

— GET —

THE ATTENTION

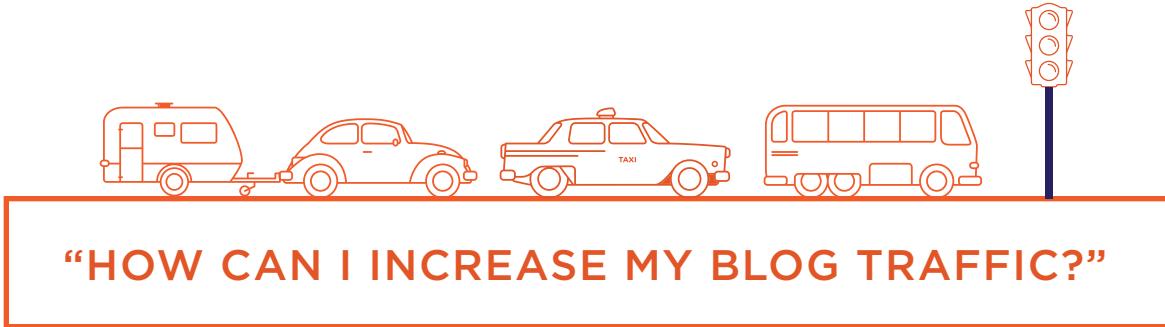
YOUR MESSAGE DESERVES

TOP TRAFFIC GROWTH SECRETS
from the WORLD'S MOST SUCCESSFUL
BLOGGERS *and* COMMUNICATORS

MICHAEL HYATT

INTRODUCTION

If there's one question about platform building I hear more than any other, it's this:



We're all asking it, right? We want to influence as many people as we can with our message, and that means connecting with as many readers as possible.

So how do we do it?

I'm a firm believer in getting outside counsel when I'm stumped or want to grow beyond my current reality. Why would I want my lack of knowledge be the thing that holds me back when I can fill the gap from the insights and experience of others?

That's what I'm doing in this ebook. I want to provide the top-nine growth secrets for traffic from some of the best known and most successful communicators in the world. What do Tim Ferriss, Chris Brogan, Lysa TerKeurst, and Amy Porterfield do to drive traffic? How do Jon Acuff, Glennon Doyle Melton, and Chalene Johnson keep readers coming back for more?

Well, I asked them and other top communicators how they do it. Twenty-six of the leading bloggers, authors, speakers, and podcasters shared their insights on how to get more readers for your ideas—people like John Maxwell, Jeff Walker, Dave Ramsey, Chris Guillebeau, and Jeff Goins. In other words, people doing it day in and out. They shed light on content, style, promotion, and a lot more. These are the strategies that can take your influence to the next level.

1. BRING THE VALUE

The starting point is content. What's your content contributing to the lives of readers?



BRINGING THE VALUE IS THE PLACE TO BEGIN.

“The most effective tactic I use to drive traffic to my website is staying committed to my overall philosophy of adding value,” [John Maxwell](#) told me. “From the time I started blogging and being active on social media, I’ve consistently focused on adding value to everyone who sees what I write—through useful links, inspiring quotes, and blog posts that answer real-world questions.”

[Chris Guillebeau](#) said almost the same thing. When he gets focused on “driving traffic,” he ends up with posts that don’t resonate. “But when I focus instead on creating valuable, helpful posts—ones that are both specific and personal—bam! All of a sudden, traffic arrives.”

[Dave Ramsey](#) dials this in for us. “People come to us for *hope* in the form of content,” he told me. When he delivers that, “our traffic spikes.” Dave’s mission is helping people attain financial peace.

[Ron Edmondson](#) serves ministry leaders, and he says his key strategy is “trying to keep my content simple and helpful. Often when I think a post is too simple, I will get the most activity.” The secret to growing traffic is consistently bringing the value that readers are coming to you to deliver.

2. GET YOUR AUDIENCE INVOLVED

Dave's comments lead us directly to the second secret: getting your audience involved. If you're bringing the value, you can expect to create fans. And...



FANS DRIVE TRAFFIC.

[Lysa TerKeurst](#) creates short, five-day campaigns with content that new readers will love. She funnels them through her social media outlets to her site. “One marriage campaign I did last year was only promoted for five days and was one of the top-ten most visited pages for our website in 2014.” But the reason she does it is crucial. “Most of all it deepens my relationship with my readers,” she told me.

