AUTHORITY HACKS

3 Simple Tweaks That

Transformed a Flat, Ordinary

Blog Into a 100,000 visitor a

month, High Profit Authority

Site That Google LOVES!

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Blogging Is BROKEN!

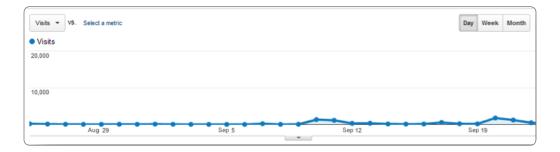
Hi, my name is Ryan Deiss... and this report is about blogging.

Actually that's a lie.

The truth is, the purpose of this report is to get you to STOP BLOGGING (or to convince you to **NEVER START BLOGGING** if that's currently your plan).

I know that sounds crazy, but to prove to you that I haven't *completely* lost my mind, I want to show you what can happen if you STOP BLOG-GING.

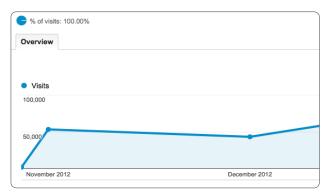
Here's the analytics from a site we launched back in August after blogging for 3 months straight:



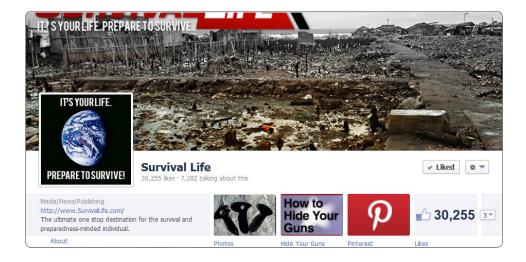
NOTE: This was a new site in a market where I'm far from a household name. In fact, my name wasn't anywhere to be found on this site, so if you think I was able to leverage my "brand," think again. I was starting off cold just like you, and the stats below are proof of that.

As you can see, traffic on this site was totally flat... as was our social media following and engagement. (193 likes... kind of pathetic):

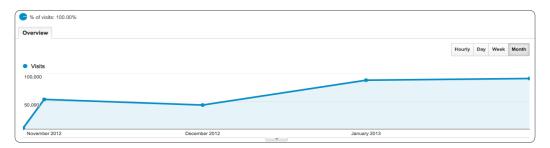




Our traffic spiked after launch, just like you would expect, but then it actually began to trail off. Then we started experimenting with a new strategy (the one I'm going to explain in detail throughout this report) and look what happened...







As you can see, our unique visitors nearly DOUBLED in one month's time and kept rising steadily. And our engagement on social media went through the roof! Our Facebook page went from 193 fans to over 30,000 fans in the span of a just two months...

So what changed?

It's simple: I stopped blogging.

More specifically, I told my team to stop blogging.

Literally, I walked into our office one day and proclaimed that "blogging" was now a fireable offense. That may sound a little extreme, but I'm not going to continue doing something if it obviously isn't working. And as you can see from that stats above...

...blogging (at least the way everyone tells you to do blogging) wasn't working!!

And the really sucky thing is, we're actually pretty good at this stuff.

I've been online for over a decade and in that time my partners and I have launched dozens of online businesses and have personally generated over a hundred million dollars in sales. Not only that, I have an experienced team and an enormous amount of cash to burn, so if I

couldn't pull this off doing what all the so-called "experts" tell you to do...

...where does that leave you?

The truth is, if you think you're going to make money blogging – **YOU'RE SCREWED!!**

It ain't gonna happen, and I know because I tried and failed miserably...and I had:

...MORE EXPERIENCE

...MORE TIME

...MORE PEOPLE, and...

...MORE MONEY

...to throw at it than you do!!

So, if you've been blogging for any length of time and your results are less than stellar, don't worry... you're in good company.

But fortunately, we did eventually figure it out, and in this report I'll break down the three big changes we made, and how shifting our positioning from "blogger" to "authority" made all the difference.

But before we dive in, I have a quick warning for you...

