

Interviews with Top Bloggers: Jason Katzenback
by **Codrut Turcanu** – www.LazyBlogging.com

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1. Would you mind sharing a few things about yourself and your background for our readers?

I am married, have two beautiful children and have been fulltime online for 4 years now.

2. When did you get started blogging, and why?

My first experience with a blog was back in 2004 using the “Tag and Ping” strategy for generating traffic to my other web sites. I certainly was not a blogger back then, instead I simply used blogs as a form of promotion.

3. What's the biggest mistake you made getting started with this?

I had blinders on... since everyone was using blogs as a promotional type tool and the industry was so focused on “made for AdSense” type sites... the idea of creating unique and worthwhile content on blogs was not something I considered. There was so much focus on comment spam, pinging, trackback spam and more that I looked at a blog as nothing more than a spam tool.

4. How did you come up with the idea of running a blog?

I actually got more serious about blogging back in November of 2005 with our new free software tool OrwellPro. The interaction you could have with your potential customers was eye opening. Since then I have started to use blogs in all my non IM niches but never really got into a blog about marketing online. I was so busy with teaching my members at <http://www.PortalFeeder.com> that it really did not seem like something worth doing. I think too I was a little intimidated to start giving away free information because of upsetting my paid customers.

When we launched DealDotCom.com a year ago, I had my eyes really opened to an entire different world of blogging and this really spiked my curiosity about creating a marketing focused blog. The audience of <http://www.DealDotCom.com> seemed to be largely related to blogging because of JohnChow who blogged about us. As I started to interact with these bloggers I realized that they really looked at things different from internet marketers... and not in a bad way, just in a different way. This is also the time I was introduced to the blog

<http://www.Johncow.com> and thought that it was brilliant the way the owner tapped into the idea of being a knock off of JohnChow.

Over the next few months I was focusing on getting <http://www.TrafficKahuna.com> ready for launch and the entire time I played with the idea of starting my own blog until my business partners Jason Potash and Marc Quarles mentioned that <http://www.JohnCow.com> was for sale. We loved the "Brand" of JohnCow and thought this could be something very interesting to move forward with. So we purchased the blog in April and the rest is pretty much history ☺

5. How often do you publish and how do you get content ideas?

I try to get a new post out everyday... but it is not always possible. There are some blogs that like short posts and lots of them, which I understand the reason for but that is not my style. Once I start writing, I need to tell a lot of detail... I want people to clearly understand what I am saying and have a hard time doing that in less than 400 words.

Most of my content ideas come from what I have come to know that people are interested in from my paid services like PortalFeeder and TrafficKahuna. I also write about what I find interesting and of course I listen to the comments and emails I get from readers.

6. How do you mainly receive (or generate) traffic to your blog?

This is kind of an ironic situation right now. The majority of my traffic is repeat visitors... which is the best kind of traffic you can get, but Alexa has changed their algorithm and does not count repeat traffic at all anymore.

What's ironic about this is I have put a lot of effort into generating a lot of repeat traffic through increased subscribers and I have not put as much effort into search engine traffic. Well now if you look at Alexa, my rank dropped dramatically (I posted about this a few days ago at... <http://www.johncow.com/alexa-sucks-and-i-think-you-will-agree/>) however my Google Analytics shows I am receiving record traffic to Johncow.

Now that does not really answer your question but it relates to it because the main way I generate traffic is through encouraging my readers (through good content, contests, incentives and affiliate commissions) to spread the word about JohnCOW. I of course do a lot of link building but optimizing my content was put that on the back burner while I focused on increasing my subscribers.

7. What is your most closely-guarded secret about blogging for money?

Stop making up excuses, Stop wasting time on busy work and stand out from the crowd. There really is no secret but these are the number one reasons.

I hear all the time people complaining about how little time they have, how "if only" they had so and so... it is ridiculous. These people think that they are busier than everyone else... that there must be something special that the successful people have done. This is absolute bull!

I started my business while I was working a full time job for a large fortune 500 company, I had a young family, my wife was suffering some health issues and we were involved in our local church. We all only have 24 hours in a day and 7 days in a week and it comes down to prioritizing how you spend that time and what you focus on.

