



Episode 13: Traffic Ideas That Don't Involve Ranking in Google (SEO)

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Hey everybody. Welcome to podcast Episode #13 where I'm going to be talking about ways for a new blog to build traffic, and it's also for people who are struggling with traffic to their site. How do you get traffic besides Google? I'm not going to be focusing much on Search Engine Optimization in this podcast because number 1, I've done it to death; number 2, you can't rely on it and number 3, there are so many other ways to get traffic. You just have to get creative.

I will say this about Search Engine Optimization. The best free guide that you can ever get your hands on is one that was created by Moz.com. They have a free guide. It's very, very comprehensive. It's also better than some of the paid guides that are out here and in my opinion, the best weapon against getting scammed which so many people do when it comes to Search Engine Optimization

services, is to get educated. Educate yourself on what works, what doesn't so you don't get had by some company that's going to guarantee to rank your site in one week, which is ridiculous when you're talking about competitive keywords. They may be able to rank you for less competitive keywords, but any worthwhile traffic is going to take some time with Search Engine Optimization.

Go to Moz.com, look for their free guide, download it, study it and arm yourself with education. Just know that ranking a website can take months, if not years to get any worthwhile traffic, so you can be focusing on other things and that's what I'm going to be talking about in this podcast.

Before I get into that, I just want to first apologize to all of you for my sporadic updates lately. A lot of you have noticed I haven't been on YouTube much, I haven't been putting out as many blog posts, I've been sporadic with my podcasts, I've missed a couple of months. I've had a health issue that has slowed me down just a little bit. Fortunately it's nothing serious but it was enough to get my attention, and I may have to actually have surgery. If I'm a little sporadic with these updates or you don't hear from me or you don't see me for a week or two, that's why. But I'm actually feeling a lot better than I was a couple of months ago, so I'm looking forward to getting back to 100%.

The great thing about this business, though, is that the passive income can still keep coming in, which is what I love about working online and working for yourself. Shout out to all of you who have purchased my courses on Udemy. Some of you have even purchased all four of my paid courses and I am truly, truly grateful for that. I'm grateful for those of you who even signed up for my free courses, but there's a special place in my heart for those of you who signed up for my paid courses, especially more than one. If you want to

check them out, they're at 2createawebsite.com/courses.

All right, enough of my shameless plug. Let's get to the podcast. The first tip I want to talk about for building traffic to your blog or website is using local sources. This is something we don't normally think about. We always think about Google, we think about social media, YouTube. We rarely think about places that are right in our own backyard.

I'm going to tell you a quick story of Lisa Leake from 100 Days of Real Food. I don't know how many of you know about her blog but it is amazing. It's one of the more popular health blogs, anti-processed food blogs out there and it just looks good. The design is very aesthetically pleasing. She's got pictures of her family, it's just a very welcoming blog. She and her husband make a full-time living with their blog, and I will always remember them because I heard that they make 25% of their income with the Amazon.com affiliate program.

Anyone who knows anything about the Amazon affiliate program knows that their commissions are super low, so if you're making 25% of your income from that program, you are banking and selling a lot of stuff for Amazon.com.

She actually got her original boost in traffic from a local newspaper. You might be thinking well, how am I going to get somebody to contact me? That's not how it happens. She actually contacted them, she reached out to them. Her goal and she had said this from the time she had launched her site, was to actually get featured in a newspaper or get some type of media attention. She contacted her local Charlotte Observer and told them about the challenge she was doing. At the time, she was doing a 100 day challenge of no processed foods. When she got to day 50, she contacted the

Charlotte Observer, told them about her story, they interviewed her, they featured the interview on their Facebook page, which at the time had about 100,000 followers and that's how she got her initial boost of subscribers and followers for her site. From there, it just snowballed so she got on YouTube, she started using social media, she started blogging more regularly, but she got her start from local media. That's something we just don't ever think about.

