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10 Ways to Improve Your Blog

Making your blog a success often has a lot to do with a series of seemingly disconnected events. Every post you make, person you contact or comment you leave adds to the sum total of your efforts in the blogosphere. Building relationships is important in any industry, but blog karma is the idea that what you do and how you behave will ultimately have an effect on you directly or indirectly. Blog karma is not often written about, but very often spoken about by bloggers, especially successful ones. So if you did believe that blog karma does exist, how should you go about increasing yours? Here are 10 ways you can improve your blog karma:

Be real. This is the first and foremost principle of furthering your blog karma that I could think of. Being real involves not lying, being transparent about who you are and what you believe, and sharing an honest voice. People trust others that have an authentic voice, and are more likely to refer them to others or help when asked.

Respond to emails. This is tough when you have a high volume of unsolicited emails, but the idea that someone took time to write directly to you should make it enough of a priority to respond. Obviously, this applies to personally written messages, and not to email blasts of press releases. Those are rarely worth a response.

Offer exclusives. Maybe you aren't breaking "news" on your blog, but the idea of exclusives is not limited to that. If you are going to write about something interesting, offer a preview to other bloggers. Share ideas as they happen and offer the chance for others to say it first. Exclusives are gold in the blogosphere ... everyone wants them.

Make connections. In social settings, the gold standard for making connections is introducing two people to one another who later get married. Blogging is no different. If you can be the person making these connections between individuals that may not have met otherwise, you will be remembered by both for your efforts.



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Join networks. This is not just about publishing networks, but about social networks of people who are interested in the same things you are. Joining groups like this, and actively participating adds value to the group. As a member, it probably won't be long before you take something useful from the group.

Avoid snark. Snarkiness is the enemy of good karma. Being rude, uselessly opinionated or arrogant are all rising behaviours from bloggers that add to the sea of needless commentary online. The price for this may not be apparent, as unfortunately, snarkiness does sometimes result in readership (who can't avoid watching a car crash?) -- but eventually the snark will catch up to you.

Forgive mistakes. Most bloggers are not journalists and don't have the time or necessity for checking every fact or argument before making it. This does result in mistakes, and people do screw up. Correcting them without holding a grudge is a big deal. Mistakes are made, people are sorry. If they fixed the error, then get over it.

Post to contact. Email is not the only way to get in touch with someone. Posting about something they have written and linking to their blog offers an indirect route to contact, as most bloggers pay attention to who is linking to them. Writing about one of my posts is still the best way to get onto my radar, and I suspect most bloggers are the same way. Communicating in this way avoids the email filter and starts the dialogue.

Comment and participate. This may be part of earlier suggestions, however the idea that you need to be a participant online rather than just an observer is key to this belief. If you expect others to communicate and add comments to your blog, you need to be online doing the same for others. Without participation, it is difficult to belong to a community online or build relationships with others.

Show gratitude. Often mentioned as an important factor in connecting with users, showing gratitude for someone participating on your blog, linking to you, or offering some other effort on your behalf is vital. Appreciation makes someone more likely to believe that you think their efforts are significant and as a result, connect more strongly with you and your blog.