The reason that's important is that our audiences are like our ambassadors and promoters. “I drive traffic to my Web site by building a specific reputation among the folks already ‘signed up,’” [Andy Andrews](#) told me. “After all, *they* are the ones who bring others aboard.” Everything he publishes is intended to strengthen that relationship.

[Jeff Goins](#) uses this strategy with his blog commenters. “The most effective tactic I used to drive traffic to my blog is to write a blog post and ask readers to promote something in the comments,” he told me. “I think you just need to get creative about making it about your readers, not about you. Whenever I do this, people come to the site in droves.”

3. CONNECT WITH YOUR AUTHENTIC VOICE

Bringing value to the people who want it most is only the beginning. You have to do it in a voice and style that's true to you.



THE THIRD SECRET IS TO STAY AUTHENTIC.

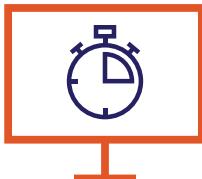
“Be honest,” advises [Jon Acuff](#). “Blog with your true voice, not the voice you think will gain the most traffic.” This is vital, he says, because you won’t be able to pull off something inauthentic for long. “If you start writing strictly for traffic, you end up becoming a character on your blog instead of being yourself. Eventually that gets really exhausting and you’ll end up hating your blog.” Jon’s sense of humor has been one of the defining elements of his style from Day 1.

Dave Ramsey knows exactly the style that works for his audience. It’s “snarky, loving, combative, informative, compassionate, and lifts the reader’s spirit,” he says. If you know Dave, you know just the mix. You’ll need to stay true to your own personal mix. That’s what will connect with readers, especially if you take some risks.

“You have two voices,” [Glennon Doyle Melton](#) told me, “one in the back of your head whispering juicy, dangerous, truthy, raw, delightful things and one in the front saying predictable, appropriate, shiny things. When speaking and posting, use your juicy voice. It wakes people up.” But, as Glennon also says, stay kind. Don’t use truth as an excuse to offend.

4. POST CONSISTENTLY AND FREQUENTLY

I alluded to this in the first secret, but consistency is so important it's worth mentioning all on its own. I know this from my own blogging experience, and I've seen it proved both positively and negatively countless times with other people's sites.



IF YOU WANT TRAFFIC, YOU NEED TO SHOW UP WHEN READERS EXPECT.

"My most effective approach to getting traffic to my website is consistency in writing," [Thom Rainer](#) told me. "My readers know the precise day and time all of my content will be released. They are waiting on it, and most of them are eager to refer the content to others every day." If you fail to meet expectations, you can expect readers to find something else to read.

Frequency is a part of this as well. "We update content on our blog five days per week," [Donald Miller](#) told me. "It might be a bit much, but it keeps a steady flow of traffic coming in." Quality plus consistency equals reader demand. Frequency is how often you can meet it.

You don't have to post five times a week of course.

Just find the frequency that works for your audience and stick with it. For [Jay Baer](#)'s audience that's ten posts a week. He used to post just three times weekly but found that upping the frequency drove more traffic. I've posted as many as five times a week, but I've found three times is perfect for me and my audience.

5. USE YOUR ARCHIVES

If you're creating quality content with consistency and good frequency, it won't be long before you have a very valuable archive. In the publishing business we call this the backlist. And every successful publisher (and blogger) knows not to overlook the backlist.



**THIS IS THE FIFTH SECRET—AND
IT'S A POWERFUL ONE.**

A significant part of my daily, weekly, monthly traffic comes from old posts—some of my most popular are years old. Repurposing and re-promoting your past content is huge for traffic. Lysa TerKeurst repurposes past content to use in her drip campaigns. I've done this with email incentives and use my blog content as feeder material for my [podcast](#).

I keep analytics on all my most popular posts and regularly re-promote them. “You spend a lot of time creating valuable content only to share it once and then leave it to die in your blog’s archive,” [Syed Balkhi](#) told me. But when you re-promote, your quality content finds new readers. “Every day you have new users and followers. Why not share your old popular articles with them? By doing this on Twitter, I was able to increase my traffic by 4,000 page views a day.” Syed recommends [CoSchedule](#) for this kind of re-promotion. That’s exactly the tool I use and find most effective.