I hear people say they only have time to either write a post or promote it... not both. I think that is complete crap. Turn off the TV, put down the book, set your alarm a little earlier in the morning and get done what needs to be done.

The last part is to be different. Yes you want to model what the successful are doing but that does not mean copy. Being different is what gets you noticed and you need to find out a way to be different and then capitalize on it.

8. What differentiates your blog among all the others in your niche field?

The first is having a COW for a mascot... this helps make or blog brandable. I feel we are also one of the few that actually talk from experience... I lot of "make money" blogs are written from people trying to make money... not already making money. So we have a little

more authority on the subject. We are also incorporating JOHNCOWtv...

<http://www.johncow.com/johncowtv/>

...a new initiative that is using the power of online video to both educate and entertain. Each video will contain worthwhile advice and also something entertaining. I am excited to see how this develops.

We also have been able to use contests very successfully. I have talked with other bloggers who have tried but have not been able to make them work but we have done well with them.

9. If you had to get a boost in comments from your blog readers, how would you do it?

Post something controversial, add a poll to the post and then offer an incentive for the best comment.

10. Which are the blogs you visit frequently and why?

I don't read that many blogs in all honesty. My most frequently visited are...

- <http://www.copyblogger.com> – Excellent content on writing
- <http://probblogger.com> – the best blogging blog there is
- <http://www.mattcutts.com/blog/> - closest thing to being friends with someone in google
- <http://blog.seorevolution.com/> - best seo advice available
- <http://www.entrepreneurs-journey.com/> - Yaro is a good friend and a great blogger.
- And I used to read <http://andybeard.eu/> but he stopped posting for while. – honest and to the point.
- Last of all I have started to visit <http://imwithjoe.com/> a fair bit because his videos make me laugh and he writes some genuine content.

11. Which are your favorite bloggers and why?

I can't say I have a favorite, each of the above have their own unique flare when it comes to their blog. I loved Andy Beard's because it was very much in your face and honest but I like blogs that offer advice and get involved with their readers.

12. Which plugins you can't live without and why?

My top plugins are...

Akismet - <http://akismet.com/>

This is the best spam plugin of them all

All In One SEO - <http://semperfiwebdesign.com/>

Makes SEO optimizing your blog a breeze

Brian's Threaded Comments - <http://meidell.dk/threadedcomments/>

If you want to interact with your readers who comment then this makes it a lot easier

Comment Luv - <http://www.fiddyp.co.uk/commentluv-wordpress-plugin/>

Fantastic incentive for people to comment on your site

XML Sitemaps - <http://www.arnebrachhold.de/redirect/sitemap-home/>

Very fast and easy way to create a Google sitemap

OIO-Publisher - <http://download.oiopublisher.com/>

Best ad manager for blogs

Polls - <http://lesterchan.net/portfolio/programming/php/>

I love adding polls to posts to get my readers engaged

13. What is the most important thing you learned about blogging that you could share with your best friend?

Find out how you can stand out from the crowd and get noticed. There are thousands of options and ask yourself "would I visit my blog if someone else owned it?"

People will not subscribe and return to your blog because you have a "Subscribe to my RSS" button on your blog, they will subscribe because there was something about your blog that stuck out to them. Find your unique angle and capitalize on it!

14. What plans do you have for the future with your blog?

Johncow has lots and lots of plans, we are creating a lot of affiliate opportunities for readers to spread the word about us even more and

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get pad for it, we have started JOHNCOWtv, we are planning some great contests and lots more. <http://www.Johncow.com> will NOT be going on sale ever again... well unless someone offers me some insane amount of money ☺

We wish Jason success in the future and thank you very much for sharing your BLOGGING tips, tricks & secrets with us all! ☺

If you want to get further into blogging, check out these resources:

- **WordPress Profit Maximizer** - The BEST WordPress Plugins sent to you weekly via e-mail:

<http://www.remarkableblogging.com/rb-products/wp-profit-maximizer/>

- **Lazy Blogging dot Com** - "Here's Everything You Wanted to Know About Building a Small Blog That Rakes-In \$300, \$3,000.. and Even \$30,000 Per Month!"

<http://www.LazyBlogging.com>

Thank you,
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