media closely, create quality content borrowing from your expertise, be authentic, and possibly most importantly, do all that FOR FREE while you grow your blog and your followers.

This is where most people fail. Six months in, no audience, no money. 'NOPE, this is not for me.' **Persistence is key.** I'll go through the different ways to make money from blogging later in this ebook.



The sky's the limit

So you're now recording your life, people are respecting your views, you're travelling pretty much for free, and you're making a couple of thousand dollars tax free every month. Sweet. **Done? Not yet.**

If you've managed to do all this, you've managed to create a brand. As crazy as it sounds, YOU are now a brand. This is where life just gets better and better. Now you can live your life, document it, help the world and achieve things you never knew were possible.

Now you can write a book. Get a TV show. Run your own tours. Become a public speaker. Design a course for your readers. You can expand, start more websites, create forums, attend conferences.



This is when blogging starts getting crazy good, the sky is the limit.

For example, last year I asked my followers to donate \$25 to a charity I work with in Senegal. Then from all the donators I chose one at random and flew them, to travel with me, for two weeks in Senegal and the Gambia to witness the work our donations are doing.

The response was so positive, six other people asked if they could pay and join us on the trip, and in the end we donated more than \$10,000 to the charity in Senegal. All from my starting a blog back in Australia. Amazing.





WAYS TO MONETIZE A BLOG

Probably the most common question I get asked is
“How do you make money from a blog?”

I know it can all seem a little confusing, or even worse, like we’re all lying about it. Don’t worry, we’re not. It is possible, it just takes a little work.

Before I delve any deeper though, I wanted to stress the fact that you shouldn’t try to monetise your blog right from the start. You should spend the first six months, or even a year, building your brand and your audience, finding your voice and working out what works and what doesn’t. Coming straight into blogging and expecting to make money from day one is pretty much impossible. It may well be the best job in the world, but it takes a little time.

Work hard, be patient. If you want it badly enough, you can do it.

**Focus on building your blog, your brand and your audience
If you can do that, the money is easy.**



Remember the key to being a financially successful blogger is to have multiple income streams. Aim for four or five, and never ever turn your nose up at a few hundred dollars here and there. That stuff adds up, trust me.

With that being said, once you've established yourself as a blogger **here are 12 ways you can make money from a blog.**

1 - Direct Ads



What is it?

This is the traditional business model for all media. Build an audience, understand that audience, sell advertising space directly on your website targeted towards that audience. For example, if you start a travel blog with a focus on photography, then you could have a Canon or Nikon ad on your homepage.

Or, if you've written one super popular article about something specific such as 'What to pack for a gap year', then an ad for a backpack or travel towel would fit well.

How do I apply it?

If your site has got a lot of traffic, fear not, the advertisers will come to you. If you're still in the early stages of blogging, then don't worry, it's still viable. But it involves a little work on your behalf. You need to outreach to companies that you think would be a good fit. Pitch them an idea, how much advertising space on whatever page, along with cost. Use Google analytics to help convince them it's worth their while. Emailing and cold calling are your friend.

How much can it make me?

It's all about negotiation. If you have, for example, four spots on your home page for direct ads, you can expect to charge \$50 a month as a minimum, now if you can fill those four spots, that's \$200 a month, almost \$2500 a year. You can open more spots, and increase your rates as your audience grows.

2 - Google AdSense

What is it?

Unless you have an ad blocker installed, you'll have noticed little rectangle boxes on most web pages you visit. Curiously, they always seem to be promoting stuff that you've recently been searching for, weird right? Not really. This is Google AdSense. They track what your IP has been looking at, then tailor the ads towards you. Everyone sees a different ad, relevant to their online profile. Pretty cool actually.



How do I apply it?

You sign up to Google AdSense at www.google.com/adsense fill in the details, and wait for approval. Generally, seeking approval isn't an issue unless you're up to no good on your website. Once approved, they give you some code, you jump onto your WordPress dashboard (more on that later) and install the code, you'll then see the google ads wherever you've placed them. Easy.

How much can it make me? Don't install this when you're just getting going, it'll only be worth pennies to you. Once you get to around 50,000 page views a month, you can expect a little more than \$100 a month, or around \$1500 per year. Not bad for a ten minute installation job.

3 - Affiliate Marketing

**What is it?**

This is one of the two biggest ways bloggers can make REAL money. Affiliate marketing is basically when a blogger recommends a service, or a product, from another business. Then if the reader goes on to buy that product or service within (usually) 30 days, the blogger will get a cut of the sale, ranging between 3% and 50%.

How do I apply it?

There are countless different products and services that you can make affiliate revenue with. It ranges from travel insurance providers, to Amazon products, to other blogger's products, to VPNs. The list is endless. Normally, you find the product you want to promote, go to their website and sign up. They will give you a special link, so when you link to that product, this special link will tell them that your website has referred the reader to the product. Now if they buy that product, your commission comes in.

This is one of the best ways to become a pro blogger. You should only ever promote products you use and trust, otherwise your audience will leave, and rightly so. But if you truly believe in a product, and send your followers that way it's a win-win-win. The follower gets something you genuinely recommend, the company profits and you profit. Perfection.

How much can it make me?

A LOT. Some travel bloggers are making more than \$10,000 per month with affiliate marketing, and remember – that's PASSIVE income, they don't have to work for it once it's all set up. Wow. Other bloggers in other industries are making up to \$100,000 per month. Honestly. And you thought that spending 40 years in the corporate grind was the best path to success? Think again.

4 - Content Marketing

What is it?

This is huge too. I made (and continue to make) hundreds of thousands of dollars with this system. Basically, once your blog is trusted by Google, after 6-12 months other companies will want to publish articles on your blog. The article they want published will include a hyperlink to their company's website, or their product. Now believe it or not, no one cares about how many people click on that link, or even how many people see it – it's not important at all.

The reason the companies pay for this is because when your site links to their site, the Google 'engine' can sense that your website is linking to their website, and therefore Google will trust that company's website more, assuming that if someone is linking to it, it must be more legitimate. Welcome to the weird world of Google.



How do I apply it?

If you're being professional with your blog, posting content regularly, then believe me, these guys will come to you. If that hasn't happened yet, you can cold email and cold call SEO (Search Engine Optimisation) companies, and online marketing companies who offer this service. Also, there are middle men platforms where you can sign up your blog, and they will do the sales outreach for you too, although they take a big cut from that. I will discuss more about this when I release my course in the summer, but you get the picture.

Once you have a list of contacts, you can contact them yourself every time you're ready to publish more sponsored content. This is often the first way every blogger makes their first money online.

How much can it make me?

A LOT. A decent blog can casually make \$1000 a month doing this, or with a big sales outreach, that could stretch all the way up to \$5000 per month, my maximum with OneStep-4Ward.com in one month was \$8500 using this method.

Now, this is why I recommend everyone starting a second and third blog. If you can make, let's say, \$2000 from your personal blog, and you have a couple of other blogs in the background, you can suddenly double your income for not a lot more work. If you nail this, you're suddenly making \$10,000+ per year, and well on your way to being a full-time blogger.

5 - eBooks



What is it?

This one is pretty self-explanatory. You're reading an ebook right now; although because the other blog-monetising methods are working very well for me, I'm either giving you this book for free, or for very cheap. Create your own book, based on your knowledge, and sell it. Simple.

How do I apply it?

Once you are an authority on a certain topic, you can create short ebooks and self-publish them via both your blog and Amazon. Maybe you know a lot about trekking in Nepal? How to stay fit in your hotel room? Or you know Chicago's best nightlife spots? Anything at all, you can create an ebook, hire someone to make it look sexy, and self-publish for as little or as much as you want.

If you're new to the blogging world, give your first ebook away while you build your reputation. Once you have a bit more credibility after six months to a year, then by all means create and sell, sell, sell.

How much can it make me?

This can vary, but there are bloggers who passively make \$5000+ per month selling their own products via their blog. If your ebook is really high quality, and priced at \$50 or similar, you only need to sell 20 each month to crack that \$1000 mark, and again you have another yearly income stream of \$10,000+.

Remember I told you never to dismiss small gains? Well, I have a few friends who sell a few ebooks on Amazon for \$1.99 and \$2.99. It may seem like nothing, but each book they sell garners them around \$150 each month, for no additional work other than creating it in the first place. Now imagine you have eight of those little bad boys selling, that's a yearly income of \$10,000+ again.

6 - Courses



What is it?

You leverage your expertise to create an online course teaching people, in depth, about what you know. This involves a lot of work, and takes months and months of full-time hours. It's normally a high end product, which sells at an expensive level.

This method can make bloggers great money, but this shouldn't be considered until you have established yourself within your blogging niche. An absolute minimum of a year, perhaps even two or three.

How do I apply it?

You lock yourself in your apartment, learn about screen casting, videography, time management and you create an online course from scratch. It takes time and expertise, but if you can create a multiple module course, teaching your readers exactly what you know about a certain topic, and you've built trust with your readers over time, then they'll be happy to buy your expertise. You sell it on your own website predominantly, also via UDEMY, and you can even create an affiliate programme where other people can sell your course for a cut. Again, it's a real win-win-win.

How much can it make me?

A LOT. If you're a fully-fledged expert on something, and you can create a quality course, these courses will sell for no less than \$150, all the way up to \$2000 and beyond. If, say, you price is at \$499, if you can sell 200 of these each year, that's around \$100,000 per year.

7 - Membership Sites

What is it?

You create a network, a closed group of people who have access to special sections of your website. They pay a monthly fee to access this stuff, and be part of the community.

How do I apply it?

You need a large following before you can implement a membership site and you will need to have created genuine trust over a period of months and years. You will have to show value for the subscriber in remaining a member of this exclusive group. That involves you creating new content every month, to keep the group growing and stimulated. This can become a full-time job, or you can outsource it.

How much can it make me?

A LOT. The recurring nature of the payments means that membership sites snowball and snowball, starting off small, but if you can keep the community energised, vibrant and growing, then there's no limit to how much you can make. \$5 a month is nothing if your product is strong. Two thousand members? \$10,000 per month.



8 - Freelance Writing



What is it?

This is the bread and butter to many bloggers, and travel bloggers especially. If you're daunted by the tech and sales side to all the other methods, this is a way to pay your bills.

You've proven to be a competent writer by the very nature of having a growing blog, you can show that people are interested in what you write, you've found your voice and you like to tell stories. Now you can find publications to pay you to write for their media output.

How do I apply it?

Reach out, all the time. Scour the web and find the contact details of travel editors, (or fashion, or fitness etc. depending on your niche) and make contact, win them over, pitch them SOLID ideas, with word counts and an angle. Eventually you'll build up a network of great contacts and every time you have a cool story, or epic experience, you can hit them up and sell them your story. Personally, I only do this for large publications, as selling your time, such as being a freelance writer, is exactly what I don't want to be doing. But to get you started, it's a great way to keep afloat.

How much can it make me?

Whilst high end writers can make six figures a year, the industry is tough. If you work hard, spend a long time writing, create a great list of contacts, you can aim for \$103,000 per month, but this is real work, make no mistakes about that. It does, however, also help spread the word about your new blog, as every time you're published, more people are aware of your existence, and your expertise.

9 - Public Speaking

What is it?

Every industry worth their salt runs conferences. Large businesses even run their own in-house events. And all these events need people to speak. Whether you're sharing your expertise on writing, or online business, or motivational stuff, if you have a story to tell, then you're in demand. They almost always include flights and hotels, and once you're established you can command quite a good fee per presentation.



How do I apply it?

First of all, you build your name via your blog. Then you attend conferences wherever possible, as an audience member, and you network, network, network. Try to connect with all the other speakers, with the event organisers, ask them about selection processes. Also, contact the organisers of events further afield and pitch your speech to them. Be willing to do it for free when you start out as you build confidence, and before long you'll be getting invited to speak at various conferences throughout the year.

How much can it make me?

As I mentioned, be open to doing it for free. Once you're established, never charge less than \$500. I've been paid as much as €2000 for a 30 minute talk, and of course expect flights and hotels to be included.

10 - Product Reviews

What is it?

You have spent time growing your blog readership, all those hours slogging over blog posts, and eventually people will take notice. Your audience grows, and now business will want to get their product in front of your audience. They'll contact you via email and ask about the opportunities you provide to showcase their product, and from there it's a big negotiation. Maybe your requirement is to keep the products? Or demand a fee? It's up to you.

How do I apply it?

They will come to you of course, but being proactive is the name of the game in the blogging world. Need a new backpack? Or an underwater camera? It doesn't hurt reaching out to brands who offer those products and offering to review their product on your site. Pitch them professionally, and you could be getting free stuff for the rest of your life.