The methods I'm going to cover aren't the typical hipster mumbo-jumbo I read all the time from bloggers who only make money blogging about blogging.

To me, this is a business and I treat it like a business.

So while advice like "Just write about what you love and the universe will eventually reward you..." may sound good, it's certainly not a business model and it probably won't make you even one, thin dime.

I guess what I'm saying is, if your goal is to blog for a hobby or because you want to look "cool"... this probably isn't the report for you. If, on the other hand, your goal was to launch a blog that actually makes money, then today is your lucky day.

Ok, with that bit of warning out of the way, let's get started...

AUTHORITY HACK #1

Switch From "Clean" To "Cluttered" and Watch Your Pageviews Skyrocket

You've probably been told that a "clean" and "minimalistic" site design is the best way to go, right?

Well, we heard the same thing, which is why this was the first design that we tested when we launched SurvivalLife.com...



Pretty slick, right?

We all agreed that it made the survival gear we were talking about look WAY more engaging and professional-grade than any competing site in the survival niche...

Heck, we even based this design on a wildly popular gear site,

Uncrate.com, that we knew was getting major traffic, in addition to accolades from the design community:



"How could it possibly fail?" we all said.

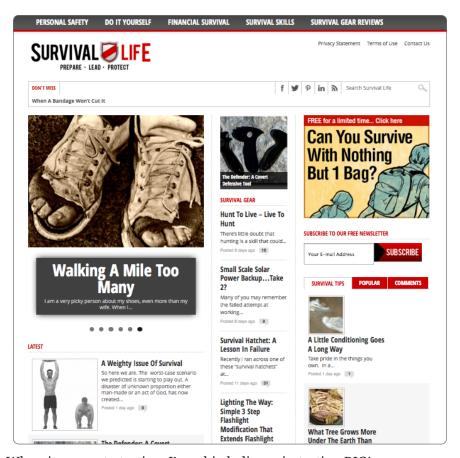
Famous last words...

For some reason, despite looking more professional than 99.9% of all other sites in the survival niche, this design just wasn't cutting it.

And this wasn't just opinion. We knew from some of our friends and partners in this space that we were well below average on the three big metrics that really matter: 1) Unique visitors, 2) Total Pageviews and 3) Average Time on Page...

...despite the fact that our content was fantastic.

So we tried something new...



When it comes to testing, I'm a big believer in testing BIG!

In other words, if something isn't working, don't make a minor tweak...go to the opposite end of the spectrum and work back to the "middle" or you'll wind up doing test after test with little or no change in result.

So that's just what we did...

We swung the pendulum all the way from clean and minimalist to cluttered (and as some have told us) downright UGLY!!

More specifically, our new site design included a lot more content on the home page. There are multiple columns, tips, popular posts, and even banner ads.

Crazy as it sounds, this cluttered design beat the crap out of the slicker, cleaner version...it wasn't even close! Almost immediately, we began to see our key metrics tick upward.

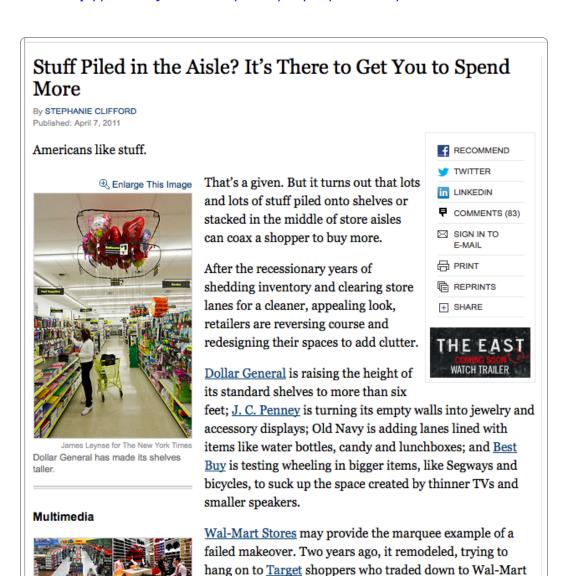
- Time on page was up.
- Pageviews were up.

