



## EPISODE 186

# How to Makeover Your Blog To Get More Traction With Julie Solomon

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**AMY PORTERFIELD:** Welcome back to another episode of the Online Marketing Made Easy Podcast. I'm your host, Amy Porterfield, and today we are talking all things blogging.

You might be thinking, wait a second, why are we talking about blogging? Isn't that so 2007. What about live video and Instagram and Facebook Live and live streaming and all of that stuff I've been talking about over and over again on my social media platforms and on this podcast.

Yes, live video is so important and I want you to keep doing it and I want you to use it on social media. However, we've got to talk about the fundamentals of an online business as well.

We're taking a step back from some of the sexier stuff we like to talk about and we're going to talk about a fundamental piece of your business. That is your blog.

For me, my blog is really a place where I post my show notes for each week's podcast. Those show notes are essentially mini blog posts. Even if you have a video show you're going to have a post on your website for each of those videos you create.

Whether you have a podcast or a video show or a traditional blog where you are sitting down and writing blog articles each week, you need to have that foundation in your business. One thing that's very certain in the world that I live in and the world I teach in, in terms of online marketing, all of my mentors (the people I follow and look up to and know they are financially successful in their business) have a central hub where they create content on a weekly basis.



Many of them have a traditional blog where they post every single week on their blog. It's important that we look at that foundation inside of your online business and make sure it's healthy, make sure it really is driving traffic and getting traction.

That's exactly why I wanted to talk about blogging today. I brought an expert on because my friend, Julie Solomon is an expert blogger. She teaches blogging to her audience and knows what works and what doesn't work.

We're going to talk about what is working, the mistakes most bloggers make, we're going to talk about a really cool concept she uses called "trigger words", and we're going to talk about the overall health of your blog.

Whether you're just starting to blog, or if you've been at it a while, I want you listen to the tips and tricks that Julie shares and do an assessment on your own blog. Make sure you are doing these different strategies she teaches in order to make the most of your blog.

Maybe it means you have to go back and do a little tinkering and tweaking of your blog in order to give it a makeover to be stronger and to get the traction you're looking for. The last thing we want is to sit down and spend hours on these beautiful blog posts we're creating, we put our blood sweat and tears into that content we put out every week, and then nobody sees it. That's the last thing we want.

We're going to talk about how to make sure you have a blog set up for success. I'm going to give you a little teaser that Julie actually doesn't blog every week. You know that's what I teach. We're showing up every single week with original content.

She has a little twist to it and I thought it was interesting and I love to hear other people's perspective and how they do business and what works for them so you might find it interesting how much she blogs and the great traction she gets from her frequency. It's just a different way to look at it.

I won't make you wait any longer. Let's bring on Julie.

**Amy:** Julie, thank you so much for being on the show today. I'm so happy to have you here.



**Julie:** Thank you so much for having me. It is truly an honor. I'm so excited to be chatting with you today.

**Amy:** I am too because we've prepared some really great high-value content for my listeners today. But before we get there I want you to tell my listeners who don't yet know all about you a little bit about your story; how you got to where you are today and what you do in your business.

**Julie:** Sure. I actually started my career after I graduated from the University of Tennessee. I'm originally from Nashville, Tennessee. I started my career in New York City doing music publicity. I majored in journalism and PR and electronic media.

I went straight to New York. I had only been there once before for a journalism college trip and decided two months before I graduated that's where I wanted to go. I moved there with no job and no place to live, no friends.

That always kind of seems to work well for me when I put myself in these really high-ridden anxiety and stressful places. I take action. Through a mix of doing a lot of trying to network and meet people and sending a lot of emails I finally got a job after a couple of months of being up there.

I actually ended up getting a job at one of the top boutique music PR firms. It was a room full of fantastic women. It's still there today. I got to assist under a very prominent music publicist. When I was there I got to work with acts like Def Leppard and Lenny Kravitz and P!nk and Maroon 5 and all of these big, big names.

You are kind of thrown into the trenches, if you will, and I always say I kind of learned in one year what somebody else would have learned in five because of the amount of work and exposure that I was able to get there and the fantastic women I was able to absorb on a daily basis.

Then I had an opportunity to actually go back home. I had kind of gotten to a crossroads in New York. I was either going to invest my life to the city and this was how I was going to live. It's interesting when you kind of get to a crossroads, and you may be able to relate to this as well, I started to look at the women who were above me to see if this was the life I wanted to live because it is the path I was on.



When I started to realize the New York way of hustle and grind wasn't really what I wanted for the entirety of my life I got an opportunity to move home and actually work for Thomas Nelson Inc., which is now owned by Harper-Collins. It is the largest Christian publishing house in the world.

I got to go in house.