How much can it make me?

For a start, you get lots of freebies. I've had Hugo Boss watches (four of them), Diesel jeans, Barbour leather bags, backpacks, shoes, hiking boots, cameras, phones. You get the picture. So this method can save you a fortune. Also, you can ask for a fee for further exposure, such as an extra blog post, or an extra-long blog post. Perhaps you require a \$400 fee if it's a product you wouldn't normally use.

11 - Brand Ambassadorship



What is it?

Once your blog has an audience, even if it's small, you can begin to consider yourself an influencer. As an influencer, many brands will like to align themselves with you. This is the holy grail of the blogging world.

A reputable business sees you as the ideal showcase of their brand and products, they pay you a monthly stipend, and you get access to all their goodies.

How do I apply it?

If you're big, like always, they come to you. If not, or even if you are and they've missed you. Outreach, outreach, outreach. It's my plan to try very hard to become an airline brand ambassador this year or next for one of my favourite airlines.

How much can it make me?

As well as the free goodies, you can ask for a monthly stipend starting at \$500 all the way up to \$5000. Personally, I think if you can get a couple of brands who work well with you paying you around \$1000 each, you're onto a winner.

12 - Social Media Sponsorships

What is it?

Building a following on social media takes time, a lot of time. And perhaps even more effort. All those updates when only your mum and granny are reading it. Persevere though, it's an absolute necessity in the blogging world. And with the new generation, social media is everything, so often brands will skip the blog articles and promote their products exclusively on social media. Instagram is far and away the biggest player here.

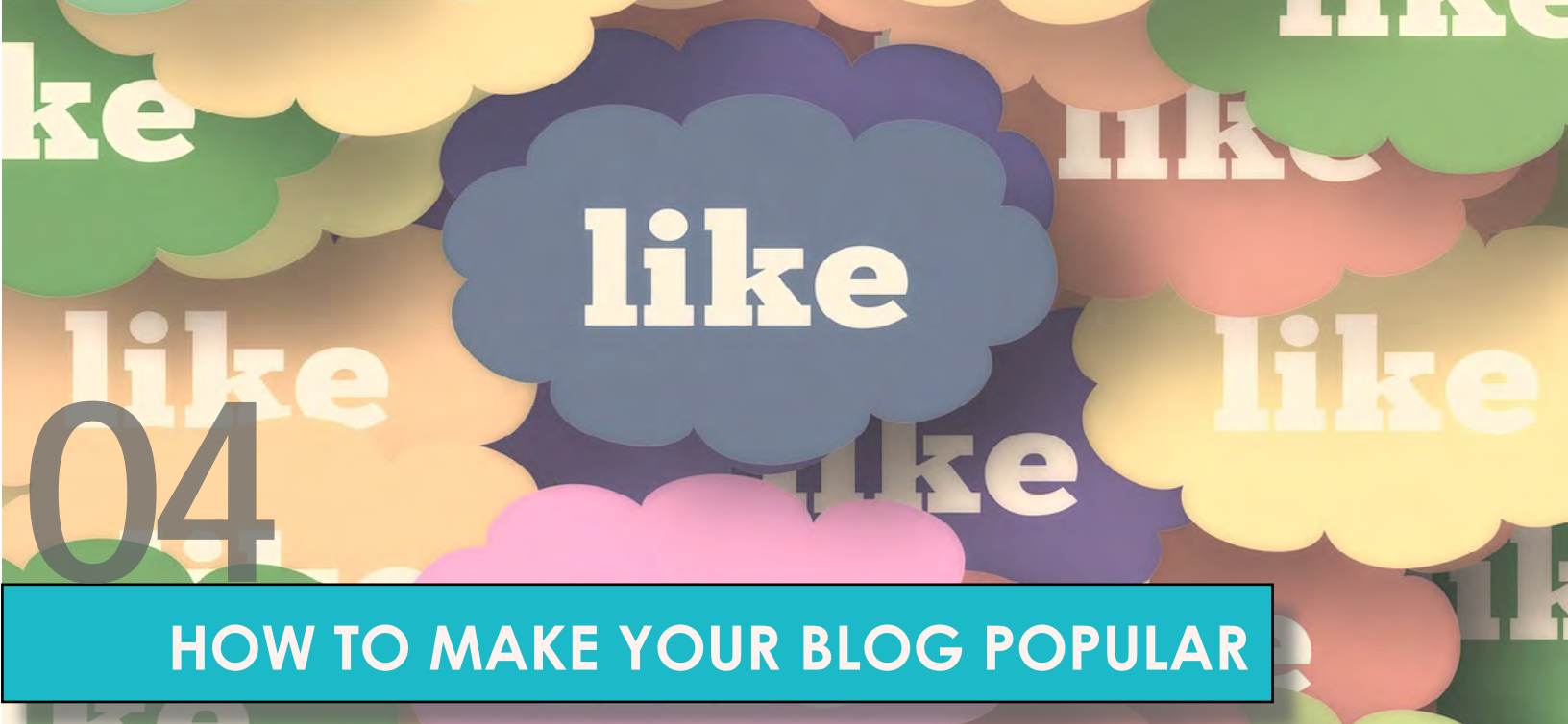


How do I apply it?

You organically grow your Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat until you have 10,000 followers across all mediums, as a minimum. From there, you can sign up to middle men agents who will pair you to suitable brands, or you can outreach yourself and offer your services to appropriate brands in your niche.

How much can it make me?

It's quite lucrative once you have a decent following. If your Facebook page is verified with the blue tick for instance, rates should start at \$500. Instagram should be roughly \$100 for every 10,000 followers, and Twitter half the value. This is a winner because it takes so, so little time. Just a few minutes and you have paid for your flight to the next destination. Be wary though, only promote brands you approve of. It's not worth destroying your credibility with your readership for a couple of hundred bucks.



I know you hear me keep saying: “When you’re established,” or, “Once you’ve built your audience,” and you’re sitting thinking, ‘Ok ok but how the hell do I establish myself as a blogger? How do I build an audience?!’

Well don’t worry, I’m gonna help you guys out here too.



First of all, making a blog popular involves a fair bit of work, and the work is seemingly unpaid.
This is where most bloggers fail.

They do six months or 12 months of hard work, it’s still just their mum and granny reading their articles, they don’t start seeing the big dollars, or the media invites, and they quit.



Don’t
Quit !



Perseverance
and
Consistency
is
THE KEY guys!

I've put together a list of ways to make sure your blog doesn't stay hidden in the dark corner of the internet, **it's all about outreach**. So check out these methods, apply them and before long you can buy me a beer in Bangkok as you travel the world too.

Here are 12 methods to popularize your blog



1 - Create NEW content EVERY DAY for six months

(SEO friendly, organic stuff) When I first started out blogging in 2010, I hadn't found my voice yet. I didn't understand if I should blog such as: "I did this, then I ate this, then I saw that," OR more like, "How to do this; how to get from A to B."

Before long I realised that when you're starting out, as cold as it sounds, people aren't overly interested in YOUR story, unless of course it's some crazy, amazing experience (and your time in Thailand doesn't count).



So you need to offer people help. How did you afford to travel? How did you plan your trip? Sure, it's still about you, but it's helpful to the reader because they can apply it to themselves. Once you're on the road, you want super helpful posts like, 'How to get from Chiang Mai to Bangkok' with bus and train times, prices, info on the level. Don't worry so much about writing every detail about your thoughts, keep thinking about the info a potential reader needs to know in order to apply it. Write articles like this EVERY SINGLE DAY. In a perfect world, you'll blog every day for the first six months.

This persistent technique will teach Google to trust your site, you upload unique content pretty much daily, and Google loves that. Also, you'll appear in so many more search results, increasing your traffic so much.

You don't have to promote these articles, they aren't interesting for the average reader, but they are super interesting to someone who searches for the exact topic of the article.

Supplement these generic articles with awesome blog posts too. Your crazy experiences, your opinions on something. Those are the posts you promote on your social media. The daily blog posts can go unnoticed by your audience, but it never goes unnoticed by Google. Organic search results are your friend.





2 - Get interviewed

Many bloggers have interview sections within their website, where they ask other bloggers a series of questions. EVERY SINGLE TIME you see an interview with another blogger, immediately connect with the writer, reach out and offer yourself as an interviewee. This was really helpful for me in my early days. Sure you'll get a lot of rejections, but you only need a few to say yes and you slowly becoming noticed.



3 - Create quality SHARABLE content once a week

I alluded to this in point one. You should be filling your blog with helpful, Google friendly content. But you can't ONLY do that. Those posts should take less than an hour each.

To engage your fledgling readership, you also have to demonstrate value at least once a week, twice if you have the time. Articles that your average 20-something wants to read, enjoy and share. Twenty best things to see in China? Perfect. "How much it costs to travel X in X months?" Spot on. You need to differentiate between these two types of articles, the short, daily articles are for Google searches; and the quality, image rich articles that took more time. Push, push, push these on your social media.



4 - Manage your social media passionately – use tools to schedule

If you want to be a full time blogger, and make money from blogging, you have to manage your social media daily. Twitter, Instagram and Facebook are the three absolute minimum platforms you need. Pinterest is great for driving traffic to your site too, and of course YouTube is a wonderful place to share your personality and true voice.

If you don't like social media in your personal life, this can be a struggle. I know a few of my friends who are bloggers and they rarely share their own stories, outside their blog, on their personal Facebook, Instagram etc. So as they tried to grow their blog and brand, they struggled to keep up with the social media requirements. They lacked the passion for it.

My advice here would be, if you're already super active on social media, then you'll love this side of the business. Luckily I fall into that side of things, I really enjoy interacting with the digital world, with my followers etc. so it's great. If you're not a social media type person, then this is gonna be a chore, so suck it up, create a schedule to stick by, and be professional. Social media is integral to a blossoming blog.



Roughly, stick to these rules:

Facebook – update every day if you’re travelling, or publishing content. As an **absolute** minimum, it should be twice a week. But always, always aim for more

Instagram – a picture a day is ideal, a **minimum** of three per week.

Twitter – as much as you can. Multiple times per day. Tweet quality articles, retweet interesting things, share your opinions and thoughts. You need to be active here **at least** once a day.



5 - Network – Facebook groups, Twitter etc.

When you start out blogging, it is imperative to find other people in your new world. You want to network with other bloggers at the same level as you, starting out, but also (and perhaps more importantly) bloggers who are already demonstrating the success you desire.

Join appropriate Facebook groups. Search on Facebook for ‘make money blogging’, ‘fashion bloggers’, ‘travel bloggers’ or whatever niche you’re in. And join the appropriate groups. These are really helpful places to ask advice too, BUT they’ll also get you noticed. Contribute to conversations, help people when you can, don’t be scared to ask for help yourself.

Twitter is a great networking tool too, reach out to your contemporaries and your role models, offer value to them. Flattery doesn’t hurt either. Be seen and make your mark. It’ll help both in the short and long term.



6 - Guest post with your new network

This is where your networking can come into play in a huge way. Once you have built a genuine level of trust with other bloggers, you can pitch them an idea for a great article to be published on THEIR blog. You, of course, offer this article to them and them alone, you won’t publish it anywhere else, including your own blog. It should be a really well written and sharable piece. If they agree, you’ll suddenly have exposure to a whole new audience. Perfect.

You need to repeat this as often as possible. This is something I’ve really failed to do, and I still need to work on, but if you do this from the outset, you’ll be flying in no time. Don’t be afraid to start small either, it’s a long process so it’s fine to be published on smaller blogs at the start, then larger, and larger until you feel confident that you can bring value to the big players.

It’s often said that if you write an amazing blog post, and you sit back proudly admiring your handiwork, those are the articles you should ‘give away’ to other blogs. It hurts in the short term, but the new audience you’ll garner makes it very worthwhile.



7 - Write for free on big publications

This is pretty simple. Freelance writing is a good way to pay the bills when you start out blogging. This piece of advice though, pays nothing in the short term. Elite Daily, Huffington Post, BuzzFeed – you know the kind of publications. They churn out content every hour to a huge audience, and more often than not, they don't pay you. Sometimes though, that's just fine.

You need exposure, you need credibility, you need access to their audience. So take it on the chin, create some awesome content, and pitch them every day until they start publishing you. Once you've been published 10 times or so, across three or more publications, watch your traffic soar. Not to mention the confidence boost of seeing your name in lights on huge media sites, that always helps too.



8 - Be interesting

This is something that seems lost on a lot of bloggers, both new and old. So many bloggers fail, and when I look at the vast numbers of travel bloggers struggling to make a living, or blogging as a part-time job, and I see them wondering why they just can't seem to generate any traffic to their site, I think to myself: "What are you offering the world?"