• Even our unique visitor numbers began to rise because the increase in pageviews led to an increase in social engagement, which actually brought us FREE TRAFFIC!!

Frankly, I was a little surprised at first, but then I remembered something I'd read in the NY Times a while back about how cluttered shelves in retail stores actually lead to an increase in sales.

I managed to track down the article online so you can read it for your-self...

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/08/business/08clutter.html



While there's no way to know for sure why cluttered sites outperform "clean" sites in our tests, here are two hypotheses...

during the recession.

Clutter boosts engagement. Cluttered websites, like cluttered shelves, make people feel like they are actively sorting through items in search of value. Somewhere in that clutter, there is a deal to be had, or a secret piece of information that everyone else has overlooked.

In other words, users actually enjoy searching through cluttered, messy information because it engages their brain in a form of personal content curation. In other words, it makes them "work" just a tiny, little bit...

And this is important, because if I don't have to work for it, my brain doesn't engage with the content and the next thing you know I'm reaching for the back button or search box desperately in search of actual stimulation.

2. Clutter is a sign of value and relevance. It may sound odd, but a "cluttered" website sends a subtle cue to your reader that your content "inventory" changes regularly, meaning they need to come back often or they might miss something. If you don't believe me, look at the highest-trafficked sites in your market. I bet you'll find that 9 times out of 10 something on these sites' homepages change daily...if not hourly.

So at the end of the day, **after multiple tests across multiple sites in many different markets**, our research suggests that a slick, minimalist site layout – like the ones virtually all major ad firms recommend – can drive engagement down and cause your readers to devalue your content and site as a whole.

I realize this is the exact OPPOSITE of what most experts will tell you. It's also the opposite of what your readers might tell you if you survey them and ask them which design they prefer.

But remember that there's a huge difference between what people TELL YOU they want and what they actually want. (This is why we spend a lot more time analyzing actual user data than sending out surveys.)

In the NY Times article above, people TOLD Walmart that they liked the new, cleaner design. But when it came time to vote in the only way that really matters (i.e. with their wallet), the consumers said something very different...

...they said they preferred clutter.

I know this isn't what people want to hear, and I know I'll get a huge backlash from the design community. But data doesn't lie, and neither do bank accounts.

So I have a question for you

"Would you rather have a high-traffic, high profit site or would you rather be 'cool' and win design awards?"

Choose your answer carefully, because you may not be able to have both...

Ok, so this first "Hack" was a biggie, but believe it or not, Hack #2 had an even bigger impact on our business...

AUTHORITY HACK #2

Stop "Blogging" and Start Editing

So, you are probably wondering why I proclaimed "blogging" to be a capital crime in my office and why I literally told everyone (including our staff writers) to STOP BLOGGING immediately.

Well, let me first say that we do believe in negative reinforcement in my office. :)

In fact, we still use the firing squad (equipped with stress balls and Nerf guns) to punish offenders...but that's beside the point. If you don't believe me, just watch this video and see for yourself:



Fortunately for Paul, our "firing squad" has terrible aim. :)

In all seriousness, I banned my writers from blogging because I realized it was having no measurable impact on our sites' traffic or authority.

Don't get me wrong, they were writing great content, but posting great content will only get you so far. Because the reality is...

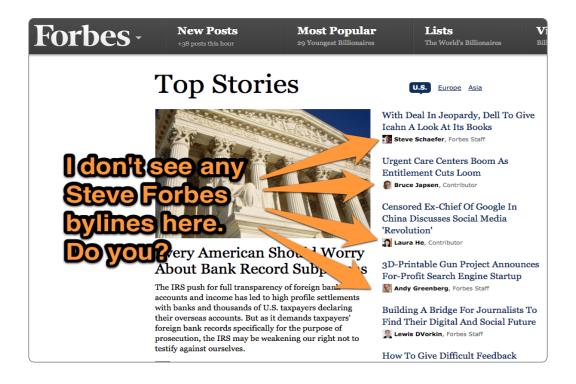
The World Doesn't Need More Information

I'll say it again: The world does <u>NOT</u> need more information.