**Amy:** Were you there when Michael Hyatt was there?

**Julie:** I was. He was the CEO at the time.

**Amy:** Oh, so cool. I had no idea.

**Julie:** Yeah, we would have pizza Fridays with Mike and download all of the good stuff. It was kind of during that time. Mike was there at the beginning and kind of halfway through my time there. Then he had left halfway through to kind of go on to do what he obviously does now, just being this online mega entrepreneur and educator.

I got to do a lot of amazing stuff there. I really got my feet wet in the corporate side of things. In New York I did the boutique side of things and then I kind of hit that crossroads again as most people in corporate jobs can at a time when you find yourself in the little windowless room thinking, "I'm living in someone else's dream again."

Although it was great and wonderful and I learned so much I was ready to really tackle my own. Myself and another girl who had actually worked at Thomas Nelson as well joined forces and we started our own book PR firm, which we still actively run today, called **OMG Publicity**.

When we left Harper-Collins and Thomas Nelson they essentially became a client. We still actually work with them, literally, as of today we have three of their book campaigns now and have started doing that in 2012.

I met my husband, got pregnant with our son, moved to Los Angeles because that's where my husband was, he's an actor and has lived out here for over 25 years. He wasn't going anywhere so I knew if we were going to actually be married and have a baby I needed to live with him. I think that was an important part of the equation.



The long story short with that, I moved to LA, was now running/co-running OMG Publicity, and then found myself at another crossroads. I was barefoot and pregnant. I didn't know anyone in LA and wanted to meet other women.

I did what every young woman in LA does when they move here. I started a blog. When I started a blog I started to meet a lot of fantastic women. Also, from my years of background in publicity I did know people out here kind of on the media side of things.

I would go to certain events or I would start networking and I was really getting into this influencer blogger space. In the beginning my blog was just kind of a hobby. I was blogging about moving to LA and my new experiences as a mom and more motherhood stuff.

I quickly realized, from all of the amazing women I was meeting out here, one of my good friends, Angela Lanter, was saying, "I really think that if you started blogging about PR people would be really interested in that."

I asked her what she was talking about. There's nothing fun or exciting about that. I felt I should be doing this other kind of blogging because, to me at that time in LA, that was the only type of blogging I was seeing, the lifestyle/fashion/beauty/motherhood stuff.

Angela, for example, is a massive YouTuber and huge blogger. She said, "I really think other big bloggers like me could benefit from the tools and tricks of the trade that you have that we don't have because we haven't spent the last ten years in PR marketing."

I decided I would try it to see what happened. I tested it out and she was right. So many of my other blogger friends were right. That just kind of took off so I rebranded my blog. It then tripled my engagement, which we can talk about today, how I did that and the process of that.

Then I became a blogger for bloggers, so to speak. I really started to use my blog and website as a resource to help other bloggers and creatives and influencers out there up level their brand and their business and income.

I created a course, which we can talk about later as well, that helps influencers and bloggers pitch themselves and become their own publicist, so to speak. Earlier this year I founded the Influencer podcast which is another way to spread the good news.



I really love that because I get to have some amazing people, like yourself, on that podcast to really share the tips and secrets behind this crazy world of online entrepreneurship and influencer marketing. Here we are today.

**Amy:** And here we are today. I absolutely love your podcast. It was so fun talking to you on your podcast. We did one all about list building. I absolutely find value in hearing other people's stories, where they are today, and how they got there. So, thanks so much for sharing some of that stuff.

Obviously I didn't know all of it with the Michael Hyatt connection. I didn't realize you guys had overlapped there. I think that's really cool. Thank you so much for sharing your story.

I wanted to get into the topic of the day, which is all about blogging. But you have a unique perspective and you do it better than most. That's why I wanted to bring you on the show. A lot of my listeners may have already started their blog. Heck, they might have been at it for a while now.

I still want to start from the very beginning to talk about the first steps listeners need to do before ever creating their blog. Some people might look back and think they skipped those steps and maybe they need to back up just a bit.

**Julie:** Absolutely. I always like to think of it, whereas, social media channels like Facebook or definitely Instagram, is kind of where we all go to connect and then convert. I love to really look at the blog as the headquarters. That's where the heart lives. That's where the story and brand of the business truly stems from and truly lies.

Thinking of it from that perspective, I like to really get down to the basics of figuring out the first steps. For me that is always getting really super clear on who you're talking to. I am a huge believer that if you're talking to everybody you're really talking to nobody.

I think that's something, as bloggers, through years of testing and trying different things out you kind of have to figure it out for yourself. But, what I have learned and what I think a lot of people that I know around me and my students and what not have learned is that if you start to specifically talk to the person you're trying to attract that person will be drawn to your brand and your blog because it feels like it was created for them and their needs.