If you've got a blog on lifestyle or something that would fit a local newspaper in your city or some type of local event, don't be afraid to reach out to those people and say, "Hey, I think your readers will really be interested in my story." So don't forget about the local outlets. We always tend to go online, but remember a lot of the local places have an online presence. If you can get their attention offline, they will often times promote you online on their Facebook page or their social media platforms.

My next tip is to create a few free Udemy courses. Let me say this upfront: you're not allowed to just blatantly promote your site to your audience on Udemy, but you can do it subtly through your courses. You have to be subtle with this because if you do it too much, when your course is being reviewed they will tell you to change some things. Here's how you can do it. Let's say you've got a website about yoga and you can't get any traffic. You've tried writing and ranking in Google, it's not working.

You could create a very short free course on how to do yoga, and in that course you can actually feature some of your blog posts by doing a screencast recording. Let's say in one of your videos, you're talking about some poses that beginners can do for yoga. At the end of that video you could say, "Hey by the way I've got a blog post that I wrote that's perfect for beginners." This is where you use your screen recording and you show the actual post and you can show

the URL of your site as well. Again, you have to be careful with this strategy. You don't want to do it too often because if the reviewers catch that you're doing too much promotion, they might ding you for that. But I do this in a couple of courses and my main goal really wasn't to promote the site. It was just relevant to what I was talking about, but you can still get people in front of your site by featuring some of your articles that are related to the topics that you talk about in your videos. The great thing about Udemy and these other course creation sites is that they make it so easy to get your course online. The reason I'm suggesting that you have free courses is that you'll get more exposure.

I will warn you, when you do a free course a lot of times you will get a lot of freebie seekers who will sign up, that will never ever watch the course. It's better obviously to get people who are targeted toward your topic to watch the course, but if your course is well done you will get some targeted, relevant exposure.

It's just a great way to get your name and your brand out there. I've had a handful of people email me and tell me that they found me through my free courses on Udemy, so I thought that was kind of cool.

You don't just have to use Udemy, you can use Skillfeed, SkillShare, Fedora. There's so many course sites out there now, there's just no reason you shouldn't try these days because it used to be it was very intimidating when it came to selling courses, but because course creation is so popular now, there are sites springing up all the time. You might want to try putting out several different courses on several different platforms and see how that goes.

My next tip is to join a private group. It could be a Facebook group, it could be some other group. It could even be a forum that is

related to the topic of your site. Now I am not talking about going on these forums and spamming them to death with your links. I'm talking about genuinely building up a reputation on the forum, helping others to the point you start to get to know the other members, and you start chatting with these people maybe outside of the group, perhaps via email or on Twitter so you sort of build up a following indirectly through that. I was reading an article a few weeks ago of a lady who was in a private Facebook group in her niche. She met so many people through that space that they began sharing all of their personal details, their phone numbers, their emails, their Periscope accounts and as a result, she was able to grow her blog following because of the people she had met in that private group.

Speaking of Periscope, just like all the other social sites or whatever I'm slow to get on board, but I actually do like Periscope and I finally did create an account. I've watched a few scopes or whatever you call them now, I don't know the lingo yet but it is a cool platform and I do plan to use it. Check me out on Periscope – that's 2createawebsite or Lisa Irby, you can find me either way ... that's I-R-B-Y for my new listeners out there. She was able to get going by building relationships through a private group, and I think the biggest mistake people make with forums and private groups is that they think it's a technique that's going to work really quickly, but these things take time. It takes weeks and months to foster a genuine relationship with people online, whether it's a forum, whether it's a private group, so you can't do this expecting results in 3 days. It does take some time, so be patient with it.

My next tip is to get interviewed by a famous blogger in your niche, or maybe submit some type of guest post. I'm going to talk about what people generally do wrong when they're trying to get the attention of someone who's already popular. Let me just break it

down. People are busy and people who have large followings like Pat Flynn and Chris Ducker and even Lisa Leake, the girl that I spoke about from 100 Days of Real Food, these people are super busy. Many of them probably have assistants helping them answer their email, so they're already getting their emails filtered. If you don't have anything that gets their attention, your email is just going to get skipped and/or deleted. Real talk!

