



## **Blog Building Kit**

*A blog is a powerful tool that can lead to significant opportunity in your life. I created this kit to serve as a guide for you to build a blog and share your story with the world.*

*Some of the links below are affiliate links, and at no additional cost to you. I have experience with all of the companies and I offer my highest recommendation for each of them. These products (and hard work) have helped me build a powerful website that attracts thousands of monthly visitors and several email subscribers from around the world.*

## **The Essentials**

*To create a blog you need a domain name, hosting service, and publishing platform.*

[Blue Host](http://www.marginofexcellence.com) – This is where I registered my domain name ([www.marginofexcellence.com](http://www.marginofexcellence.com)) and where my site is hosted. They have extremely helpful customer service, “how-to” videos, and a forum to ask questions.

[WordPress](http://WordPress.com) – #1 blog publishing platform. Their software is free and is built by hundreds of community volunteers. There are thousands of plugins and themes available to transform your site into almost anything imaginable. Over 60 million people use WordPress.

## **Themes (Design)**

*A “theme” is a design template for your website. It’s an inexpensive way to create an attractive site without paying big bucks for a customized design.*

[Woo Themes](http://WooThemes.com) – The ultimate resource for WordPress themes. They have 100+ themes to choose from.

## **Plugins**

*A plugin works like an iPhone application. You download it to create a new feature on your website. No programming knowledge required!*

WordPress Plugin directory - <http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/>

Here are the plugins I use:

**Akismet** – Spam filter for your blog.

**All-in-one SEO Pack** – Makes your site search engine friendly.

**BackUpWordPress** – Backup program for your website.

**Clicky for WordPress** – Displays your top posts (in the sidebar) based on your Clicky stats.

**Easy Privacy Policy** – Standard privacy policy for your website.

**Fast Secure Contact Form** – Contact form for your website.

**Pretty Link** – Create customizable links.

**WP Touch** – Formats your website so it's readable on a smartphone.

## **Email Marketing Service**

*One of the most important features of a blog is the email subscription service. Email is the most effective way to stay in touch with people and is one of your most valuable assets.*

[AWeber](#) – The best email marketing service on the market and the only one I recommend.

## **Photos**

*Pictures make your blog posts visually appealing and help the reader connect to your message. The services below offer pictures you can download for your blog posts.*

[Flickr](#) – Great place for free pictures (check out the creative commons).

[iStockphoto](#) – The #1 picture resource on the internet.

## **Web Analytics**

*There are various services available to track your website statistics. It's important to know what actions your visitors take when they visit your website.*

[Google Analytics](#) – One of the best analytical services available.

[Clicky](#) – They offer statistics in real time. Also, their platform is extremely user friendly.

## **Traffic/Keyword Research**

*The ultimate success of your blog depends on the amount and quality of traffic you get on your website. There are many ways to get traffic. The resources below will help you get traffic from search engines.*

[Google Keyword Tool](#) – A free tool that allows you to find out how many people search for a particular keyword.

[Market Samurai](#) – The #1 keyword research tool available.

[40 Day Challenge](#) – A unique book that shows you how to rank your website in the top-5 in Google for a competitive keyword in 40 days.

## **Outsourcing**

*You can't do everything by yourself!*

[Elance](#) - #1 resource for finding quality outsourcing help.

## **Other Resources**

[Blogger Guides](#) – Extremely helpful resources for aspiring writers and bloggers. The guides include: The Bloggers Guide to Freelancing, Effective Writing, and Irresistible eBooks.

[Empire Building Kit](#) – My favorite business resource EVER. A 365-day email series that shows you how to create a profitable business (empire) around your passion.