A way to really get more specific about that audience, what they look like, and where you can find them, is really kind of the “how.” I always like to encourage people, or even myself when I get at this crossroads of wanting to get clear on my audience, because even if you’re just starting out blogging or maybe you’ve been in it for five years and you’re just kind of starting to feel a plateau, maybe we need to kind of go back to those basics a little bit.

I like to look back over the last few years of my career or someone’s career and call to mind those people you most enjoyed spending time with and that you most enjoyed working with, those people that you had a great connection with or relationship with, those people who really gave you that kind of energy and left you feeling more confident and fulfilled in the work that you do. I think that’s always a really good place to start.

It’s so much easier to break that down and talk to that one person or that small group of people than trying to talk to a void of people. It’s an easier way to get clear on who you are talking to.

Once you kind of get clear on who you are talking to and can paint that picture visually you can start asking yourself questions like: What is this person coming to me for? What kind of services am I going to be able to deliver to them in a unique way? Am I going to be offering incentives? Am I going to be providing information? Am I going to be offering some kind of upgraded opportunity?

What am I really going to be giving them that’s unique on this space? How are they going to be able to connect with me to contact me? From there we can start to learn more about them and there is actually a worksheet I have on my website that I like to get super weird and specific about the things I want to know.

Some people may think it’s weird but I think it’s really fun. I’ll start to ask questions like: What is their favorite margarita flavor when they are going out for a Taco Tuesday with their girlfriends after a long day at work?

What conversations are they talking about? What are the three books they just took on their last girl’s trip? Not only what are those three books, but once they read those three books, what are they going back to tell their girlfriends about that book?

Demographics, obviously, how old are they? Male or female? Where do they live? I like to get really specific on what kind of car they drive. What’s the last YouTube video they might have



uploaded? Who do they love to follow on Instagram? Are they a fan of Real Housewives or not?

I feel the more you can really visualize who this person is, as far as going to give them a name, the easier it is to really get clear on who that person is and how you can show up for them.

**Amy:** I'm going to ask you kind of a weird question but I know my audience asks this a lot. They will say something like, "How the heck am I supposed to know what kind of margarita they like on Taco Tuesday?"

**Julie:** I like to start off in the beginning, it's kind of a two fold, if you don't really have an audience at all yet you have to be wondering what kind of margarita you would like on a Taco Tuesday. I've noticed, especially if you're just starting out, if you don't know your audience at all and are trying to cultivate it you will start to find out when you start to answer all of those fun questions I was talking about earlier that they start to become a mirror of yourself.

At the end of the day what you are trying to provide with your blog is a service that maybe you were seeking somewhere that you couldn't find. You may find that initially.

As you go on to needing to refresh your audience or maybe you've hit a plateau then, of course, you could pull some insights and analytics. Perhaps you survey the current audience you do have and actually ask them these questions.

I am a big fan of surveying and that's another way you can get clear on that as well.

**Amy:** Definitely. I think the whole point there is that you are wondering what margaritas have to do with what the heck you are selling or any topic like that. But you are making your avatar more human to you and you're expanding your conversation with them when you start to learn more about them or you are just making educated guesses around what they like, who they are, and what they're talking about.

As you get to know them more those educated guesses actually become more of the truth. You've got to start somewhere. I think this exercise is so important. So I love the idea, even if you already have a blog, going back and asking yourself really quick, I'm looking at my blog here and I need to get clear, who am I talking to, what is my greater mission here, and is my message on target.





I think just doing a reevaluation is so important there.

**Julie:** Yes. Then when you get clear on that audience. I love what you were saying when you use the word “truth” because that truth is going to lead to the mission. The only thing, when it comes to the mission, you’ve got the audience figured out and the only thing you really do need to start to really grow your business and cultivate it is getting clear on the mission.

I like to tackle these three statements. I feel you need to find a problem real people are having in the real world. You need to create a solution for that problem, which is obviously your audience. And then you need to get that solution in front of your audience who have the problem.

It doesn’t necessarily need to be in the best way possible, it’s just about doing it uniquely, not necessarily better. How can you uniquely show up? What is the most unique way that you can reach them? What are you providing and how are you going to be a solution provider for them?

**Amy:** Okay, very cool. I like the word “unique” because a lot of what I teach has been done before. Other people teach it but I have a unique style of doing so. It doesn’t mean my style is better but it’s going to attract people that really like that style of teaching so I think the word “unique” is important there.

**Julie:** Absolutely.

**Amy:** Now I want to walk through the different elements that make up a great post. If somebody’s going to post on their blog I want you to talk about those elements that they need to be paying attention to.

**Julie:** When it comes to the element I really think about the story and the message. What really is the story here? I feel the message and post should really be the story that connects your ideas and then converts and compels your audience to kind of continue to become loyal readers of the blog.