Another generic gap-year in Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia? Working holiday visa in Australia? Oktoberfest in Germany, and space cakes in Amsterdam? It's been done before, a lot. You need to bring something new to the table. Be interesting. What's your angle? Maybe you're from a developing nation, showing the world how to travel on a not-widely recognised passport? Or you're a fitness traveller, or a vegan, or LGBT travel is your thing? Maybe you want to document your journey from making zero money blogging, to hopefully a successful future, and show how you are doing it step by step. That'd be great.

Do cool things, see amazing sites, break the mould. South East Asia is fun, and for sure you should go get drunk on the Thai islands, but why not also go a little further afield too – Myanmar, Borneo, Indonesia (Bali doesn't count!). Personally, you'll get to truly travel, and that's amazing, but also your audience will respect you as a voice of authority if you don't just follow the crowd. Furthermore, after you've written about Myanmar and Borneo, suddenly your articles about partying in Thailand, and tubing in Laos hold more weight, because people can see you're not only about that. Perfect.

There are other ways to be successful but it's much harder. Successful bloggers are either amazing writers and story tellers, Wandering Earl for example. His blog isn't all bells and whistles but his story telling is amazing, and genuine. Or bloggers are first class marketers, Nomadic Matt for example. He doesn't travel much, he doesn't do much exciting or interesting travel-wise, but he creates sleek products and markets himself amazingly well and works really hard. Same for the Blonde Abroad. Or people with cool, interesting lives such as Nomadasaurus or The Broke Backpacker. I would include myself in this category!

The best combination is all three, of course. But being a pro blogger, in my opinion, is to have an awesome life, and make money doing it. If you wanna work 80 hour weeks, you'll probably make more money in an office. I prefer to have an interesting life, and share it with the world. This way you don't have to work the 80 hour weeks, but you can still be hugely successful.



9 - Be consistent

Another common flaw with new bloggers. Having an epiphany and hitting your blog hard for three weeks, daily blog posts, social media schedule, networking every opportunity you have. Then you get sidetracked, forget about it, find yourself demotivated and don't touch the blog for a month. Next month – new month, new you? All over again, hit the blog hard, same story. And soon stop again. This won't work for you.

The audience you build will become disillusioned by your lack of consistency, and if they see your social media, and your blog, void of new content, they'll soon unsubscribe. One step forward, two steps back. Set yourself realistic targets each day, week and month in terms of output and stick to them. And should you miss a few days? That's fine, you're human, we all do that. But as soon as you're aware of it, jump right back on the wagon and get publishing and updating again. Consistency will carry you through, past all the other people who don't have the heart for it.



10 - Ads – Facebook and Google AdWords

For the impatient people among us, me included, you can always buy traffic to expedite your growth. The two easiest sources of bought traffic are Facebook promotions and Google AdWords.

With Facebook ads, on your Facebook page, you can choose to boost your page to increase your likes, you can choose to boost particular posts to boost that one update only, or you can choose to promote your website directly. This is a great way to get a few thousand likes on your Facebook page, and to increase engagement on your updates. If you've written a really awesome blog post that you know people will enjoy it, find value in it and ultimately share with their networks, give it a boost. Target to an audience you think will love it. If it's about the best restaurants in Rome, promote it with people who live in Rome, amongst others. You get the picture.

Google Ads is a whole other world. This is a little more advanced, and personally I would only use this once you've gotten into affiliate marketing. Then you can 'buy' traffic from Google, send it to an individual article that you know people get value from, and click on your affiliate links. So you're buying traffic to your website, and you're hopefully converting them to customers for whatever product it is you recommend - travel insurance, hotels etc.





11 - Sell your story to mainstream media

If you're following point 8 above, and you're living an interesting life, and then blogging about it, it's time to get some REAL exposure. Following the silk route through Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan? Awesome, now write a cool story about your experience, and pitch it to travel editors. Your local paper at home, regional press, national press, international press.

Travel editors NEED to fill their column inches every day, they NEED fresh new content. It's easier to get published than you think, honestly. Jump on LinkedIn and Twitter, the two best tools for this, and reach out to all the publications you can think of, find the travel editor and bombard them via email, Twitter and LinkedIn. Pitch them a solid, professional story, and watch your story go viral. Amazing.

I just did this for my mum back in Ireland, now she's getting TV and radio interview requests DAILY. Why? I took her to Afghanistan on holiday. Be interesting, it pays off.

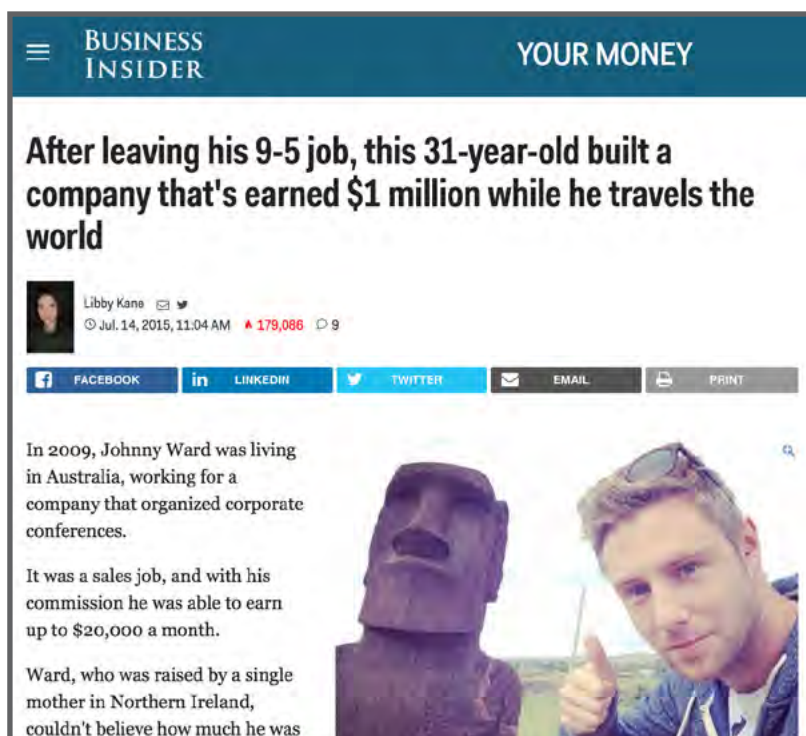


12 - Be professional

Business cards (Moo), media packs (Canva), slick website design, solid email signature, business email address, collect emails (aweber).

Be professional. In the same mould as 'Dress for the job you want, not for the job you have', this is the same approach. From day one, be a pro blogger, even before you're making money and getting free trips around the world.

Start as you mean to go on, you'll feel better about your blog, your brand and your product, and so will the other people who start doing business with you. Try not to cut corners at the start, and you'll reap the rewards later down the line.



“Dress for the job you want, not for the job you have.”



05

HOW TO REACH OUT FOR FREE STUFF

(Includes examples of Press Kits, Pitch letters)

As a travel blogger, without doubt the biggest perk of the industry is FREE TRAVEL.

Although I should stress I don't like to refer to it as that.
It's not free, it's a trade.

They give you their services and products in exchange for exposure to your audience, an audience that has taken years of blood, sweat and tears to generate. But for easy communication, I'll refer to it as 'free travel'.

It's true, with a well worked blog, you can stay in hotels you only dreamt about before, go on safaris that would break your bank account, and eat in restaurants where the bill is the same as your monthly rent. You can plan trips for three months, and have all but a handful of hotels sponsored. But just having a travel blog doesn't suddenly make you entitled to all this. You have to earn it.

Out reaching to potential partners is essential, as is your professional approach. This can be both time consuming and stressful, which is why, as soon as my blog was generating money, I hired a virtual assistant in the Philippines to do all this for me. For about \$600, you can free up a lot of time by outsourcing this work, then spending that time on ways to build your blog, and your revenue.

“But just having a travel blog doesn't suddenly make you entitled to all this.

You have to earn it.”

That time should then allow you to generate a lot more money than the \$600 monthly salary. A perfect example of time management, and another step forward towards your dream life.

Until you reach that point though, you'll have to do it yourself.

Here's a step-by-step guide about how to leverage your blog to get free trips and hotels

Here's how to get free travel, using your travel blog

1 - Install Google Analytics on your blog

This is absolutely imperative. You'll need to include your statistics in your media pack, and your emails when you're working with larger brands (think Shangri La, or Emirates airlines).

If you're working with smaller, boutique hotels or tour companies they don't often ask for this information, BUT if you include this data in your pitch, these companies are much more likely to think you're a professional outfit, and offer you something. If they think you're an amateur, they're more likely to delete the email and never reply.



Sign up for Google Analytics at: www.google.com/analytics

Google Analytics

SIGN IN

Overview Features Success Stories Resources Analytics App | All Analytics Solutions

Measure, learn, and grow.

Google Analytics lets you do more than measure sales and conversions. It also gives insights into how visitors find and use your site, and how to keep them coming back.

SIGN UP FOR FREE

Mariam Naficy
Founder & CEO, Minted

2 - Create a media pack from your social media and analytics

A media pack is a one or two page PDF document that you can send to companies and hotels, along with your email sales pitch.

The document will include:

- all the details about your site and your brand
- the demographics of your readers, age group, gender etc.
- your stats (viewers, page views)
- Also, if you've been featured in any press, you can include the links there.

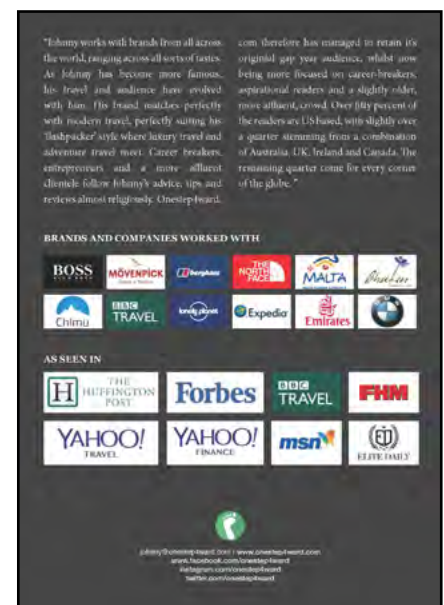
This is your chance to sell yourself, and your blog.

Below is an example of my old media pack.

Keeping your old media packs is great too, because you can see just how much your traffic, and social media figures have grown too. In March 2016, I cracked half-a-million page views for the first time. More than five times what I was doing less than two years ago. Consistency, and perseverance is key.



Media Pack is also known as: Press Kit, Media Kit



3 - Create your travel schedule for your whole trip

If you want to maximise your potential partnerships and ultimately have an entire one-month, or longer, trip sponsored, then the best way to do it is to lock in your dates and plans as early as possible.

Book all your flights into the area, and your flights back out of the area, including all domestic transfers.

NOTE: While getting sponsored flights is possible, it's very, very difficult. In my opinion, until you get over 100,000 page views per month, I wouldn't waste my time chasing the airlines. They take ages to reply and you're safe just booking a discount ticket, or low-cost carrier. Trust me, it'll save you time and stress.

Once you've decided the dates of your trip, you can begin your outreach.

It's much easier to say to a hotel in Barcelona: "We're coming on 5 April, for three nights," than: "we may come next month." Your chances of success are much, much higher when you have confirmed dates, especially when you're starting out.

This is the same with activities. If you can contact the bungee jumping company with a specific time i.e. the morning of 5 April, they are much more likely to confirm you.



4 - Create a spreadsheet for your partnerships, with separate tabs including:

- for the type of travel your blog fits,
- and where you'd like to go
- and start to create a database of travel/marketing contacts.

Now, back to Microsoft Excel. And you thought you'd escaped that when you gave up your day job to become a blogger, right? Not quite!

Although creating spreadsheets for scuba diving companies and boutique hotels in Santorini, Greece, is a lot better than number crunching potential insurance liabilities, or whatever it is people do in the these huge offices every day!



You have to remember your niche here. And this is why it's important, that when you start your blog, to think about your future. "TheBrokeTraveler.com" may sum you up right now, but what about when your blog makes money? How will it fit you then? Or, what if you want to stay in the Intercontinental in Hong Kong? They simply won't ever, ever give you a (complimentary) media stay, because the demographic of your readers, doesn't fit the clientele of that caliber of hotel.

If you haven't read my article titled 'How to Start A Travel Blog', it talks about this. Don't worry, it's the last chapter of this ebook too, so you can read this later. Remember to put thought into your branding, you don't wanna get stuck living in hostels for the rest of your life, right? Or, maybe you do? And that's cool too, but be aware of aspirations.



Approach brands that fit your niche.