Instead, what the world needs (and values) is a trusted authority who will organize and aggregate all the GOOD information that's actually worth reading into one place.

And this concept is nothing new. In fact, the largest, most successful authority sites on the web rarely feature content written by the person who has their name on it.

Think about it: The Huffington Post, The Drudge Report, Bloomberg, Forbes, Breitbart... these sites aren't famous for the owner's writing style. They're famous for the content they present.











Do you see where I'm going here?

I sometimes like to jokingly call this "The Oprah Factor," because Oprah has built her ridiculously successful career by bringing the best experts, content, and entertainers onto her talk show.

Oprah understands something that most people don't...

Experts do NOT equal Authority... authorities are people who aggregate and associate with multiple experts.

That's why Oprah has associated with (and in some cases created) expert brands such as Rachel Ray, Dr. Phil and Dr. Oz.



This is the playbook that the most successful authority sites use. They host expert content, associate with the most reputable thought lead-

ers in an industry, and they leverage those associations to build their authority...just like Oprah does (just on a slightly smaller level). :)



If you have a hard time imagining yourself as the "Oprah" of your industry, then here's another way to look at it that's slightly more humble...

Don't Talk About Yourself, Talk About Who You Admire

As media becomes increasingly social, the game has changed. Old school self-promotion -- AKA talking about yourself all day everyday -- will only get you diminishing returns.

Your audience will grow tired of your constant self-promotion and they'll begin to tune you out. Honestly, they're right in doing so...

People who talk about themselves all the time are usually self-centered blowhards. And they usually present a very minimal amount of helpful information anyway.

The trick is to talk about other people who are worth talking about. If you follow this rule, talking about exclusively worthwhile content experts... you're almost assured of saying something worthwhile. Right?

Here's one of my favorite quotes, written by technology publisher, Tim O'Reilly, in an article he published on LinkedIn:

http://www.linkedin.com/today/post/article/20121002122119-16553-it-s-not-about-you-the-truth-about-social-media-marketing

"The secret of promotion in the age of social media isn't to promote yourself. It's to promote others. Success comes when your success depends on the success of your customers, your suppliers, your end-users, and when you spend more of your time thinking about them than about yourself."

Honestly, I don't think I can sum it up any better than that.

Unlike most so-called "experts", Tim O'Reilly understands that people don't care about *your* book, or *your* show, or *your* blog... they care about what your book, show, or blog is *talking about*.

The sooner you realize that, the sooner your blog will start leapfrogging the competition and building rapid authority because most other bloggers will continue to operate using the old self-promotion model.

So as crazy as it sounds, the first step to becoming a respected authority in your market isn't to publish something new and amazing...

...the first step is to identify and associate with the most trusted, authoritative experts in your niche and then seek to aggregate and promote THEIR CONTENT in one place (i.e. your site).

Admittedly this isn't as easy as it sounds, which is why I have written another report called "The Free Traffic Loophole" that covers this strategy in even greater depth. You should have received a link to this report when you registered for the "Authority Hacks" report, but here's a direct link just in case:

https://www.AuthorityROI.com/free-traffic-loophole

This "Expert Aggregator Model" is also something I cover extensively in my AuthorityROI training program. So if you're at all interested in launching your own authority site (or if you want to transform a boring, low-profit blog into a high-traffic, high-profit authority site) you should definitely check it out.

You can get all the details about the AuthorityROI program and find out if it's right for you by going to: http://www.AuthorityROI.com

So that covers the first two "Hacks", but in many ways I saved the best for last because Hack #3 gets into how we transform traffic into revenue...