But the truth is you don’t even need to repurpose and re-promote to see a benefit. You’ll gain value just by packing your archive with evergreen content. Why? It’s all about search engines. “Over time,” Jay Baer told me, “Google has become our best friend, driving about 70 percent of all traffic. Eventually, quality is rewarded.”

Tim Ferriss is crystal clear on this point. “My personal mantra: *Create evergreen content*. I want my blog posts—90 percent of my nearly 600 posts at least—to be more valuable in two years than the week I write them. I aim to have the organic search traffic grow over time, so I treat my content more like buy-and-hold real estate than a time-sensitive newspaper. In the long-term, the former is much less work, much more fun, and much more valuable.”

Part of making this work is coming up with titles that will work long-term. “The title makes all the difference,” says Donald Miller. CoSchedule has a [free tool](#) to help with that as well.

6. DON'T OVERLOOK PODCASTING

My podcast has become a key component of my platform, and it's the same for other bloggers.



PODCASTING CAN DRIVE A LOT OF TRAFFIC.

“With 525 million active subscribers in the iTunes store, I leverage that directory by providing targeted content that results in my listeners wanting the additional value provided at EntrepreneurOnFire.com,” John Lee Dumas told me. “By ending every episode with a strong call to action, I have seen my website traffic grow consistently with my podcast traffic, which is now over 1 million unique listens a month.”

I podcast once a week, and consistency is just as important here as it is with blogging. “My most successful traffic growth secret is my weekly podcast,” [Ray Edwards](#) told me. “I have produced this show for three years, without missing a single week. *The Ray Edwards Show* has been directly (and indirectly) responsible for a large portion of my traffic growth.”

If you’re not offering a podcast yet, this sixth secret might be just what you need to reach your next big traffic target.

7. PROMOTE WITH EMAIL

I hammer this one as often as I can. Along with your archive, your email list is one of the most valuable platform assets you possess.



**BUILDING AND LEVERAGING YOUR LIST
IS VITAL TO DRIVING TRAFFIC.**

When I asked [Pat Flynn](#) about it he said it was his most important traffic driver “by far.” What works for Pat? “An email with a compelling headline and a clear and compelling call to action with a link back to a specific page on my website. A blog post, a landing page, a product—the email is the best traffic generation tool I use.”

“We decided to focus on just building relationships with our customers,” [Chalene Johnson](#) told me. “The most successful method that we’ve used has been our [30DayPush.com](#) opt-in where people provide us with their email address and I send them one video a day for thirty days to teach them organization, productivity, goal setting, etc. and it’s all free! I started doing that at the end of 2010, which generated 100,000 subscribers and since then we generate close to 160,000 opt-ins each year. We try not to make our website a place for people to hang out; we really want them to find something that they want, give them that gift, and in exchange start the relationship.”

You can see how this seventh secret ties back to the second secret. All of these strategies work in concert.

8. LEVERAGE SOCIAL MEDIA

There's a lot to unpack with the eighth secret.



**SOCIAL MEDIA DRIVES TRAFFIC
LIKE NOTHING ELSE.**

“The most effective tactic that I use is to curate content on my Facebook page that informs or entertains people,” [Guy Kawasaki](#) told me. He calls this the NPR model. Why? “My goal is to earn the right to promote my website by providing valuable content just like NPR earns the right to run pledge drives.” Again, it goes back to bringing value.

[Chris Brogan](#) shares another angle on the same point. “I ask an interesting question on a social platform, where the post will help with the answer. I make the question different between Facebook, Twitter, and sometimes LinkedIn, and link back to the blog post as a way to encourage traffic.”

It's all about meeting the audience's need.

[Crystal Paine](#) has done a tremendous job cultivating her Facebook community. “By responding to comments there personally, listening to what my readers’ needs are, and sharing articles that address those needs, my active Facebook community continues to drive the most traffic to my blog on a daily basis.”

One of the keys to making this work, says [Michael Stelzner](#), is getting the right headline and image. “Crafting headlines that are very attractive to my audience *and* placing them inside an attractive visual image optimized for Facebook is the most effective technique I use. Why? A good headline draws people to your site. But a good headline along with a visual stands out in the Facebook news feed!”