“Because the branding of my blog was open, I could make this transition.”

When I first started OneStep4Ward.com I focused on super, super budget travel, because that's all I could afford. So I reached out to hostels, to walking tours, pub crawls. Things that suited my audience.

As blogging has made me more and more money, and for my staff, and business has grown beyond seven figures, my writing has changed, my travel experiences differ, and being featured in Forbes, Business Insider, etc. means that my audience and demographics have changed too.

So now I can reach out to helicopter tours, private villas, Michelin starred restaurants. Because the branding of my blog was open, I could make this transition. Aim for the same thing, you don't know where you'll be five years from now. I can testify to that!

Your spreadsheet should have:

- a tab for 'Accommodation'
- a tab for 'Activities'
- if you're feeling ambitious, a tab for 'Transport' and 'Restaurants'

The 'Accommodation' tab, should then include subheaders, and examples like below:

Destination – Berlin

Accommodation Name – Lazy Hostel

Accommodation emails – anna 'at' lazyhostel.com, reservations 'at' lazyhostel.com

Pitched – yes/no

Replied – confirmed/rejected/no reply/in discussion

Follow up pitch – if they didn't respond to the first pitch, try again three days later. And then again three days later, and a final, fourth time, three days later. This column is answered 'once/twice/three/four

Replied – confirmed/rejected/no reply/in discussion

Notes – no reply/rejected/media rates/etc etc

CONFIRMED DATES - once you have a place confirmed, lock it in here.



Once your spreadsheet is set up, it's time for the research period.

Hit the internet with all you've got.

Depending on your niche, use various tools to find contacts for accommodation in your area. If you're a budget blogger, jump on hostelworld.com and hostelbookers.com, and find a list of AT LEAST 20 hostels per destination. So if it's Berlin, organise by 'best rated' and write the 20 best hostels in your 'Accommodation name' tab in the spreadsheet.

Then jump on Google, individually search for each hostel, find as many contact emails as you can for each hostel, and save all those under 'Accommodation emails'.

Repeat this until all 20 hostels have names and email address.



5 - Create a sample email pitch and save as a draft, then start pitching.

Next you need to create a sample pitch email, which you save as a draft, and copy and paste for each hotel/hostel/guest house. The email should be something like this below, but remember: *don't copy this, because every reader of this book would then have the same pitch, and none of you will be accepted!*

And repeat. To all 20 hostels. If no one replies, try 20 more.

In cities like Berlin or Amsterdam, your chances of success are quite high.

The more obscure, or the less developed the place is, your chances are lower, as 'new media' isn't so well known.

You'll see for yourself, but some places are notoriously difficult, like Singapore or Hong Kong, and you need a big following to work with them, but it's always worth a try. Good luck!



NOTE: Once you have a place confirmed it's unprofessional to keep searching for a better place. If somewhere confirms, call off the rest of the pitch for location. Move on to the next place. You damage the blogging industry by reneging on agreements.

SUBJECT LINE: Travel blogger reviewing and promoting your hostel in Berlin next month

To whom it may concern:

My name is XXX, from the travel blog XXX.com. I'm an up and coming blogger within the budget travel niche, and I am coming to Berlin on 3 April for three nights.

I plan to write a series of articles on Berlin, about how to enjoy Berlin on a budget, and I will be writing one specific article about "The best place to sleep in Berlin on a budget", where I review just ONE hostel in the city. I'd love to work with you guys during my stay in Berlin, where I stay for three nights in a private room/dorm [up to you, starting out, perhaps a dorm is an easier sell], at a complimentary media rate.

In exchange for the complimentary room I will tailor my article about where to stay in Berlin exclusively for your hostel, sharing my reviews, my photos, all the good bits about the hostel, and of course linking to your website etc. Promoting your hostel to all my readers.

Also, I'll include a Facebook update, an Instagram update and three tweets, all linking to your hostel.

I hope we can confirm this as soon as possible, so let me know please. Also. I've included my media pack accordingly.

Yours faithfully.

XXX

6 - Contact travel PR companies



This is a GREAT way to work with big brands. Rather than constantly contacting the Hilton in each country, these huge brands outsource their PR and marketing to marketing companies. You can reach out to these guys, build a great relationship with them and then rather than contact hotels directly, every time you go to a new place with a hotel belonging to that brand, you contact the PR company who do all the ground work for you.

This is particularly successful once you're up and running and can prove how many people have read your review etc. But if you have time to spare, start researching and making a spreadsheet of all the travel PR companies and who they represent. It's a gold mine.



7 - Be professional at all times

When I'm telling my crazy stories, like the exorcism in Mongolia, or avoiding ISIS in Libya, for sure I slip the odd swear word in. It's a passionate account of what I experienced, with extreme emotions. But there's a time and place for it.

When working with brands, be aware of their company culture. If it's a part hostel, of course you can talk about getting wasted and hooking up. If it's a luxury hotel in Mauritius, they'd be happier with serene photos and a sunset cocktail.

Be sensitive and professional. You want this to become your career, you want six figures, tax-free, so be aware. These guys are your clients. You want to make them happy.

**You want this to
become your career,**

**you want six figures,
tax-free, so be aware.**

These guys are your clients.

**You want to
make them happy.**



06

HOW TO START A BLOG

Start a Travel Blog in Less Than 30 minutes...

Blogging changed my life, I went from being a broke English teacher in Asia to making over a million dollars, buying properties in London and Bangkok, Thailand, traveling to almost every country in the world, and now truly being free.

That's my honest story.

I get invited to luxury hotels in every corner of the world, get offers to keynote conferences from Algeria, to Dublin to Hungary. TV shows, free gear, respect in my field.

All from my blog. Starting my travel blog changed my life.



In this chapter, I'll teach you how to start a travel blog in about 30 minutes tops, and for less than \$70 total.

Get ready to change your life....

After my story went viral, from Forbes, to Yahoo, to BBC and FHM, I've been getting emails and messages on my Facebook page and Instagram every single day asking how you too can start a blog, make money and travel the world.

So let me lay it out, step by step here, along with some very frequently asked questions and a tech glossary explaining all these weird tech words at the bottom.



I should add I'm AWFUL with technology, so if I can start a blog and make it popular, and make great money from it every month, as well as endless 'free' trips as a perk, then you really, really can too.

I personally think everyone should have a blog, whether its a travel blog, fitness blog, lifestyle, fashion, beauty or anything. Worst case scenario is that it's a great diary of your life that you will have forever, and it gives you a voice, not to mention a great additional feature to a resume. Best case scenario is endless free trips, and six figures a year just talking about your life. Yes please. I'm going to teach you how to start your first blog.



With that in mind, let's move on to how to start a travel blog, step by step. If you follow this, you'll have a blog in about 30 minutes:

Step 1 - Choosing the Name of your Blog

This is super important, put some real thought into it. Your blog can define your online persona, and it's here to stay. Here are some quick tips to keep you on the straight and narrow:

a) Don't Pigeon Hole Yourself

The best advice I can give is to not pigeon-hole yourself with your blog name. "24yearoldtraveler.com" may sound good now, but next year it's already out of date! Equally, you might think superbudgettraveler.com is a winner today, but 5/10 years later when your travel style is a little more luxurious, your blog no longer fits you. Be careful.

Choose something you can mould into something else should you wanna do that later down the road. Try to keep it general so your blog can mature/evolve just as you do. For me, One Step 4 Ward allows me to do that, I didn't have a clue about online business when I started, but now my blog name allows me to incorporate that which is great. Be smart about your choice, you don't want to have to change it later and start again.

b) Be Smart with Your Characters

Be careful with numbers, abbreviations etc. I WISH someone told me this when I choose OneStep-4Ward.com.

Most of my blog conversations now start like this....

“What’s your blog?”

“One Step Forward, but no, with the number four, yeah the digit, not the word ‘forward’... ermmm.. hang on I’ll write it down, eurrgh”

I have this conversation daily, don’t make my mistake.

Keep it simple as possible, and avoid numbers, abbreviations, hyphens if possible.



c) Be Professional

When it comes to working with big brands, luxury hotels and creating products – these businesses don’t want to be aligned with dubious bloggers so anything referencing drugs, getting drunk, having sex might seem cool now, but when Nikon, or the Four Seasons refuse to work with you 2 years later because of your branding, you will wish you choose something more professional. Think ahead.



Step 2 - Getting Your Blog Online

First I'll explain how it works, then I'll take you through step by step....

2a) Hosting your website.

To get your blog online you need to set up hosting (*see the next paragraph*) and you need to buy your blog name (*this is referred to as your Domain Name*). It's much better and easier to use the same company to both buy your domain name, and set up the hosting. Then when you have any issues, you only have one point of contact.

Sounds confusing I know, but it's not I promise.

Hosting your website essentially means 'renting' the space on the internet that your blog will appear on. In the same way you may rent your apartment to live in, you have to rent the space for your blog to live in. Easy peasy.

There are lots of companies – GoDaddy, HostGator etc and having used tried, fought with and left them all, I **would only ever recommend, BlueHost.**

Their rates are super cheap at between \$3.95 and \$5.95 per month. They also offer a 30 day money-back guarantee, they have live chat to talk you through your tech problems (something I often need!) AND they let you have your domain name for free when you first register! Winner!



2b) Buying Your Domain Name

If your domain name is available (*no one else has registered it before*), then you buy the rights to the name, for example 'YOURNEWBLOG.com'.

This roughly costs around \$15 per year, BUT like i mentioned above if you go through my guys at [BlueHost](#) when you register your hosting with them too, they give your domain registration to you for free. Boom!

- Ok, so now you've chosen your blog name (from Step 1)
- you understand what hosting and buying your domain is (from Step 2)
- Now, head over to the [Blue Host home page](#) and let's get your blog started today.

This is what you see once your on the BlueHost page

Part A) Click the big 'GET STARTED NOW' button in the middle of the screen...



Part B) PICK YOUR PLAN:

Now you have to choose which hosting plan you want.

The cheapest option is fine.

I own hundreds of sites and have only ever chosen 'starter'.

Choose the cheapest option, no need for anything else...

select your plan

	starter	plus most popular	business pro
	normally \$7.99 \$3.95 per month	normally \$9.99 \$6.95 per month	normally \$19.99 \$14.95 per month
	select	select	select
server power			
websites	1	unlimited	unlimited
website space	100 GB	unlimited	unlimited
included domain	1	1	1
parked domains	5	unlimited	unlimited
sub domains	25	unlimited	unlimited
email accounts	100 accounts	unlimited accounts	unlimited accounts
email storage	500 MB per account	unlimited	unlimited
marketing offers	\$50 included	\$200 included	\$200 included
	select	select	select
		free CDN 1 SpamExperts account	free CDN over \$13/mo in extras 2 SpamExperts accounts 1 free SSL 1 dedicated IP domain privacy

Part 3) Buying your blog name (Domain Name)

After you have chosen your plan from the Part 2 above, you will be presented with this page.

This is where you can check the availability of your blog name, and then go on and purchase it.

Type the name of the blog you want to buy in the box on the left, and click 'next'.

If someone else has already snapped it up, don't panic. Think of some alternative blog names, try those, you'll find the right one for you.

When you find your perfect available domain, click 'next'...

sign up now

Thank you for choosing Bluehost. You have made the right choice in selecting us as your web hosting and eBusiness provider. We provide excellent customer service, reliable hardware and affordable prices.

We appreciate your business and look forward to a great relationship.

new domain

Help me get my free domain!

 .com

Type your domain name above

next

i have a domain name

I want to signup with my existing domain

Type your domain name above

next

Part 4) Fill in your details

You can now choose to sign up your hosting for 1-3 years, with the prices varying from between \$3.95 and \$5.95 per month.

If you're a first time blogger, I'd say the 1 year option is best, but it's up to you.

All the extra stuff you can add on? Remove it all.

The only one you may choose to keep is domain privacy so no-one can find out who owns your blog. I don't bother with it though.

sign up - congratulations!

The domain you have requested, **yourkeytotravelingtheworld.com**, is available.

account information

All fields are required unless otherwise noted.

First Name	<input type="text"/>
Last Name	<input type="text"/>
(optional) Business Name	<input type="text"/>
Country	<input type="text" value="United States"/>
Street Address	<input type="text"/>
City	<input type="text"/>
State	<input type="text" value="Please select a state"/>
ZIP Code	<input type="text"/>
Phone Number	<input type="text" value="(123) 456-7890"/> Ext. <input type="text"/>
	Use an international number
*E-mail Address	<input type="text"/>
	*Your receipt will be sent to this address.