AUTHORITY HACK #3

Stop Driving Traffic Away From Your Site... Monetize Email NOT Clicks

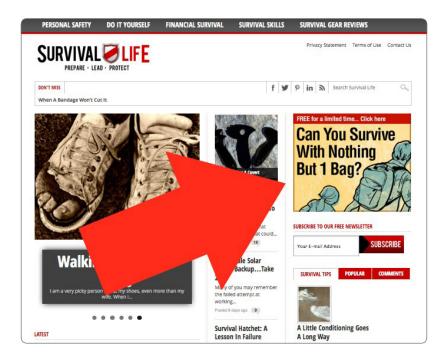
Here's another secret to building your site's authority in a hurry: STOP sending your traffic to someone else's site by selling banner ads!

NOTE: There is an exception to this rule which I'll discuss in just a bit, so if you do go to one of our sites and see 3^{rd} party banners, don't freak out.

Instead of letting another business siphon **YOUR** traffic via banner ads, use those banners to advertise your own products -- and keep those users on your site.

My team has been testing and refining this strategy for a long time. And let me just say, the money you make by selling banner space is only a small fraction of what you can make by building an email subscriber list and promoting internal assets.

Here's an example of what we've been doing over at SurvivalLife. com...



At first glance, this looks like a typical banner ad, right? But it's actually an advertisement for one of our own FREE reports...

And when you click on this banner, you'll see that we're using this free report to generate leads. Instead of monetizing clicks like most content sites, we leverage our banner space to build a list.



Once again, I'm telling you to do the exact opposite of what has become conventional wisdom in online marketing... but here's why it works.

Selling clicks is incredibly shortsighted, especially if your goal is to build a booming authority site. You're literally sending the traffic you worked so hard to get, away to someone else's site.

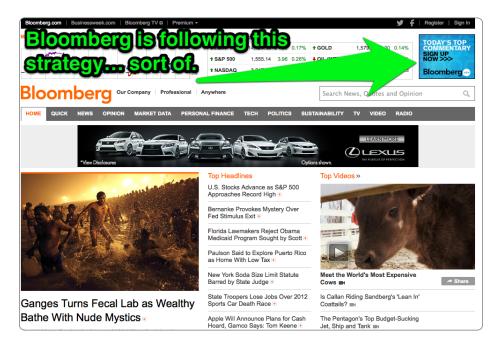
And you're giving up this valuable traffic for PENNIES!!!

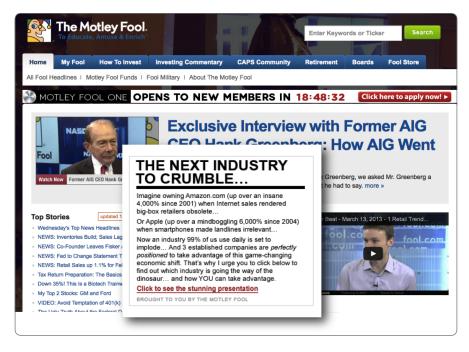
Please don't do that!

By using your banner space to build your own subscribers list, you're getting the absolute most value out of your traffic. Rather than just getting a few cents per-click once... we're able to monetize our subscriber list time and time again via sponsored emails, affiliate promotions, and in-house product promotions.

When you think about it, it's really a no-brainer. It's basically a TINY amount of money right now... versus 10 or 20 times as much, every month.

Most high-traffic authority sites do this at some level. This strategy is even more important for smaller, growing sites with limited traffic...





I know that despite my pleas, most bloggers will go for the quick, easy advertising money and miss out on the opportunity for real, sustainable growth.

I'm begging you...DON'T DO THAT!!!

Typically, we're able to generate between \$0.50 and \$4.00 per subscriber, per month (depending on the market) by promoting a mix of

in-house offers, affiliate offers, and premium level subscriptions to our content.

Do the math.

Even a small subscriber list, if you nurture and manage it effectively can produce an income most ordinary bloggers can only dream about. And going back to Hack #2, if you follow our model you'll also be doing less work than most

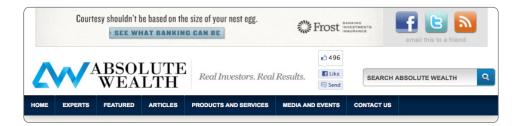
Let's see...less work...more money?