The first thing I would recommend is you scour their blog and see what kinds of posts are more popular. What does their audience like? Can you write on that subject or something similar, and what can you bring to the table that maybe the other post did not bring? The second thing is, do you have proof that what you have to offer works? That's what makes the post compelling, that's what gets people's attention.

I'll tell you a quick story. I had someone that emailed me just last week, they wanted to do a guest post on my blog. I'm really, really particular about the posts that are on my blog, because I want the guest posts, if I have them, to hold up to the same standard that I have for my posts. I remember when I had guest posts on my blog for the first time, I got criticism from my readers because they said that my guest posts were never as interesting as my posts, so that really made me think. I was like, I need to be a lot more selective about what type of content I allow on my blog. Anyway, this guy contacted me and he wanted to do an experiment on his blog where he was going to be changing headlines, titles and colors and test them out to see if that makes a difference, or if he can increase his click-through rate and all that type of stuff. He wanted to talk about what he was going to be doing on the guest post on my blog.

I thought that's a great idea, but it would be much more compelling if you come back to me after you have your results, so you can say

on the post “This is what I’ve learned. When I do this with my title, I get a 10% increase in my click-through rate or these colors work better than this color.” That was going to make it a more interesting post that’s helpful to my readers, and that’s what you have to be thinking about if you want people that have a following to feature you. They’re going to be very selective about what they accept for their blog and they should be, so you have to ask yourself, is this of value to their readers? If not, how can I make it more valuable? Can I show proof that what I’m talking about really works? I’m going to tell you guys, if you want to be featured on my blog, not that I really have guest posts all that often because of the issue of people not really sending quality stuff, if you’re going to talk about something that’s working, I want to see screenshots. That’s what’s going to make the post more compelling and more interesting to my audience. If you’re trying to get in front of a popular blogger’s audience, you have to ask yourself, what can I provide that their audience is going to find useful? That’s when you can comb through their blog posts that they’ve already written and see what their audience likes, and then look for ways to talk about a similar topic or a new topic that may be related to that.

When you contact that blogger, make sure the email is short, sweet, to the point. Be sure to mention the success that you’ve had and you can even reference an older post that they’ve written. You might say, “Hey I read the post that you wrote about on XYZ. I have a success story as well. Here are my results ...” Maybe a quick screenshot. “I’d love to be featured on your blog and share my results with your audience.” That kind of email is going to get my attention.

So going back to Lisa Leake from 100 Days of Real Food, one other thing she could have done early on was contact other food bloggers or health bloggers and say, “Hey my name is Lisa. I’m doing a

challenge where I'm not eating anything but real food for 100 days." That in itself is interesting enough, so that would get my attention if I were a foodie blogger. Then you could say, here are the results, I've lost weight, my cholesterol went down, blah, blah, blah. Providing proof is not always possible for every subject, but if it's a weight loss blog for example and you've lost 30 pounds, you can show a before and after picture. If it's about making money, you can show a screenshot of some income that you have. Again, you can't always show the proof but if you can, that's going to be very, very helpful in getting that blogger's attention. The golden rule is to remember you have to answer, what's in it for their audience? You should already know what their audience likes by browsing the blog yourself, or maybe you're already a reader and you know what their audience responds to. That'll help you when it comes to crafting your own post.

Here's another tip: don't just look for the blogger's popular posts. Also look for their success posts. If you've had success on the same topic they've written about and you have proof, that would be a great topic or a great in to get featured on their blog. For example, I'm always talking about Pinterest because I've had some success with Pinterest. If you've also had success and you can show proof, I'm going to be more inclined to entertain a potential guest post from you because I also love that same topic.