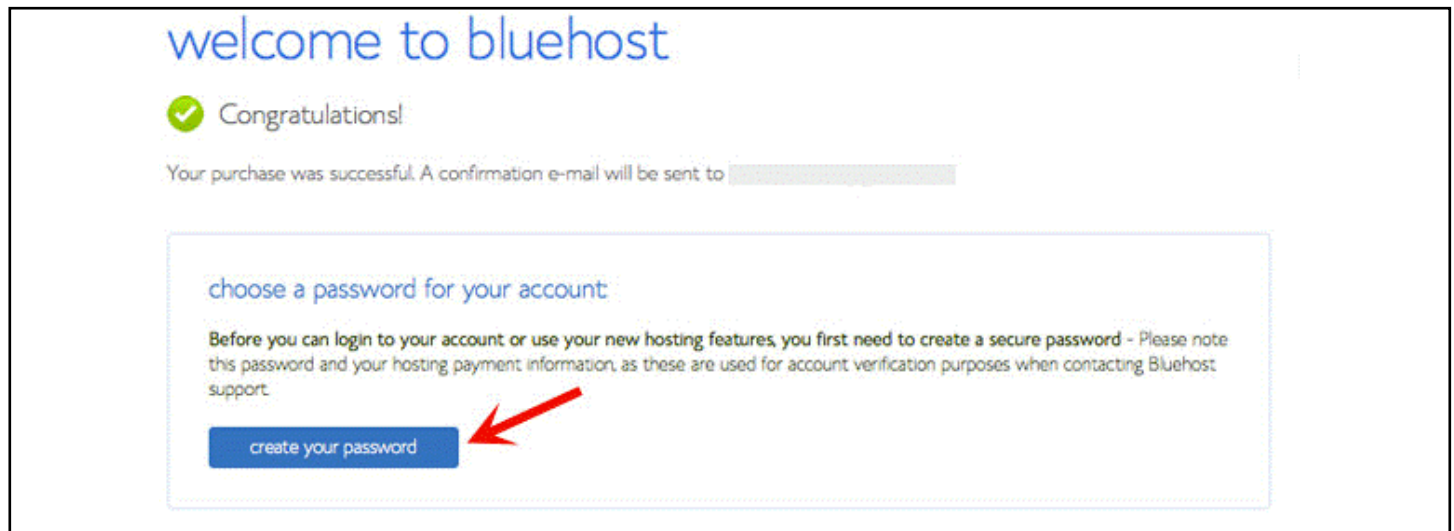
package information

Account Plan	<input type="text" value="Basic 12 Month Price - \$5.95/mo."/>
Setup Fee	Free
Primary Domain Registration	Free
Constant Contact	<input type="checkbox"/> - \$10 per month for first 6 months (normally \$20 per month) More information
Domain Privacy Protection	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> - \$0.99 per month More information
Site Backup Pro	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> - \$1.99 per month (Billed to end of hosting term) More information
Search Engine Jumpstart	<input type="checkbox"/> - \$125 per month (Billed annually at \$14.99/yr) More information
SiteLock Security - Find	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> - \$1.99 per month (Billed annually at \$23.88/yr) More information

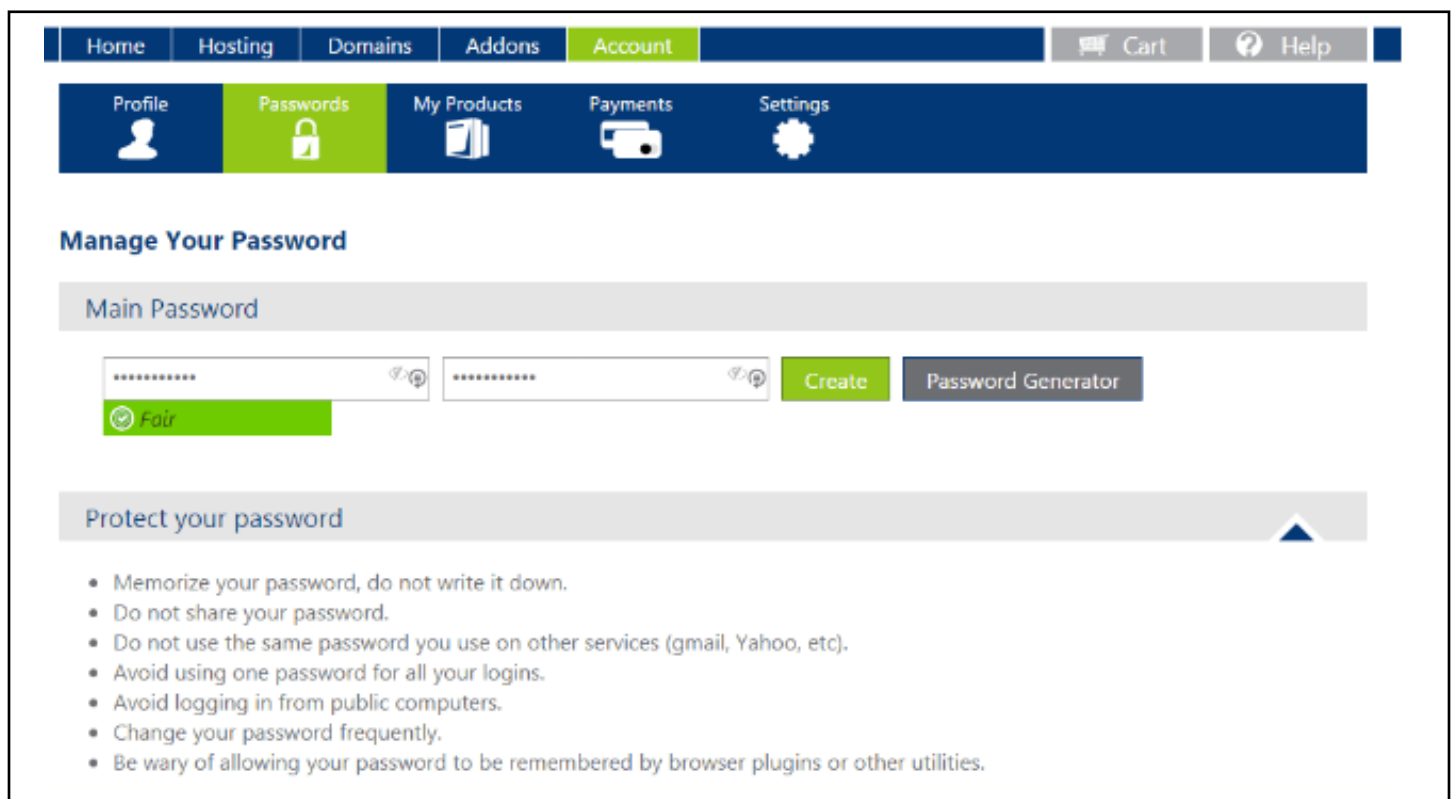
Part 5) Creating your BlueHost password

After you complete the filling your details stage, you'll be greeted by this screen, click on 'create your password'

Click on 'create your password'



This screen appears, go ahead and create your password



Step 3 - Making Your Blog Look Like a Blog - INSTALLING WORDPRESS

Great, so now you've sorted out:

- your domain registration (you've bought your blog name),
- and your hosting (you've rented the online space for your blog),
- you're ready for it to actually be live, on the internet and look like a blog.
- Awesome, well done so far!



Here you need to **install WordPress** from your BlueHost control panel.



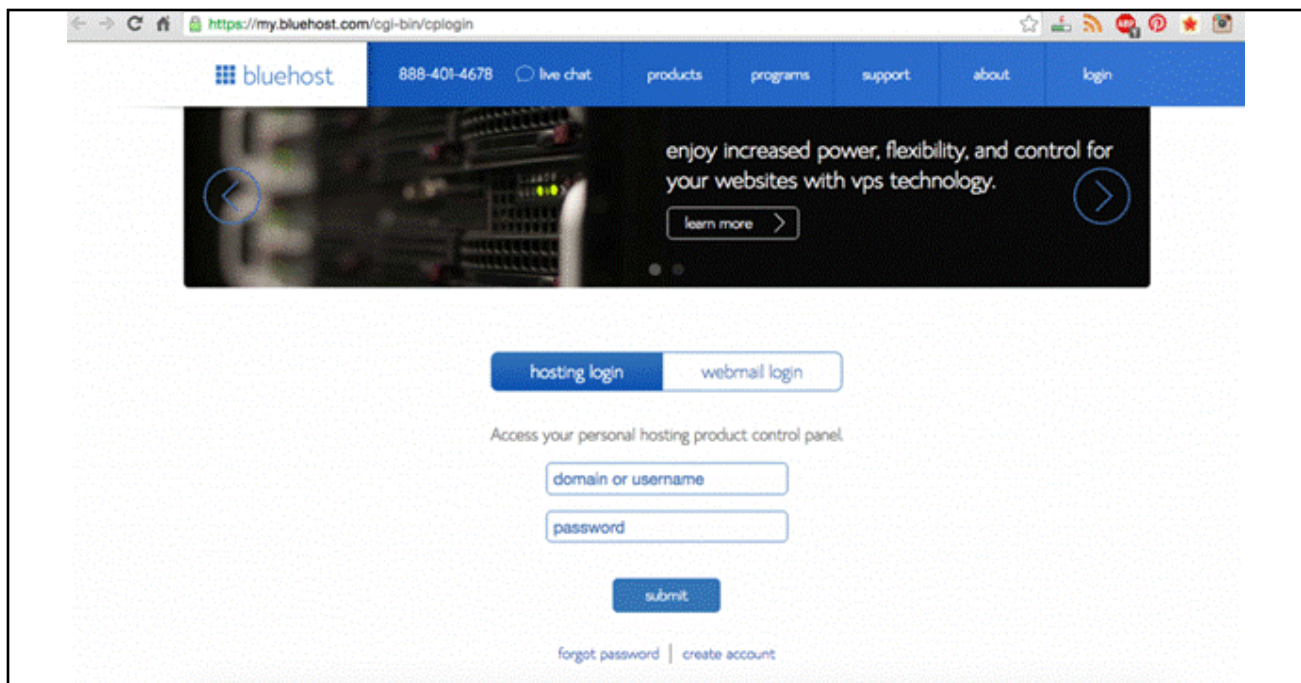
WordPress is FREE software that allows you to publish articles, add advertising, change your design etc and it's all super user friendly. There are other platforms – blogspot, blogger etc, don't use them! WordPress is the one every successful blogger users, me included.

Ok, so how do you add WordPress? Let me give you some screenshots to avoid confusion.



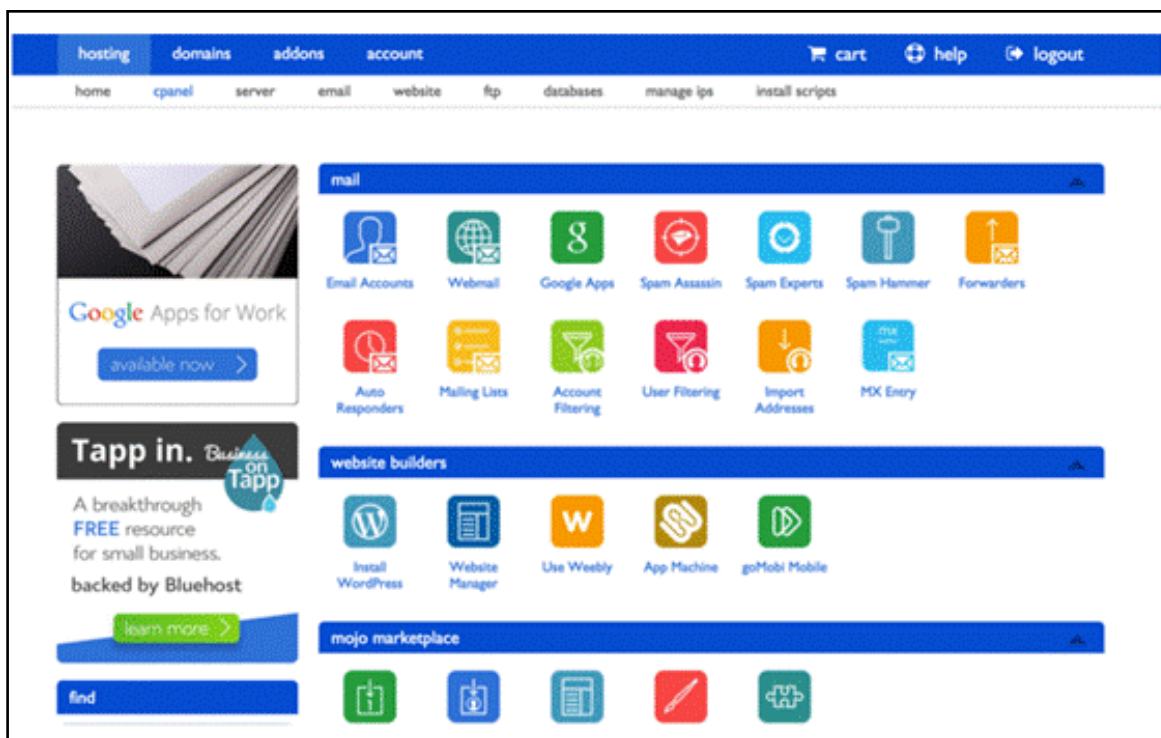
PART A) Log into your BlueHost account here: <https://my.bluehost.com>

Use the username and password you created when you were finishing your registration from Step 2.