[Ed Stetzer](#) optimizes his posts for sharing. “I make sure that the post includes a few pithy and short sentences that are then posted to social media with a link sending traffic to my site for the full details,” he told me.

I’ve been doing this with Twitter and it’s been huge for me too.

But there are other ways to work social media. [Amy Porterfield](#), the Queen of Facebook, uses value-packed Facebook ads. She told me how she does it: “I’ll write a content-rich blog post that is full of practical advice. From there I’ll set up a Facebook post about my blog article, using a snapshot from the blog post and simple text, such as ‘Love this post about XYZ.’ The more personal and casual the ad text, the more often it’s shared. From there I turn my Facebook post into an ad. In my blog post I always offer an opt-in opportunity, so I’m driving traffic to my website while growing my list at the same time. Works like a charm!”

So far we’ve mentioned Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn, but there are other social media services that may be better suited to your audience.

“The most powerful thing for me has been Pinterest,” [Lewis Howes](#) told me. “My website traffic went up four times in two months when applying a few strategies to getting featured on large boards, and driving more followers to my own board. I had no clue how powerful it would be, but it’s my No. 1 source of traffic now and drives twice as much traffic as Google and Facebook combined.”

9. CREATE PARTNERSHIPS

Social media is another great reminder that we're not doing this alone.



A NETWORK OF FRIENDS AND FELLOW PLATFORM BUILDERS CAN MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE FOR YOUR SUCCESS.

“The reality is that whatever market you’re in, it’s extremely likely that someone else has already put in a lot of hard work building a platform of your ideal clients,” [Jeff Walker](#) told me. “They’ve already got an email list or social following that’s filled with people in your target market. If they promote your site with an email, blog post, social media post, the impact is powerful and immediate. I’ve literally added tens of thousands of email subscribers in a single week with endorsements from partners.”

Wow! But it makes sense, right? Supporting others is a good example of how trading influence can lead directly to growing it. “Your job,” says Jeff, “is to find those potential partners, build a relationship with them, and then create a partnership where everyone wins.” I’ve seen this model work in my own launches, and it’s a game changer.

You’re not in it alone.

Sharing our influence in partnerships is a good example of how abundance thinking produces greater abundance for everyone involved.

CONCLUSION

There's no magic formula, and all these secrets require effort to maximize. But they're proven to work for the biggest and best platform builders I know. I would recommend looking over the list and seeing what you're doing now. Ask yourself, how you could improve it. Then...



**LOOK AT WHAT YOU'RE NOT DOING,
AND GET STARTED.**

Consistently bringing valuable content that connects with your audience is the best way I know to grow your traffic, increase your influence, and spread your message.

FREE WEBINAR!

Now you know how crucial it is to create value-packed content. But can you do it *quickly*? I'm leading an upcoming webinar that will show you exactly how to craft amazing content faster than you thought possible. You don't want to miss this!

BLOG FASTER, BLOG SMARTER

PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FOR CREATING MORE CONTENT IN LESS TIME

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22 | 10 A.M. CENTRAL TIME

Register Here





Michael Hyatt is the author of *Platform: Get Noticed in a Noisy World* (Thomas Nelson, 2012). It is a *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, and *USA Today* bestseller. Recently, *Forbes* magazine named him one of “Top 10 Online Marketing Experts to Follow” and one of the “Top 50 Social Media Influencers.”

Michael is the former Chairman & CEO of Thomas Nelson Publishers, the largest faith-based publisher in the world and now part of HarperCollins. He began his career at Word Publishing while a senior at Baylor University. In the 30 years since then, he has worked in nearly every facet of book publishing.

He is also an expert in the field of social media. His blog, MichaelHyatt.com, is ranked by Google in the top one-half percent of all blogs with almost 500,000 unique visitors a month. He has readers in more than two hundred countries.

His podcast, *This Is Your Life*, is consistently in the top ten in the Business category on iTunes and downloaded by more than 350,000 people a month. He has more than 220,000 followers on Twitter.

He is also the President and Founder of *Platform University*, an online membership community designed to give people the inspiration, coaching, and resources they need to get noticed in a noisy world.

While Michael loves his work, it is not the most important thing in his life. That position belongs to his family. He has been married to his wife, Gail for thirty-seven years. They have five daughters, four sons-in-law, and eight grandchildren. They live just outside of Nashville, Tennessee.

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