Now what if the blogger doesn't accept guest posts? What if you don't see a form to submit the post on their blog? If your story is compelling enough, I say contact them anyway. Bloggers are always looking for a break. If they're going on vacation or they need a break from their blogging schedule, they'll want some guest posts out there to keep the momentum going. They're always looking for great content, so if you've got something that is useful that you know will help their audience, they'll be more than happy to

feature it even if they don't do guest posts regularly. I don't do guest posts regularly but if I get a post that is really helpful, I'll feature it.

My next tip: YouTube. Publish a series over the course of 2-3 months and measure the results. This is great for those of you who are looking to build up a following on YouTube. I believe I mentioned this in a podcast before, but it's worth mentioning again, because someone emailed me and told me that it did help them and they were able to build up their following with their channel doing this.

So what you're going to do is you're going to pick a topic within your topic. The reason I say within your topic is because a lot of you all have very broad topics, so you're doing fitness or you're doing health. Those aren't niches, those are broad topics. Let's say you're doing a healthy eating website which is a fairly broad topic. You could choose eliminating sugar as your topic, and you can do videos Monday, Wednesday and Friday for a 2 month period every week and measure the results after that 2 month period. You can talk about strategies that you've used that have helped you eliminate sugar. Maybe every Friday you do a recipe or you show people how to prepare a dish without sugar or sugar substitutes. The point is to develop a rhythm.

The reason I'm saying that you're going to narrow it down to a specific topic is it's easier to rank your videos for more niche topics than it is generic, broad topics. If you want to find out what keywords you should target when you're doing your videos, you can actually just type in those keywords in the search field on YouTube and YouTube will actually show you what people are searching for on YouTube. For example, when I type in 'stop sugar' into the YouTube box, I already get suggestions like stop sugar cravings, stop sugar addiction, stop sugar glider biting. YouTube is going to tell you

what people are searching for. That's a really important tip.

You can also comb the results and see what kinds of videos are out there already. If you see pages and pages and pages of videos, you might want to narrow that down some more or maybe try a different angle so there's less competition, but you want to make sure they're actually videos on that subject so you know that there's some demand. The purpose of doing this series is that you build up momentum over time. You end up having maybe 20-30 something videos by the end of your series, so you've got some videos out there that will hopefully be bringing in some organic traffic and you can build up your subscribers.

At the end of 2-3 months, however long you decide to do it, you will assess the results. Did you get more subscribers? Did you meet your goal, whatever that goal is? Are people now coming to your blog as a result of your YouTube channel? If so, keep doing it. If not, it's time to change things up. Maybe you chose a wrong topic. Maybe you discover YouTube is not really for you; that's fine, it's not going to be for everybody. But the point is, you want to do something consistently. Not just 1 video or 2 videos, you want to keep doing the videos regularly to build up that momentum, so give it a try.

My last tip is Pinterest. Of course, how am I going to do a podcast on traffic without talking about my favorite social site, Pinterest? I know a lot of you aren't really into Pinterest. Maybe you tried it or you think it's better for certain topics, and it's true. It is better for certain topics than others, but I think a lot of you would be surprised at how many topics it does work well with. Just yesterday, I was browsing Pinterest for DIY tips. I don't even remember why I was typing that in, I think I was doing research on something, but it is amazing how much potential traffic there is on Pinterest in that space.

The images for the DIY space on Pinterest get shared so, so much. It's a wonderful place if you happen to have a blog on that topic. The reason it does so well is what a lot of bloggers will do is they will post a picture of a hack or some type of unique tip, and that picture alone will get people's attention and people will begin sharing it like crazy.

I'll give you an example. There was a blogger who posted about different hacks and she used a very good picture. You know how you're in your bathroom and you want to fill up a bucket but you can't get the bucket underneath the sink because it's too large? One thing you can do is take the bucket, put it on the floor and then get a dustpan. Put the dustpan under the water so the handle is positioned outward, and when you turn on the faucet the water will run to end of the dustpan onto the floor where the bucket is. So it was a neat way to fill up a large bucket.