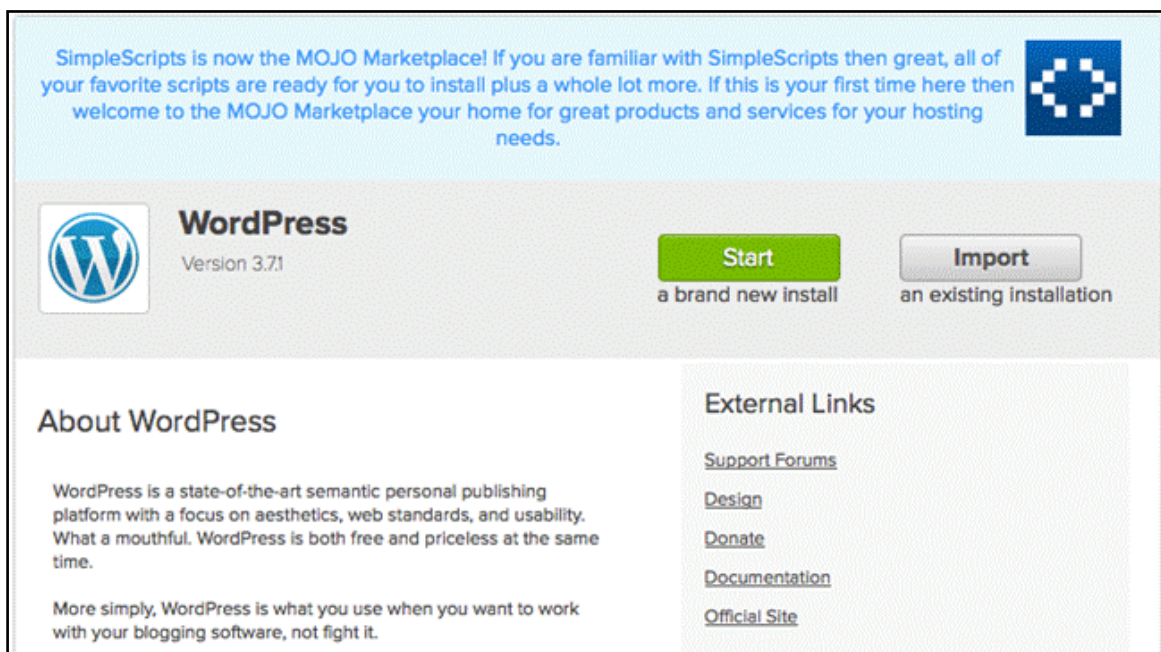


PART B)

Scroll down the page until you see the little light blue icon saying **'Install WordPress'**, click it. The page will advance.

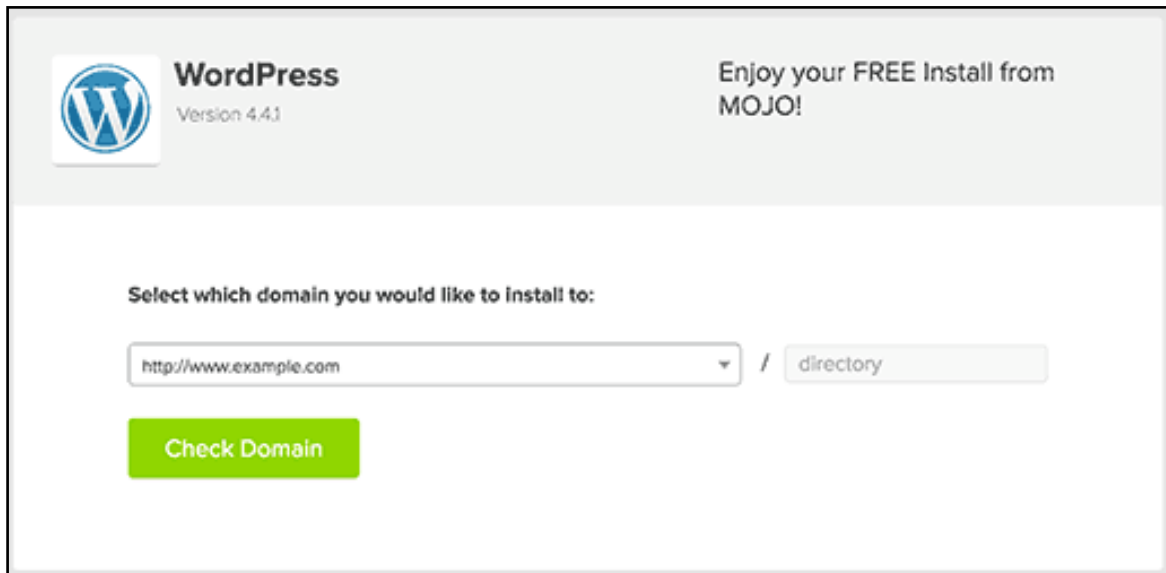
**PART C)**

You see two buttons, click the green one saying 'start', don't click 'import'.



PART D)

Once this page pops up, click the drop down menu, and select your new domain name

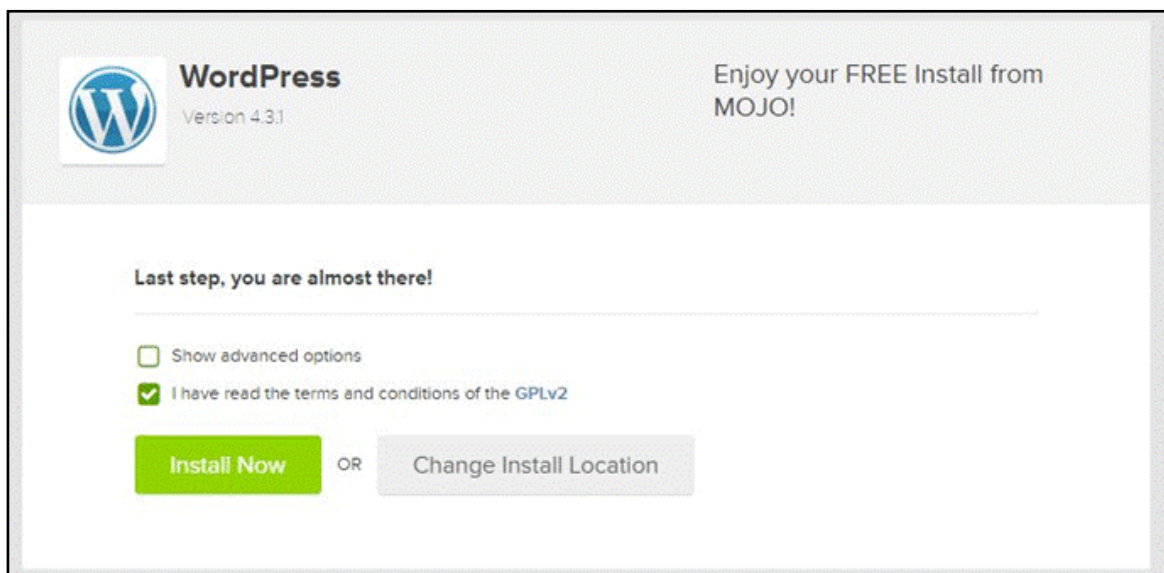


The screenshot shows the WordPress installation interface. At the top left is the WordPress logo and the text "WordPress Version 4.4.1". At the top right, it says "Enjoy your FREE Install from MOJO!". Below this, a heading reads "Select which domain you would like to install to:". There is a dropdown menu containing "http://www.example.com" and a text input field containing "directory". Below these fields is a green button labeled "Check Domain".

PART E)

Leave the first box unchecked, check the second box and click 'Install Now'. The loading page will pop up, then leave it for a short while, installing wordpress can take a few minutes.

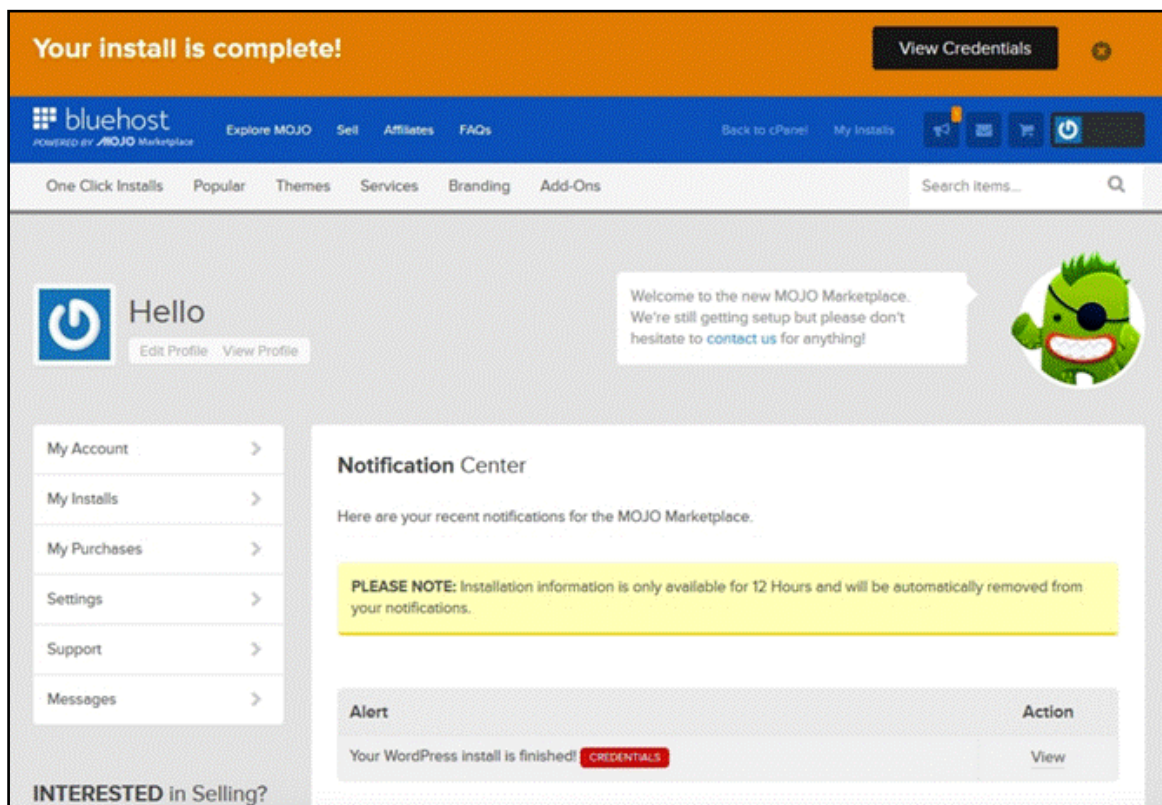
Ignore 'advanced options', check the 'I have read..' box, and click 'Install Now'



The screenshot shows the final step of the WordPress installation. At the top left is the WordPress logo and the text "WordPress Version 4.3.1". At the top right, it says "Enjoy your FREE Install from MOJO!". Below this, a heading reads "Last step, you are almost there!". There are two checkboxes: "Show advanced options" (unchecked) and "I have read the terms and conditions of the GPLv2" (checked). Below these checkboxes are two buttons: a green "Install Now" button and a grey "Change Install Location" button, separated by the word "OR".

