

# Explode Your Profits with Personalization

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If you see the word “personalization” and you stop breathing – either because it petrifies you to even consider, or you become paralyzed by a lack of knowledge, you’re about to feel a lot better about working your own style and voice into your online business efforts.

For many people, introverts or not, personalization is something they don’t understand or don’t want to do. After all, isn’t making money online all about being able to stay anonymous and rake in cash?

No, it’s not actually.

Working from home online is about finding your passion to help other people, and reaping both monetary rewards and personal satisfaction from your efforts. Personalization elevates you from anonymous, possible scumbag (in the eyes of a wary consumer), to a trustworthy source of valuable information.

## **Why Content Is So Important to Your Business**

Some misguided marketers like to start threads in forums that say something like, “Content is dead” or “Article marketing is no longer viable.” The truth is, the one phrase, “Content is king” will always be correct because content is what conveys information from an authority figure to the person seeking information.

For a marketer, content is how you get found online. Search engines crawl the web with what are known as spiders or bots – and they index these pages like a library catalog.

Whenever a consumer comes along searching for information, they reach into their stores of files and present what they consider to be the top possible matches for the person using their service. Without content on your site, you won’t be one of the options shown.

Content is what informs consumers on a buying decision. Graphics are nice and all, but it's words that tell a person what a product or service is, why they need it, and how it will change their lives.

It will never become obsolete. No matter how hard you want it to or wish it didn't have the power that it had, content is crucial to the success of your online business success.

But there's a right and a wrong way to do it. Sterile, keyword-laden content is the wrong way to do it. Content reliant on spammy backlinks is wrong. Personalized content is *right*.

### **What You've Been Taught About Content in the Past**

In the past, length was one thing that many marketers focused on. It used to be that you could get away with a 100 or 200-word post filled with keywords and you'd rank high.

Then marketers got spanked by Google and figured it must be the length that got them into trouble, so they stretched their content out to 500 words or more. For awhile, it worked, too!

Keyword density became next on the hit list. Marketers started getting penalized for having too many keywords in their content. Suddenly all those expensive tools they'd invested in, and the long hours spent researching the right words and phrases they could dominate with were all a wash.

Where to put the content became an issue. Article directories were slammed by Google. All that content people had listed with a strategic call to action were worthless – not ranking anymore.

Web 2.0 sites like Squidoo got beat up. In retaliation, they started closing accounts of people who thought their content was created perfectly. It was unique, just the right length, had keywords, etc.

Everything people had stressed to you in the past about how to create content that worked online – had now been demolished. It can send you reeling, paralyzed about putting any more effort into your online content creation.

The solution to this is to start writing personalized content. With personalization, length isn't an issue, keywords aren't "key," and you can put it anywhere and rest assured that Google's not going to slap it down.

Personalization is the only characteristic that has stood the test of time. It's what attracts a true, loyal audience and what will help you become a leader in your niche with very little effort.

### **What Is Personalized Content?**

Some people don't really understand what personalization means. They think it means that they have to spill their deepest, darkest secrets onto the web. That's not it at all!

It conveys emotions. When you want someone to buy something you're promoting, you don't just write about specifications that a product seller or manufacturer can say.

That's like a friend asking you which doctor you recommend, and you spouting off the credentials of a local MD. Facts don't tell the actual things that make people want to spend money. It's emotions.

Learn how to use adjectives when you write and express what you feel when you use or read or learn from something. It's a simple phrase of, "I felt so \_\_\_\_ when I read that!" It could be:

- Relieved
- Stupid
- Angry
- Excited

If your blog reader is sitting there nervously reading your product review because they want to learn a strategy so bad, and you, their trusted leader, tell them you felt relieved, then that feeling will flow over to them and they'll feel more comfortable buying the recommended item.

Personalized content makes the reader interested in what you have to say. Who wants to read content that sounds like a nutritional label? If you've landed on a blog about preparing a healthy recipe, would you enjoy reading a list of ingredients only, or the personal commentary about the preparation difficulties (or ease), the comments that dinner guests made when they tasted it, and whether or not they feel it's worthy of making a second time?

Personalized content helps build trust. Without your own voice, your opinions, and your insight, everything is just facts and figures that could come straight from an encyclopedia.

Tells stories with your personalization. Stories work well to help convince people to buy. They shouldn't be made up, unless you're specifically up front about it being a hypothetical situation.

It doesn't have to be your story. You can have a friend who you saw suffer from extreme acne, and you can talk about the emotional pain you witnessed and how you have always felt bad for people dealing with acne scars and shame due to skin blemishes.

Personalized content gives opinions. When you're in school creating research papers, opinions aren't used in most cases. You cite resources, organize data and share it. People want to hear what you love, hate and are indifferent to.

It's okay to weed out your non audience. It might feel awkward at first – because we're so used to people pleasing and not rocking the boat. But it's the best thing you can do for your business because it also helps identify your fiercely loyal audience.

**Where Is Personalized Content Supposed to Be Used?**

Blogs are the primary place to personalize your content. Do you want to read a blog called “100 ways to lose 100 pounds” or “How I lost 100 pounds and keep it off year after year?”