Typically the story, the message, the post will stem from these five core values so it’s kind of going to set the stage for your blog post, so to speak.



The first is to educate. Are you going to be someone showing up everyday to educate your ideal reader? You need to ask yourself what they are going to be learning from you. What are you going to be providing that is going to be beneficial for them from an educational standpoint? What are you going to be teaching them?

Of course we have great people like yourself, like **Jasmine Star**, like **Lewis Howes** who do this beautifully. They really do come from this place of wanting to educate.

The second one is to inspire. These are obviously going to be people, how do I show up everyday to make this person's situation, day, or life better in my blog post? I always love to think of travel blogs, Airbnb actually has a great blog that is super inspirational, **Every Girl**, **The Home Edit**, **Super Soul Sunday**.

These are the types of blogs that are coming with a full impact of inspiration to really uplift us and make our day and lives better.

Perhaps you're a blogger out there who wants to entertain. In that perspective, you are going to be going kind of a softer format, you are kind of looking to help people take a break in their day. Maybe you're going to be offering some kind of escape from their hustle and bustle.

I always like to think of the blogs like **Awkward Family Photos**, **Passive Aggressive Notes**. Jenny Lawson from **The Bloggess** is a fantastic entertainment-based blogger. The ones that are really going to make you laugh, and that is their core mission everyday when they show up on the blog.

The fourth is going to be more of the behind the scenes. This is going to be the blogger that says, "My readers really do have an interest in my life or in the process I do something."

Food bloggers are great examples of this because they are really going to be showing you the demo driven behind the scenes of their recipes and how they put the amazing food that they are creating together.

Celebrities are another fantastic examples. Their readers really want to see more of the behind the scenes of their life. Of course there are a lot of fashion bloggers out there like **Olivia Palermo** or **Marianna Hewitt**. Their readers really do want to feel like they are walking their life with them everyday. The behind the scenes is where they are really going to be where they are coming from.



The fifth, one that is a core value for a blog, would be community. These are going to be the bloggers that are coming from the space of “my blog is a place where I’m building a community. I’m making people a part of something greater than myself.” **Rising Tide Society** is a great example of that. The **Momastery**, which is Glennon Doyle Melton, **The Glitter Guide**.

These are blogs that really come from a place of building community and that’s going to be their first priority there.

**Amy:** Such great examples! I’m going to list all of these in the show notes at <http://www.amyporterfield.com/186>. If you missed one or you wanted to check one out that Julie mentioned I will list them all.

I want to talk about consistency when it comes to generating content each week. What are some ways you can be more consistent in your delivery? If anybody follows my podcast religiously then you know I talk about consistency of content a lot.

I actually did an entire podcast about how to show up more consistently in your business. If that’s something you struggle with I’ll link to that in the show notes as well. I want to talk about consistency exactly how it relates to blogging. Can you give us some tips here?

**Julie:** Absolutely. When it comes to consistency with blogging, consistency is key. I know that sounds redundant and generic because we’ve always heard that. But it really is, every day the same process and the same flow no matter if your schedule may be different.

Obviously, every priority needs to be scheduled by that level of importance as well as how long it’s going to take you to complete. Everyone may be thinking, “that’s great,” but when it comes to consistency, but how?

The easiest way that I have figured out to hold myself accountable as a blogger and stay consistent online is by batching. That is just my way of really being able to plan out the things I need to get done in advance.

Are my blog posts going to have launches in them that I need to be aware of and be mindful of to plan in advance? Are there going to be seasonal tie ins? Are there going to be vacations or holidays I’m going to be talking about? Are there going to be things that are more



evergreen that can be planned a little bit more in a flow or are they going to be something that's more open/close and are going to have deadlines onto them?

I like to really kind of look at the big picture. What I actually do with all of my blog content, and if I was really amazing and could do it for the entire year that would be awesome but I actually go quarter by quarter because that's what my brain can kind of hold at one time, but I go quarter by quarter on a really big desktop calendar.

I found one on Amazon that I use and I literally go week by week, month by month, quarter by quarter of everything I'm planning out. I put it on the big desktop calendar first. What I like about the desktop calendar is that it is just going to give you the space.

For me, I really need to space to write things, ideas, rewrite, move things around, highlight things, white out things. I need that space. That gives me the space and then once things kind of get firmed up I can then put them in a structured Google calendar that is specifically just for my blog content and that is where that goes.

It allows me to kind of plan in advance and make sure I'm not really missing anything. The way I tackle it weekly once it is in the monthly thing is that I take one day a week, for me it's Sunday, and plan out most of the content for that week. That is essentially my batch day for the week.