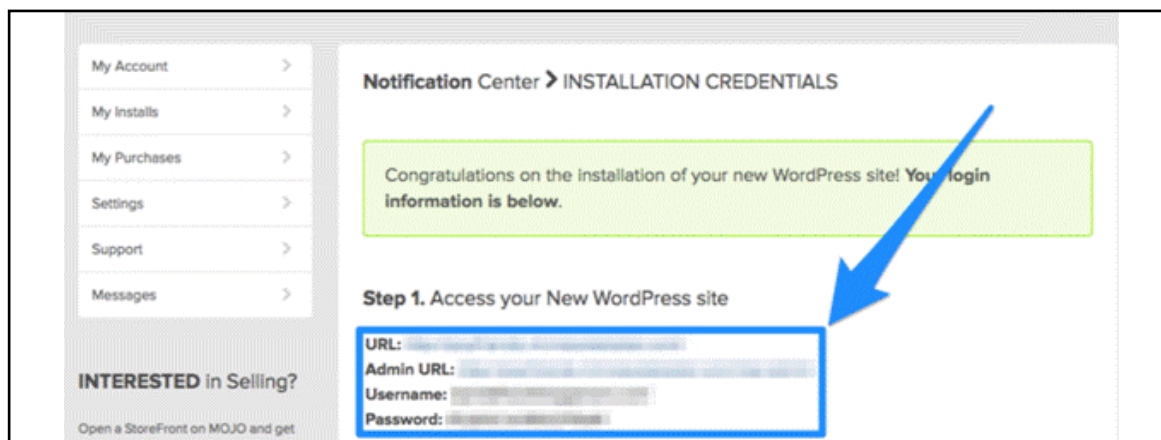
PART F)

After installation is complete, a new page will pop up with a 'View Credentials' option, click on that... ('view credentials' either at the top or the bottom, it's the same link)

**PART G)**

YOUR WEBSITE IS NOW ON THE INTERNET! YAAAAAY!

Click on the URL and you can see your new site live.



Your blog is now on the internet. Your site is LIVE !!

See that was much cheaper than you thought, much easier than you thought and much faster than you thought, right? Awesome. Next stop... Hawaii. Ok ok, not yet, but you're on your way!

Step 4 - Logging Into Your Site and Designing Your Blog

Now you need to install a design for your new blog.

(referred to in WordPress as a 'theme')

You've sorted out your hosting through [BlueHost](#), now you have to design your site (by adding a theme on WordPress).

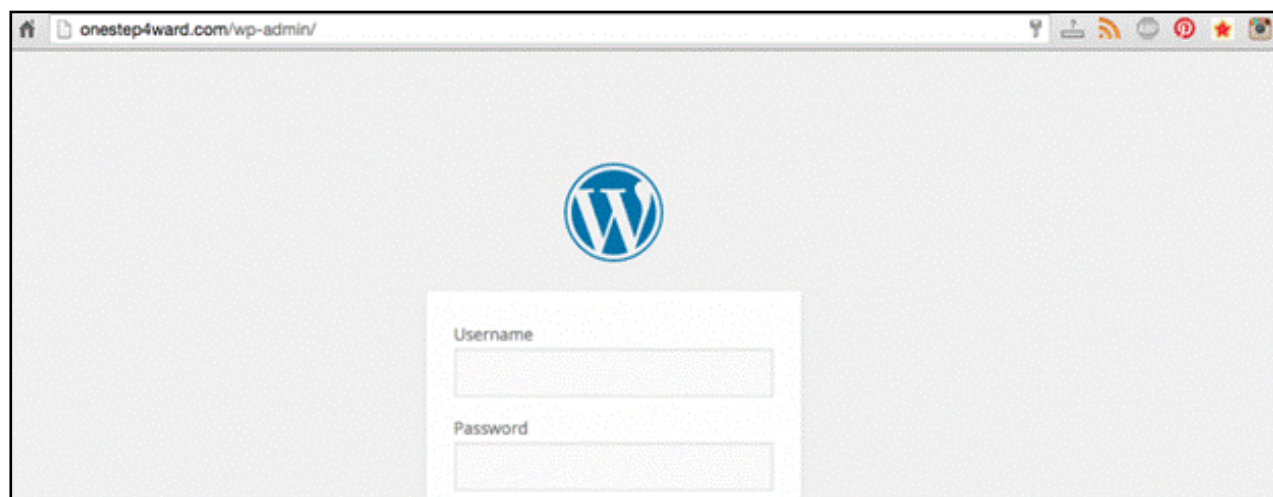
If you to go to the URL (remember that the full version of your site, like <http://www.onestep4ward.com> for me, or <http://www.YOURNEWBLOG.com>), you'll see a super basic website.

Now you need to make it a little sexier.

PART A)

Go to: <http://www.YOURNEWBLOG.com/wp-admin/>

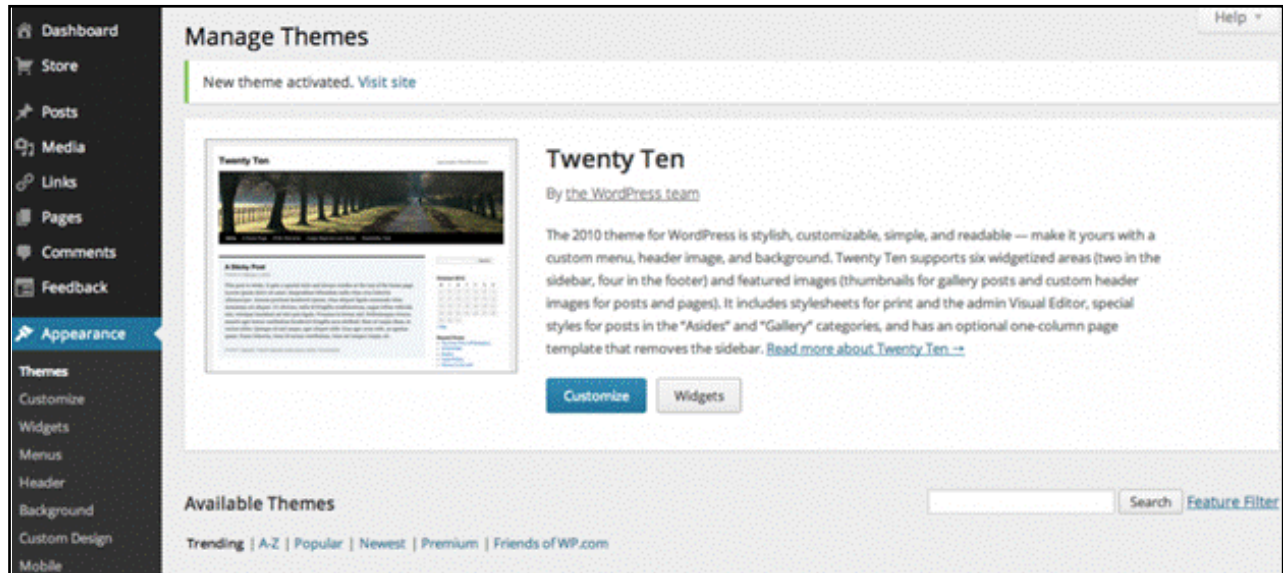
Enter your username and password from Part G in Step 2 and sign-in to the backend (*Dashboard*) of your sexy new website. Log in to your website here...



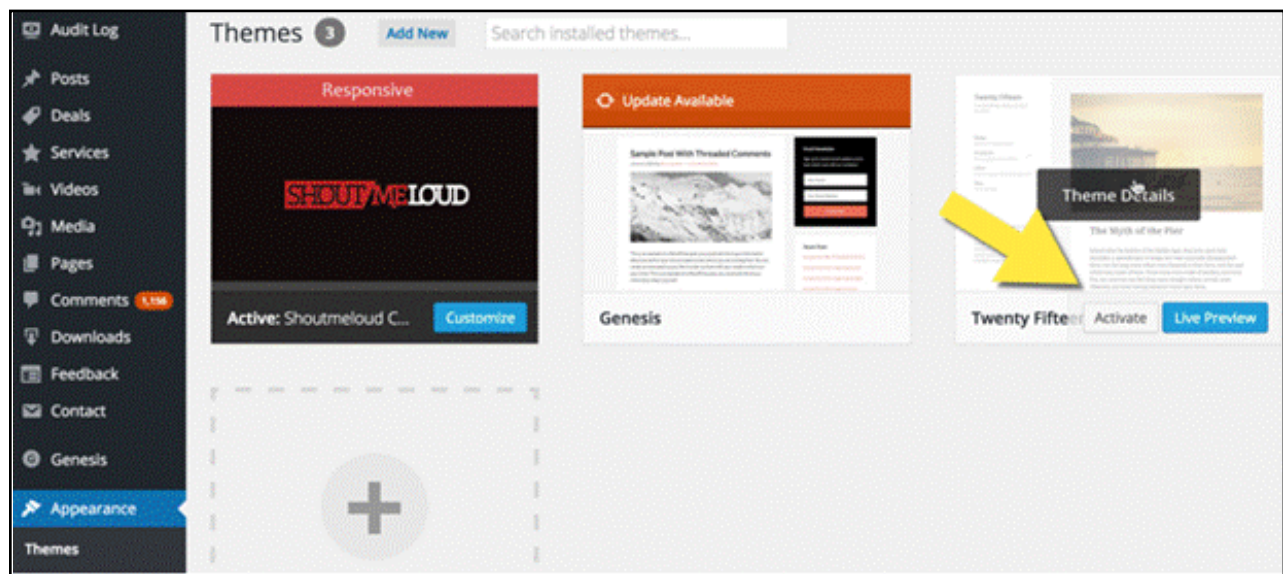
The 'Back End' of your blog is like the control centre, where you can edit everything, publish blog posts etc. Only you can access this, not your readers. **We call this the 'Dashboard'**

PART B)

Once logged into the backend of WordPress, you go to the sidebar in the left hand side, **find 'Appearance', hover over it, and click 'Themes'** when it pops up.



There are hundreds of free themes you can choose, so choose one you like the look of, hover over it, and click activate. Don't worry, none of this is permanent, so you can try a few out, once you've **chosen one and clicked activate**, go to the address bar, type in your new website URL <http://www.YOURNEWBLOG.com> and you can see your new theme. Done.

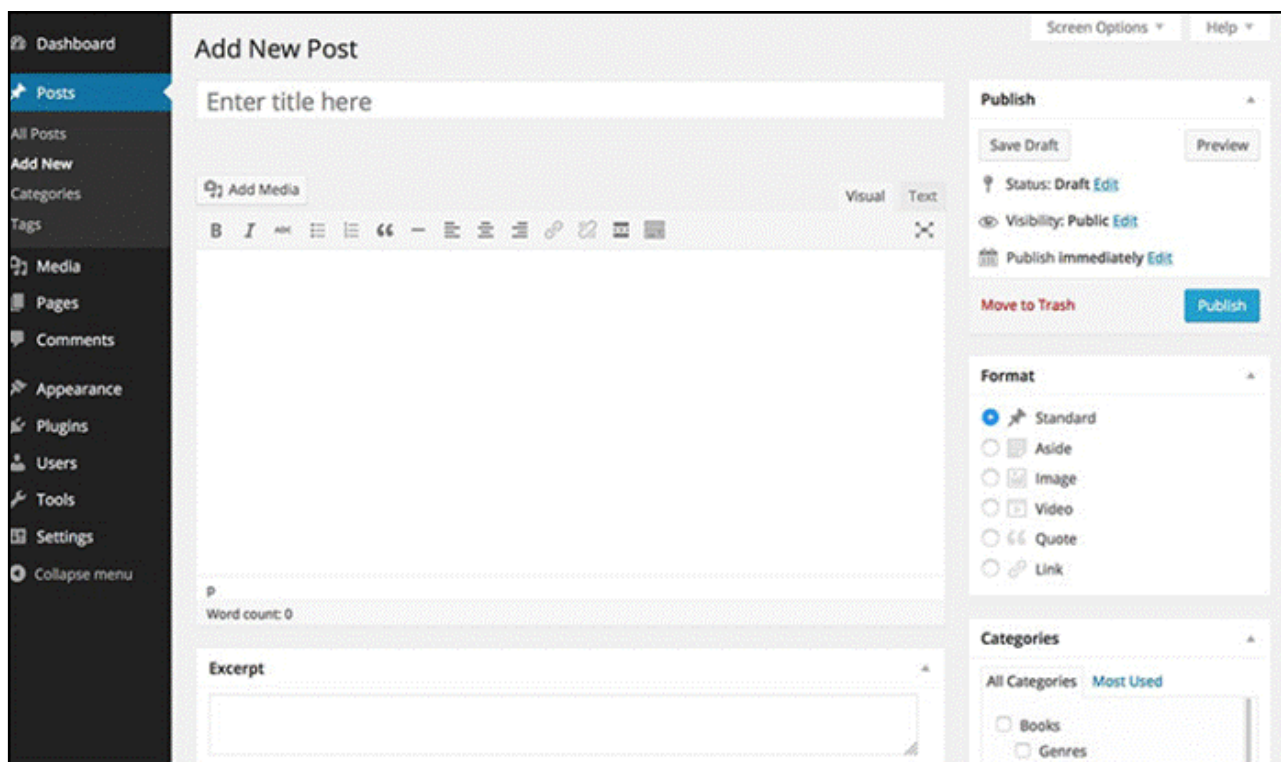


PART C)

All's left now is to publish your first blog post,

- Go back to that black side bar on the backend of your wordpress,
- Hover over 'all posts',
- Click on 'add new'.
- Then title your blog post 'My first post yaaaay!', and in the subject box write something like "This is where my new life begins....", click publish on the right hand side.