Personalized content, where someone is sharing their story – which includes their successes *and* failures, helps people relate to you. Nobody is perfect, and putting yourself out there as such damages your credibility.

Don't *only* use your blog's “About” page to share your personalization. Do it in every post that you make. Whether your entire post is all about your inside thoughts and reactions, or only a portion of it, it doesn't matter.

Email autoresponders are often written by marketers with a sterile approach, but that's the wrong way to try to connect with your subscribers. People have invited you in to their email inbox.

They've trusted you not to spam them. Email them with a friendly opening that's not always on-topic. Maybe your diet email autoresponder broadcast starts off with a note about a bad storm you're dealing with, or some sort of news event you're reacting to that day. Let people get to know the real you – not just the on-topic authority figure.

Don't be spammy and pushy in your emails. They're not sales letters – they're meant to be friendly emails. Not everyone will be used to this, and you will weed out your non audience here, too.

Forum posts are great for personalization. You'll see marketers who outline a step-by-step plan for readers – and it's appreciated, for sure. But the ones that get the biggest response are those where someone is sharing their journey and their story and how they overcame obstacles to achieve an outcome they desired.

Squidoo and other web 2.0 sites now don't prefer personalization – they require it. Accounts have been closed in full due to the lack of personal insights, opinions and commentary.

Social networking sites like Twitter, Facebook, and Google Plus will always convert higher for you if you aren't always business, but also personal. You

want people to share your content, and they'll be more likely to do that when you build a genuine relationship with them as people, rather than just see them as a "target audience."

### **What Scares You Most About Personalization?**

You're a private person. It's understandable that you might be nervous about personalization but the first thing you have to understand is that no one wants to know your clothing size, your bed or bathroom habits, or what skeletons you have in your closet.

That's not what personalization is. They want to know your opinions. Maybe you're too nervous to even give that – many people are. You could be afraid of online trolls who will argue with you or make you feel bad in some way.

On your blog and email subscriber list, you are in control of the backlash. You can approve or send comments to the trash. You can ban people if they're being too hostile.

Of course, you don't want to silence other peoples' opinions if a healthy debate is occurring on your site, but if there's abuse on the scene, it's acceptable to remove that person from your domain.

Personalization isn't like going into a confessional at church. You're just sharing what you want to – never anything you feel would bring shame and humiliation to you.

Some people are more transparent than others. Think about whose blog you enjoy reading on a regular basis. Do they talk about their kids? You might not truly care about their kids, but if you're amazed at the hours they work, and the reason they work so hard is because they're supporting their kids, then it might help you understand what drives them better – and earn them more respect in your eyes.

You may not know what to say. Everything you type looks stupid to you. You read it and think, "Nobody cares about that!" But even though you

may not care if someone had a Starbucks one morning, it could matter to your audience.

Not “matter” in the sense that it changes their life having that new piece of information. But “matter” as in, you’re willing to share your day with them. It’s like painting a picture for your audience.

If someone was blindfolded, and you had to paint a picture for them about sitting next to a beautiful pond, would it be more helpful to say, “You’re sitting by a pond,” or, “You’re sitting in the soft bed of grass at the edge of the pond, listening to the birds tweet and the frogs ribbit?”

The more detail you include about your life, the better. And a simple paragraph isn’t going to throw a wrench in anyone’s day – it just helps them get to know you better.

A true story of something having to do with you always works best. Let’s use anti aging as our example niche. Instead of just writing an article about how moisturizer helps plump up lines on your face, give a personalized story about how you discovered your first wrinkle, how it made you feel, and what you did to get rid of it.

It can be funny, like this:

“I walked past the mirror and saw an enormous gash by my eye! It wasn’t really a gash – it was a ½ inch wrinkle that had crept up on my face sometime between 10 PM and this morning. I had never seen it before. My first instinct was to rub it away, to reposition my skin - but it didn’t work. I seriously considered using strategically placed tape in my hairline to pull the wrinkle out of existence, but that wouldn’t work.”

It can be heartfelt, too. You can tell an emotional story if you want to – and no one will be ridiculing you for it – they’ll be thankful – because they’re in the same boat and looking for guidance, and that’s why they sought you out in the first place.

If you don’t know how to add personalization, read other blogs and curate snippets of other articles and blog posts (with a link back for

courtesy). Add commentary about what other people said. Pretend like a friend just asked for your opinion.

### **Reworking a Sterile Piece of Content**

Go back to one of your blog posts or articles and look for places where you can add personalization. If your entire article uses the word “you,” find ways to use “I” as well – tell *your* story, not just what a product or service or strategy can do for your reader.

Don't worry about changing every sentence, just sprinkle your personalization in here and there. Or, create a new article from scratch and this time, instead of acting like you're on a fact-finding mission, write as if you're talking to a close friend who needs help.

Not only will you build a loyal audience who feels like they know and trust you now, but participation on your blog will increase, and prospects will begin converting into paying customers. Google and other search engines will take notice of these behaviors and begin rewarding you as a *true* authority figure in your niche.





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