I can tell you from experience that it definitely doesn't suck. :)

An Exception To The Rule (and a Sneaky Little Trick)

Every rule has an exception and our "No 3rd Party Banner Ads" rule is no different...

If you visit one of our sites, oftentimes you'll see a 3rd party banner ad from a prominent website or service. For example, here's a banner ad for Frost Bank (one of the largest banks in the U.S.) on one of our financial sites:



Ok, so why do we do this?

Well first off, I feel like I should tell you that Frost Bank did not pay for that ad on our site. Nope, we gave it to them for free.

Now why in the heck would we do that?!

It's simple: Big, important sites have big, important advertisers. So, if you want your site to look big and important, it can make a lot of sense to give away free advertising to some of the bigger, well-known services and brands in your market.

And when I said "in your market", I mean "in YOUR market".

Don't just slap Coca-Cola, McDonalds or Apple ads all over your site because they happen to be some of the largest brands in the world. Not only will they likely make you take them down, these brands don't necessarily mean much to your market unless you're in the beverage, food or tech space.

So try to keep it "in the family"...

Select a company that would be recognized by at least 6 out of 10 people in your market, and offer them a free ad on your site. Most will take you up on it.

NOTE: If you're feeling a little frisky, you can always go the route of asking for forgiveness rather than permission (meaning you just put up an ad for a big site without asking first).

I'm not an attorney so I don't want to get into the legalities of this particular strategy, but I will tell you that unless you're dealing with a very large brand most appreciate the free traffic and branding as long as your site doesn't encourage activities that are incongruent with the brand. And if they do have a problem with it, they'll usually just tell you to take down the ad.

But again, in my completely non-legal opinion, this strategy is definitely in the gray which is why I always recommend that you get permission before leveraging any trademarks...even if you're technically doing them a favor.

Sneaky Little Trick: Bad Ads Are Best

If you're worried that these big advertiser ads are going to drive traffic away from your site, here's a sneaky little trick that will minimize any negative impacts.

It's devilishly simple...

Only run really bad, "branding-style" ads that have no call to action. In other words, just run the same boring, bland, non-effective ads that most websites run. More times than not, these are the ads these big companies will give you anyway, because

Let's take a second look at the Frost Bank ad...



Does that strike you as the type of ad that gets a lot of clicks?

I hope your answer was "No", because based on our analytics, I can tell you that this ad generates less than one click per day on average. That's right...that boring little ad is so bad it can only manage to generate 4-5 clicks PER WEEK!

Admittedly, those are still 4 or 5 clicks I'd rather have, but the benefit of being associated with a big-name brand is well worth it.

Why Being An "Authority" Is So Much Better Than Being a Blogger

This report is just a thumbnail sketch of the model I'm using right now to boost the traffic, authority, and profitability of my sites across all kinds of niches.

And it's working like crazy!

It's the very same model that I teach in much greater depth in AuthorityROI. If you own a blog or authority site (or if you'd like to start one), you will definitely want to be a part of this training.

Here's why this model is vastly superior to the way most bloggers operate:

- You don't need a product, sales copy or even an idea...
 you just need to be passionate about a market where great content and fascinating experts already exist
- You can become a respected authority in virtually any market...even if you're a complete "no-name" today
- You'll be able to generate cash on demand (from your email list)...which is something most ordinary bloggers can only dream about
- You don't have to be a writer (become Oprah) It's more profitable to be an authority that draws attention to the best content in YOUR niche
- You become an "insider." Doors will begin to open for you and even the best-known experts in your space will start asking YOU for favors!

If you just like to write for fun and you're not looking to make money from your blog, then admittedly AuthorityROI is probably not right for you.

But if the goal of your site is to make you real money and build authority for your brand, then AuthorityROI is perfect!

Again, you can get more details by going to:

http://www.AuthorityROI.com

I hope you found this report valuable, and more importantly I hope it encourages you to make some changes to your own blog.

If you do, I'd love to hear your results...good or bad.

Either way, let's continue the conversation over at:

https://www.AuthorityROI.com/access

To building authority, Ryan Deiss

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