As I'm explaining this, I'm thinking to myself why in the world didn't they just fill up the bucket in the tub? But maybe this was one of those half baths or something and they didn't want to go into another room or run upstairs to fill up the bucket in the tub. As I'm telling you guys this I'm thinking, is this really such a great idea? Why can't you go outside and use the hose or some other place in the house? Anyway, I digress. I don't remember how many shares that particular image had but it was a ton of shares, and there's countless examples of DIY tips on Pinterest like that. If you're a blogger in that space and you're not on Pinterest, what in the world are you waiting for? I'm serious. It's such an ideal place for that type of blogger.

Here's how you test to see if Pinterest is worth your time. Simply go to [Pinterest.com](https://www.pinterest.com) and do a search for keywords related to your site. Look and see how many popular images there are on your topic.

There's a trick to this because sometimes an image is popular simply because the user has a lot of followers, so whatever they post they're going to get a lot of shares simply because of their following. But if you see a ton of different boards dedicated to that topic and a lot of different images that are getting a lot of re-pins or shares on Pinterest, then that's a sign that that topic can do really well with the social network.

Once you've decided that you're going to use Pinterest, then you're going to want to study the images that do really well. What about them makes people share them? Is it the quality of the images? Are people using infographics or tipographics, which is what I like to use where you have a title at the top of the image and then some quick tips below. People love sharing that type of stuff when it's designed pretty well, so I really like to spend time on Pinterest studying what works. I did a tipographic last summer that went over really, really well and I got the idea from another blogger who had posted a similar tipographic on the same topic. I just took elements from her image and made my own.

One thing I noticed was that the colors she used were very bright, so I used bright colors. I put a photo in the same position. I noticed she used shapes to sort of outline the tips; I did the same thing. To this day, that particular pin has been shared over 3300 times, so I'm always getting ideas from other people's pins when it comes to creating something for Pinterest. I just have to clarify when I say I take elements from other popular pins, I don't mean I steal things. I get ideas on the color schemes, on the shapes of the boxes, that kind of thing. I just want to make that clear.

The other thing you want to do with Pinterest is you want to follow popular people in your niche. It's really easy to tell how popular they are. First, do a keyword search and Pinterest will always put

the board or the pins with the most re-pins or the most popular pins, so you can click through, look at that person's profile that pinned the image, see how many shares their various pins get. Don't just look at the followers, look at the shares and you want to follow those people.

When you re-pin a lot of the popular people's pins, many times they will follow you in return. This is not going to work with everybody, but some people will take note of the fact that you're re-pinning their stuff and they'll give you a follow. If they follow you, then they can start sharing your stuff, so that's how you build up an active following on Pinterest over time. If you don't know what Pinterest is or how it works, don't worry. I did a podcast on it last year, so you can go to 2createawebsite.com/podcast4 to listen to that episode.

I hope you found this podcast helpful. The great thing about these tips is that every tip I mention, you can try. It's not like these are tips for experienced bloggers or people that already have traffic. You can start doing this today and start measuring the results. What's even better, it doesn't involve Google. Nothing wrong with Google and ranking in Google as I said before, but I still think that today you can't really rely on it; you have to treat it as secondary traffic or bonus traffic. Sometimes when you do so well with these other areas, your organic traffic will take off too because you'll start earning links naturally to your website.

If you download the guide that I suggested you download earlier in the podcast at Moz.com, you'll learn that links are the key to getting Google traffic. But in the meantime, you can focus on these other tips and see how they go.

I really hope this podcast helped you out. Definitely go to

2createawebsite.com/podcast13 and leave me a comment. Let me know if it helped you, have you tried any of these, how are things going with your site, whatever you want to leave. I'm always happy to hear from you guys. Don't forget, you can take my free and paid courses at 2createawebsite.com/courses. Thank you for listening and I'll talk to you in the next podcast.