I am going to be pulling in any images I am going to need. I'm going to be getting my headlines drafted. I'm going to be getting my copy, for the most part, drafted so that I'm not really overwhelmed in the moment that I'm going to post. That way I only need to kind of go back with minor edits of anything.

For the most part the blog post is really going to be ready to go in that moment. Then another thing I will do throughout the week before I post is that if something else kind of pops into my brain I will add those in the note section of my phone or give myself a voice memo.

That way it is pen to paper. I don't have to get anxious about remembering it and it really does help me kind of copy and paste it later on down the road. That's how I show up every time and really try to stay consistent with my schedule and really the content that I'm creating.



**Amy:** I love how you have the big calendar on your desk. I recently did a podcast episode about **planning for the New Year** and I think it's important that you have the space to write the notes, change things around, and then look at everything big picture.

I'm a really pen and paper kind of girl as well so I really encourage all of you to do it physically, actually put it in front of you. I want you to have your pens and markers and highlighters in front of you. It just changes the experience, I think.

**Julie:** It absolutely does. It gives you a template, so to speak, that is flexible. Of course life changes and schedules change but it allows you to stay flexible while, at the same time, accountable.

**Amy:** So very true. What are some big mistakes you see most bloggers make? Some people listening right now are just really struggling to get traction with their blogs. I'm wondering if they might see themselves in some of these mistakes that you see your students doing on a pretty regular basis.

**Julie:** For me, I think the biggest challenge and mistake that we can all find ourselves in as bloggers is the forcedness we make with ourselves of trying to fit in. I always go back to people and remind them that you really do have to go back to the idea of who it is you're talking to, how you are showing up for them today to be their solution provider, and how they are best going to find this information.

Really, first and foremost, it's just about not really worrying so much about fitting in. I think a lot of times when we start to not necessarily stay on our own page and start to go to other people's pages we kind of continue to look at what everyone else is doing for our inspiration from logos, to colors, to designs, and all of the sudden we start to look a little uniform.

My biggest encouragement over that mistake is to just keep the focus on the work you're doing and really get clear on what's important for your growth. That is what's going to set you apart. It's also going to allow you to create what you need to create before you start consuming everything else around you.

**Amy:** I love it. It makes perfect sense. I think you had one more, right?

**Julie:** Yes. The other thing I see a lot of times is that the About Me sections are not very utilized effectively I see this across the board, not only with blogs but on social media as well.



A lot of times I think it is kind of natural for us to waste that precious space in the About Me section kind of stating the obvious.

Someone will say, "I love jewelry and style." Of course you do, you're a jewelry designer on Etsy. I'm glad you love what you do but tell me something about that I didn't already know. What is the story behind that? Why do you love jewelry? Does it remind you of when you were a little girl and you would look up and see your mom putting jewelry on to get ready to go on a date with your dad and that inspired you to love the beauty of jewelry and that inspired you to create it one day?

Really tell me the story about what has really cultivated your passion and desire to want to do this. That really kind of goes back to remembering the blog is where the heart lies. The blog is the headquarters. You really need to make sure you're utilizing this to share the story and not just state the obvious.

**Amy:** Makes perfect sense, for sure. I know we talked about how to nail down your content. Let's talk about promoting your newest blog post. It's one thing to get the content out there, especially if you're doing it every week. You're working your tail off. But how about getting traffic to that blog?

**Julie:** Yes! This is kind of a Catch-22 as well. What is so great at promoting is actually kind of another mistake I see people make. I'm going to kind of explain what I mean by that. One of the ways I love promoting is something I call the 80/20 rule.

A lot of people might have heard this in many/various forms but I'm kind of going to explain to you how I use it to promote my content as well as how I also use it to not make the mistake of blogging every day.

We all know that the secret to building engagement with a raving fan base, so to speak, that's ready to buy anything you're selling really comes down to, not really how much content you're creating, but how good the content is. It's quality over quantity.

A lot of people have a mindset that you should be spending all of your time creating this content and rarely ever spend an equal, if not more, time promoting that content. When I noticed I was doing this myself I had to kind of sit back and think about it.



I was writing a new blog post almost everyday. I promote that blog post once, maybe twice on my various social media platforms, and so on and so forth. Maybe I do an ad. Who knows? Then I move on. What if I actually spent more time promoting the content that's already there?

Not only does your blog post get in front of new eyes but we also start saving ourselves so much of that blog overwhelm. That's why I started spending 80% of my time promoting my blog content and only 20% of my time creating new blog content. Before it was flipped.

I spent 80% of my time creating blog content and only 20% of the time promoting it. I like to think of it this way. If we spend time with blog content, and as bloggers out there listening, you know how much time that takes and we just talked about batching and planning in advance, all of that takes time.

If you do that and you spend all of that time and energy writing that amazing content and the content only gets seen by 1,000 readers, the chances are there are probably hundreds of thousands more readers out there who could benefit from what you just wrote.