Look at 'Posts' in the left sidebar, hover over it, click 'new post'...



Now go back to the live version of your new blog
on YOURNEWBLOG.com!!

And it's live, CONGRATULATIONS!

NOTE: The free themes aren't super duper sexy, but if you don't want to spend any more money, then of course they'll do. You can find some premium themes from major wordpress designs companies like WooThemes, or you can hire someone to design it for you.

For me, I'm I'm awful at design stuff, am terrible at technology and generally it was beyond me, so I hired a freelancer to design my site for me.

Now thankfully, since my blogging took off, I have a team of guys at my media company Step4WardMedia.com who do all my tech stuff for me. The good news is that they can design your blog for you too, we do cute, clean, basic designs starting at \$300, so drop me a message on johnny@onestep4ward.com if you want my guys to do it for you.

If you want my team to knock you up a nice, clean travel blog, email me on johnny@onestep4ward.com

WANT A TRAVEL BLOG?

MY GUYS CAN HELP YOU.

STEP4WARDMEDIA.COM



PART D) Plugins

Plugins are useful little widgets that make your blog a lot better. Like an area for people to comment on your blog posts, or a way for people to share your content via social media.

You can see the 'plugins' in the left sidebar, but **for now make sure you install all these free plugins:**

- Akismet – to stop spam
- WordPress SEO – this will help you rank better in Google, you'll learn more about this in time
- WPTouch – to make your site perform better on phones and tablets
- Easy Social – so people can share your content via their social media
- Contact form – so people can get in contact with you

Step 5 - Social Media, Making Money and Everything Else

From this point on, there's still a lot more to learn.

Pages, plugins, your menu options, networking, media packs, SEO, online marketing, affiliate marketing, monetizing. But you've done the hardest part, now blog and don't give up.



PART A) Social Media

Make sure you create profiles for your blog in the following:

- [Facebook page](#) (this is different from your profile)
- [Instagram Account](#)
- [Twitter](#)

The 3 above are absolute musts, you can/should also create profiles for:

- [SnapChat](#)
- [Youtube](#)
- [Pinterest](#)



PART B) About you

'About Me' rather.

Create your 'About Me' page so people can hear your story. [You can check mine out here too](#). If you can face talking to the camera, a video here is even better. Don't sell yourself short, talk about your experience, about your hopes and dreams. Be open, be honest and most importantly be yourself.

My 'about me' page



PART C) Making Money

I know, I know you all want to know about how to make a million dollars, but be patient.

Spend the first 6 months to a year creating quality content, learning the blogging ropes, building an audience (priority).

DON'T WORRY ABOUT MAKING MONEY, DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT IT FOR SIX MONTHS OR MORE.

Once you have an audience, then you can consider how to make money, but believe me when I say building the audience is the toughest part, once you have your audience, you can make money guaranteed.

Here are the methods successful bloggers have monetized their sites:

- Affiliate Marketing
- Google Adsense
- Sponsored Posts
- Brand Ambassadorships
- Public Speaking
- Freelance Writing
- Ebooks
- Products/Courses
- Tours

There are a million and one ways to make a million and one dollars.

DON'T FOCUS ON THE MONEY.

Focus on making your blog popular, never forget this. **Create value from your blog, and it'll come back to you. I promise.** Good luck and feel free to message me if you need any help.



PART D) Google Analytics

You want to track your traffic, and your journey. Google analytics lets you track every bit of data imaginable, but most importantly it lets you see how many hits and visits you're receiving. You can see what kind of posts are resonating well, and which ones aren't so much. It's invaluable, and when it comes time to work with awesome hotels, and big clients, they'll want all this info, so get it going from the outset.

Sign up here, it's free: <https://www.google.com/analytics/>

PART E) Be Yourself and ENJOY!

Perhaps the most important part of all of this blogging stuff is to be yourself, and to show your true self to the world.

There's never been a time in history with so much opportunity, so much potential freedom, so many chances to do things we could never have previously dreamt about.

Blogging can be your key to that lifestyle. So find your voice and shout it loud. Let me know if I can help you guys in anyway, blogging changed my life and I hope it can change yours too.



Johnny



Blogging has brought me all across the world

FAQ

A) Can anyone really start a blog?

Yes, pretty much anyone. I know almost nothing about tech, and I have managed to do it. As long as you can sign up to a host, and pay for your monthly fees, then you can do it. So essentially, if you have a credit/debit card, and can spare \$60 a year or so, then you can do it.

B) Do I need to speak English to start a travel blog?

Definitely not. If you speak Spanish, or Arabic then you can blog in your native tongue, there is a HUGE market out there for non-English speaking blogs. If you're bilingual, then I'd blog in both languages, it increases your reach, and of course English has the biggest potential readership.

C) There are so many blogs, maybe I'm too late to start a travel blog?

There is ALWAYS room for a quality blog, ALWAYS. Don't worry about the competition, if you take it seriously, then you can succeed. Simple as that. Travel blogging, and blogging in general, is one of the best 'jobs' in the world, it's worth all the effort, I promise.

D) I haven't traveled that much, can I start a travel blog?

Of course you can, you can document your journey. Planning to travel, prep for travel, the emotions of wanting to hit the road. Actually, it's a great idea to start a blog before you hit the road, because by the time you hit the road, your site can be making you money.

E) How much does it cost to start a travel blog?

Very little. If you're happy for a simple design, then roughly \$60USD per year. Super cheap.

F) But you can set up a free blog, right? Why would I pay?

Right BUT while it IS possible to get a free website from blogspot, tumblr and blahblahblah.wordpress.com. My advice? Don't do this. You can't make money from a free blog, you can't build a big audience, people don't read or trust free blogs, it's restrictive with the design you can do. All-in-all, it's unprofessional. I literally never open blogs that say .blogspot.com or .wordpress.com, or if it's been done in wix.com. Avoid it. If you wanna make money online, and have a voice that people listen to, then pay the \$50 or so per year, it's worth it, honestly.

G) Can I really make money blogging?

Yes you can, really you can. But it won't happen overnight. If you're dedicated, then within six months or so you can get press trips, and travel without having to pay sometimes, within a year, if you take it seriously, you can live from your income, and beyond that it's up to you. How ambitious are you? How dedicated are you? I was hungry, so I made it happen. I don't want a 'real job' ever, so I made sure blogging worked for me. If you have that attitude you can do well.

H) OK, So how much money can I make from a travel blog?

How long is a piece of string? Many bloggers make nothing, be aware of that. Successful bloggers can make hundreds of thousands of dollars per year. For me, making the first \$100USD was key, from there the limit is determined by you. I expanded aggressively and bought more and more blogs, which in the end made me more than a million dollars. If I can do it, so can you. Honestly. But it all starts here.

TECH CHAT GLOSSARY

Don't worry, I didn't understand so many of the terms when I started either, let me try to break it down for you guys. If you need any more explanations, comment on my facebook page or in the comments below and I'll add those terms too, thanks.

URL:

The actual name of your blog in the address bar, for example the URL of OneStep4Ward is <http://onestep4ward.com>

DOMAIN NAME:

The name of your website, so for me it's onestep4ward.com

HOST:

In simplest terms, your host is the person who provides your internet space, kinda like a landlord you pay rent to. For example, BlueHost are my host for all my hundred+ websites. They manage your server.

SERVER:

Where your website 'lives', like the garage where you keep your car. Your host manages this on your behalf for the monthly fee you pay them.

BROWSER:

What you look at your websites on – internet explorer, safari, chrome.

NOTE: You should be using Chrome, both on your laptop and your phone, it's so much better.

FTP:

A username and password that will allow someone to access the files in your server and change it. Remember, the server is taken care of by your host.

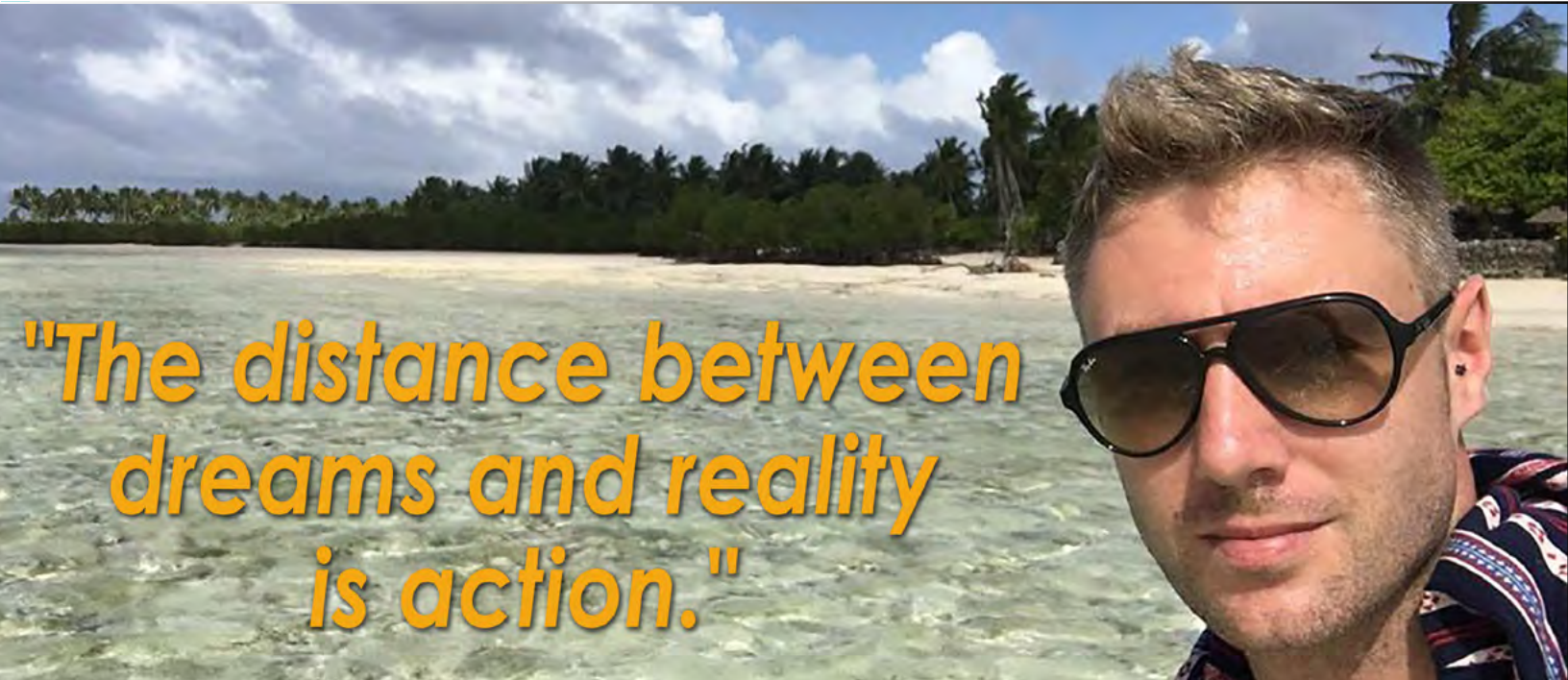
SEO:

Search Engine Optimisation. Basically making your site more appealing to Google and Google searchers. If Google trusts you and your site, and thinks you're creating helpful content for people searching, you will feature higher in the Google search results. Featuring higher = more visitors.

Affiliate Marketing:

Links to products, hotels, courses within your blog. These links send your visitors to other sites like Amazon, or Booking.com and you make a small percentage of any of their purchases. If you have big traffic, you can make six figures a year with this. Honestly. And it's passive income. The dream.

So you've been wondering how to start a travel blog, well now you know, so don't hesitate. Start today, and if you're serious about it, before long I'll be seeing you on the road somewhere. Happy travels.



Thanks so much for reading my book, and my story.

I will be releasing an in-depth course in September 2016 showing exactly, step-by-step, everything I did to get to where I am today. Starting with teaching English in Asia, then a huge module on blogging (*in depth ways to design your blog, your business cards, your media packs, your sales pitches etc*), and then a final model on digital media and how to make REAL money (*think \$10k+ per month*), how to outsource, how to minimise working hours etc.

So be sure to stay tuned for that!

Feel free to message me on my social media channels if you have any input about what you'd like to see in the course! You can find me at:

OneStep4Ward.com
Facebook.com/onestep4ward
Instagram.com/onestep4ward
Twitter.com/onestep4ward