

"A-Ha!" Blogging Cheat Sheet

Your totally targeted, visibility boosting, status building, guerilla traffic generator!

Things that work well for blog headlines: Provocative questions, numbers, avoiding pain/mistakes, more verbs, less nouns, benefit-driven, under 80 characters if possible.

- 1. "WHAT kind of post will you write?"** *Battle cry: "Inform, Entertain, Empower." Some proven types: "System/Process"; "How-to"; "List" (top XX lists are always popular); "Opinion"; "News-jacking" (riding a current event); "Interview"; "Trend-casting"; "Case Studies"; "Success Stories"; "Inspirational"; "Contrarian"; "FAQs"; "Reviews"; "Press Releases/Announcements"; "What People Are Saying" (ex. curate tweets on a topic); "Resource Round-up."*

- 2. "WHAT is your opening?"** *Provide context for the subject of your post. What challenge is the reader facing? What information do they need to know to improve their business or lives, and how they use their time, money, etc.? Statistics can provide an attention-grabbing opening. Making an emotional connection is stronger. Or you can use both at once!*

- 3. "HOW do you follow through on your headline?"** *As you lay out your process, build your list, explain your opinion, or tell the case study story, remember: People SCAN more than they READ. Use lots of white space. Keep paragraphs short. Add bulleted and numbered items, and stick to language a sixth grader could easily understand. Don't be afraid to drop a keyword or two in when it's relevant. Above all, write as if you were talking to a real human being!*

- 4. "HOW will you wrap it up?"** *If the opening is the "Tell 'em what you're going to tell them" section, this is the "Tell 'em what you told them" section. In different words, summarize for the reader what point you're ultimately trying to get across. Reinforce the reason why your assertions are important, the problems that you're solving, or the positive results your readers will experience if they take your words to heart, and put them into action!*

- 5. "OPTIONAL: Add your resource box!"** *Similar to the "boilerplate" at the end of news releases, this is where you say what you do, who you do it for, and promote a low-risk way for readers to take a next step with your business. **You'd use this for guest blog posts and articles you submit to other websites.** For example: "Janet Hightower is CEO of The Amazing App Company, an award-winning mobile app design firm. To get their free special report on "The Three Worst Mobile App Design Mistakes You Can Make," go to AmazingApps.com."*

Don't forget – always, ALWAYS include an image with your post!