Why do we always spend time creating the content when we already have some thing that's ready to go for our ideal customers, we just haven't gotten it to them yet?

It's really difficult for bloggers and businesses, particularly those that are kind of new to the game, to find an audience for their content. This means they may need to work a little bit extra hard on the front end of creating content. But once you have a good archived amount of content you can start promoting it in ways you are really focusing in on that and kind of trying to reach a new audience instead of spending so much time creating content.

That's kind of my little secret of how I like to do it. When I started doing this I saw a dramatic increase in growth. I used to, on average, blog about five to six times a week. I now maybe blog once a month. I know that sounds crazy.

**Amy:** Wow!

**Julie:** Yes. But every single day, sometimes multiple times a day, I have that content that I have already written going out to my ideal audience through various social media platforms, through newsletters, through podcasts, through ads. Since I've done this I've not only seen my engagement triple on my blog but my blog traffic increased over 65%.



**Amy:** That's so interesting because I would have just assumed you are blogging weekly. You always have new stuff, it feels like, that you are promoting and driving traffic to. Really, you are repurposing some of the older blog posts that you wrote so you're not actually getting something out there weekly.

I guess this goes a little bit against what I teach. I teach my students to create original content every single week. But I guess if you're a bad ass in promoting the content and people don't even notice because you always have new stuff out there on social, there is a way to get around that.

**Julie:** Also, when you think about it Amy, the promotion of that content is new content. I'm still maybe having to write a new Instagram post or maybe I'm tweaking a photo or maybe I'm tweaking the way I upload it on Pinterest a little bit. Maybe I'm adding a new Pinterest post. It's still new content from the social media side of things and the way you're promoting it but it's still going back to that original content that you've already promoted.

**Amy:** That's so cool. I love looking at things in different ways. It's definitely working for you so that might just be a new perspective that somebody can try on and see if it would work for them as well.

**Julie:** And I think with this said, and I kind of mentioned it before, when you are starting out you do need to produce more content so you have enough in your wheelhouse, so to speak, to shoot out. There are exceptions to the rule, obviously. If your products or services or posts aren't necessarily evergreen, if they are seasonal or if you're in the middle of a launch you're going to have to do a little bit more content creation during that time.

I'm a firm believer that a lot of us probably just have archives and archives of fantastic content. We just need to think outside of the box a little bit more on how to get that content to new eyes.

**Amy:** Definitely, for sure. Do you have any favorite tools that you like to use to promote your blog posts?

**Julie:** I do. Tools are kind of a big thing for me. I'm a tool geek, so to speak. I have three. One, of course, will be obvious for people but I'm going to tell you why I love it and then two may be new. The first one, of course, is Google Analytics.





The way I like to use Google Analytics in terms of promotion is that with the 80/20 rule about once a month I will go into my Google Analytics and see what have been my top performing posts for that time. Obviously, the more I can generate more promotion for those specific posts and the more clicks they get and the more eyes they get on that post the higher they will rank on Google.

I will specifically spend a lot of time focusing on my top five biggest blog posts ever when I'm looking for promotion. That is kind of how I like to use Google Analytics specifically when it comes to figuring out what I'm going to be promoting in the future.

I also love a program called **PeopleMap**. PeopleMap is actually stated as an Instagram marketing tool because it pulls data from Instagram but you can actually use it because you can export so much fantastic information for your blog, for Facebook, and so to speak.

What PeopleMap allows you to do is really search out your ideal audience by those key words and some of the things we talked about earlier. Once you get a clear idea of what that is you can essentially use PeopleMap to seek those out.

PeopleMap is also a great way to reach out to media if you're wanting to figure out another way to promote your blog posts. You can find media contacts on there and essentially pitch them your idea that stems from your blog post. It also allows you to build lists and campaigns. It's a fantastic resource.

Amy, I really love a new one that's actually a Google Chrome extension called **Clearbit**. Clearbit also helps shorten a lot of research time. I'm a huge proponent in saving any time I can. It allows you to kind of get to those contacts and get to the information you may need in the space. It's really a contact generator.

Let's say you're looking for a hotel contact and maybe you just did a blog post on travel and you're wanting to align with a hotel brand in the future about a potential collaboration. You can essentially find any contact in the hotel space from there. You can get as specific as listing the actual hotel name or as general as just putting "hotel". I really love Clearbit for that as well, in terms of promotion.

**Amy:** Those are really good tools. I will make sure to link to all of them in the show notes at <http://www.amyporterfield.com/186>. Let's talk about something I hear people



mentioning online, the health of your blog as it relates to Google. Can you give us any tips so that Google actually sees us as having a healthy blog?

**Julie:** From what I have gathered there are really two. There are a lot but the two I want to focus on, that I think are the most important, would be speed and responsive design. It's really important as you grow your blog to make sure every 90 days or so that you are checking up on your site's speed.

There's a free tool, **Pingdom** is one, there are a ton out there but Pingdom is one that you can use that's free. It essentially checks your site's speed for you. If you go on Pingdom and are finding that your site is taking more than a couple of seconds to download (when I say a couple of seconds I mean two to three seconds) then you need to do a little bit of investigating to find out what is slowing it down.

It could be unused plugins or images. Images are a big one. If it is an image issue there is actually another great resource out there called **JPEGMini**. If you are an image-heavy blogger then JPEGMini is going to be your new best friend. It's going to help you actually drop the size of your JPEGs down without dropping the quality.

You can still maintain fantastic quality of images, high resolution images, but you're not maxing it out at the highest. Really, the rule of thumb is that you don't want your blog images to be any more than 80kb at the absolute max. Dropping the image quality that JPEGMini allows to 70 or 80% will reduce the image file size and will then help your site speed a lot.

Those are the two things I like to focus on when it comes to speed. With responsive design that essentially means you want to make sure your content is discoverable across all devices: Tablets, mobile, and desktop.

Obviously, now that we're in 2017 and getting into 2018 Google even says it is mobile first. Every consumer is starting to buy more and more off mobile than they are desktop. Google is really focusing in on making sure mobile sites have a fantastic responsive design.

If the responsiveness is taking two seconds or longer it can actually disrupt the crawling activity that Google does on the back end so that's another reason those seconds really do matter. You want to make sure your site is mobile friendly, desktop friendly, and tablet friendly so Google will boost the ranking of your sites in their algorithm.



The more consumers are using it and making purchases the more important it is going to be. When it comes to figuring out how to get a good responsive design for me it's the flexibility of the design. If you're with a designer you could talk with him/her about that to figure out what is going to be the best design for you based on what you're going to need in terms of your layout, how many plugins you're going to have, because all of those things factor into the responsiveness of the site.

There is also **SquareSpace**, the platform I use, or even with **WordPress**, there is a lot of stuff they have on the backend that will help you whether you create your own design or you use a template. Of course, their customer service is just absolutely fantastic with helping you figure those out if you're someone who doesn't have a designer and you're signing up for SquareSpace or WordPress and you just need a little navigating with that, there are a lot of great resources there that they will help you figure out what is going to be best based on what your needs are.

**Amy:** There are so many great resources. Thank you for this. This is fantastic. As you were speaking about Google I was thinking about the whole idea of SEO (search engine optimization). I know this is a can of worms. SEO could be its own episode. However, can you give me two to three things that we should definitely be doing with our blogs to spice up our SEO?

**Julie:** I always look to SEO experts when it comes to really getting down to the nitty gritty. Like you said, you could do an entire episode. I have come to find, at least with my own site and what has really helped me spice up my SEO, the three things I have found is that you want to make sure the site is as easily navigable as possible.

You want to make sure you are linking internally and you want to make sure to check your content for dead links. I am going to get into a little bit of what those three things really are. With making sure your site is easy to navigate and obviously when you are thinking SEO we are thinking how we can rank to the best of our ability.

You want to really take a fine-toothed comb, so to speak, to your site starting from your home page and clean out any categories and dead ends you have. Eliminate that. Any thin content you have, really make sure your posts are easy to search and discover.

If you have content that is specific to a certain season or time of year you also want to consider creating tags or categories or subcategories just to make it easier to find those kinds of things.



That's really when it comes to navigating you want to look at the whole picture and really think of ways you can map that out.

A good example of what I try to do, because sometimes we get a little too close to our website, if we see it everyday it is kind of hard for us to look at it from a naked eye, I like to set my mom down and I will say, "Okay Mom, look at this home page. Is there anything you find confusing? Is there anything you find hard to understand? Is there anything that makes you wince because it's too bright or doesn't look very good on the screen?"

I ask her these types of questions because I know she's not really going to be coming from any other type of background or knowledge and she's going to be as honest as she can with me about it. It's really surprising when you do that, when you sit down with someone who may not be as used to your site as you are, what you will find. That really helps you figure out easier ways to navigate it and ways to kind of move it around so it's a little bit more user friendly.

**Amy:** So good. I knew you would have some good SEO tips. My final question for you is something you really teach in a unique way that I think everybody needs to hear. You talk about trigger words. What are they and why are they so important?

**Julie:** When it comes to trigger words I think we have to kind of first go back to the idea of words. Words are obviously powerful and they can literally trigger someone to think and feel in a way that makes them want to take some kind of immediate action.

The words in our blog posts and the content we share should really be no different in that idea. Obviously, coming from my background of publicity, words are going to be something that I not only connect with but also something I just really hone in on because I know how powerful they are.

Whether you're writing blog copy or a newsletter or a social media post or even visual content you need to be able to integrate the right kind of words. I call these trigger words. The trigger words are really the words that are going to mold the perception.

Let's go back to those five core values we talked about for a moment: Inspiring, entertaining, educating, behind the scenes, and community. From each of those you want to really figure out how you can take those values and then use those words to transform your blog into more of a defining brand.



That's what's going to keep people connected and that's what's going to keep people coming back. When you're able to attract and connect you're able to grow. You want to start using these words within your copy and content and you may be surprised how much the engagement and traffic grows because when you start to use trigger words people are going to start remembering you buy those words.

It's kind of like subliminal messaging in a way without it being a negative or manipulative kind of thing. You want to be able to use these words throughout your content so people remember you by them. How you figure out what your words may be, I actually kind of learned this from a coach of mine, she had me close my eyes.

She told me she wanted me to close my eyes and think about the words my family and closest friends would use to describe myself. They could be adjectives or just other words that describe elements of my personality and elements of who I am.

Once you kind of think about that I also want you to use words that business colleagues would use to describe you. How would they define your passion? How would they define your performance? How would they define your struggle? Your enthusiasm?

Once you map that out with your family, your friends, and your colleagues then I want you to think about words that excite you and make you happy, challenge you, and motivate you. The last one she asked me to do, once you kind of go through that she wanted me to try, if I could, to think about words that I see other people use to connect with me and draw me in.

What are words that other people are using that are triggering you? Those are equally important to note. When you think about that you can start to think about those words that your ideal audience uses and then pull those in.

You've got the words people use to describe you and then you've got the words that you're triggered by that other people use and then you want to start really kind of being resourceful and going back to the core audience and thinking to yourself the words they use to describe themselves or that they use to describe their pain points or their pleasure points.

Once you get a massive list together you can start to write those down. At this point I have about 75 or so words I use. I literally have them on a sheet of paper and I keep them on my desk at all times. These words just help me stay in line with, not only my beliefs and passions



and goals, but these words help me trigger that emotional response that I am trying to engage and connect with when I am writing copy.

**Amy:** That's so good. I love the idea of trigger words. I hope everybody listening will actually do that exercise. I'm going to encourage you all to take a little time. Get 75 words on your desk. I bet that is so valuable when you're writing or when you're doing social media or doing video. Just kind of look at those words and identify with them so quickly.

**Julie:** You do. I think they change as you change. They evolve as you evolve. The words I first discovered when I started doing trigger words two years ago, some of them are the same, but then some of them are now completely different.

**Amy:** For sure.

**Julie:** It's nice that you can add or takeaway, whatever. However your brand is evolving in that moment, those words kind of keep you accountable and resourceful and in line.

**Amy:** That's so very true. Julie, I cannot thank you enough for coming on the show. All of this has been incredibly valuable. I can't believe we were able to talk about putting the blog together, the SEO, Google stuff, all the tools you use, these trigger words. We covered a lot so thank you so much for preparing for this show to make sure we made it into a mini workshop for my listeners.

**Julie:** Absolutely.

**Amy:** I really appreciate it. Before we wrap up, can you tell people where they can find out more about you and everything you have to offer?

**Julie:** Sure! [JulieSolomon.net](http://JulieSolomon.net) is the website where all of my free tips and resources to help you up level your blog and monetize your brand can be found. I'm also @julssolomon on all social media platforms. I do an Instagram Live every Thursday at 4 p.m. Pacific. You can find me over there.

Then, of course, [The Influencer podcast](#) is every Wednesday on iTunes and Stitcher as well as the [TheInfluencerpodcast.com](http://TheInfluencerpodcast.com) and then you can head over to [JulieSolomon.net](http://JulieSolomon.net) as well to check out the course, [Pitch It Perfect](#), if you are a bloggers/influencer out there who



needs a little help with your pitch strategy and you're looking to negotiate better rates for yourself and grow more media opportunities. You can find all of that there.

**Amy:** Perfect. Thank you so very much, I really appreciate you coming on the show.

**Julie:** Thank you.

**Amy:** There you have it. I hope you enjoyed this interview with Julie as much as I have. Listen, she covered so many great tools for blogging as well as listing so many great blogs that are doing it right. I don't know about you but I love to look at examples of other blogs that are getting great traction so I can study what they are doing.

If you want that full list of all the blogs she mentioned I have listed them in the show notes. Go to <http://www.amyporterfield.com/186> and I'll list all the links Julie mentioned in terms of tools, examples of different blogs, and all of Julie's information as well.

Thanks guys, for listening. I cannot wait to connect with you again next week. Bye for now.