

**HOW TO START
A BLOG THAT
WILL MAKE YOU
MONEY**

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Chapter 1: How to Start a Free Blog That Will Make You Money

"Why a free blog?" You may ask. This is because I have personally made some money from a free blog and I believe we cannot talk about blogging without mentioning how blogging for free works. However, note that free blogs tend to be rigid, so you can only make limited changes.

Below are the steps to creating a free blog and how you can profit from it.

Choose a Blogging Platform

There are two main free blogging platforms: WordPress.com and Blogger.com.

WordPress is great in terms of design while the strength of Blogger lies in the fact that it can be used for advertising and affiliate marketing.

WordPress is very restrictive in terms of how much they'll allow you to advertise. To understand more about advertising on WordPress.com, check out their [advertising policy](#).

Despite the advertising limitations, most people still prefer to use WordPress due to its ease of use and the fact that most paid blogs still use the WordPress software that is available on WordPress.org. FreelancerKenya actually started as a free WordPress.com blog and later I moved to WordPress.org and got my own hosting.

Choose a Domain Name

The domain name is basically the name of your blog. This is the name that will show up before the ".wordpress.com" such as "example.wordpress.com". It is therefore important to be careful about the name you choose since it is one of the first impressions that will meet your readers.

Your domain name should be:

1. **Easy to Remember:** People should be able to easily remember the name of your blog. This way, it will be easy for them to come back to refer to something or just check on your latest post.
2. **Not too long:** A short domain name is welcome but it is never advisable to have a very long domain.
3. **Interesting:** Everyone loves nice things. Therefore, it is advisable to get a name that sounds great to the readers.

If you are not interested in your blog being called example.wordpress.com or example.blogspot.com, you can buy a domain upgrade in either of the platforms. Therefore, you'll have example.com but the domain will still be hosted on WordPress or blogger. Note that with WordPress, a custom domain does not get exclude you from their restrictions and advertising policy.

For a long time, the most preferred method of choosing domain names was using exact match domains (EMDs). For example, if you wanted to create a blog about weight loss, you would name it weightloss.com. You need to be very careful about this since in late 2012, Google pushed an update that works against EMDs. [Click here to read more about it.](#)

This update started taking effect from around 28th Sep, 2012. Google traffic is very important when it comes to bringing visitors to your blog; therefore this update cannot be ignored. You don't have to focus on exact matches, you can just do a nairobi.com or petersfitness.com or something like that. In case you still choose to use an exact match, note that the above update may knock you off the first page of Google's search results..

Start the Blog

Below are the links to where you can start a blog using the platforms above.

[Click here to start a WordPress blog](#)

[Click here to start a Blogger blog](#)

In WordPress, enter the domain name you've created on the Blog Address field, enter the other details and select "Create Blog".

In Blogger, you will need to first create a Gmail account if you do not have one. Once you have signed up with Gmail, click again on the link above. You can choose to create a Google+ profile or a limited Blogger Profile. Once you do this, you will be taken to a page where you can create a new blog. Here, click on "New Blog" and enter your details and click on "Create Blog".

[Click here](#) to see how you can add Google AdSense and start advertising with Blogger.

Choose Your Theme and Start Posting

Feel free to change the appearance of the blog to what you find best. Personally, I used "The Beach" and later "Mystique" WordPress.com themes.

A good appearance will give a great first impression to your blog's visitors. Start writing as many posts as possible. A good frequency to start with is at least once a week.

Make sure you make your blog posts friendly, easy to share and optimized for search engines. Also encourage people to comment.

Final Note

The processes above will help you to start a free blog. Note that you may not make as much money from free blog since there are limited changes that you can make there. [Click here](#) for more from my blog about making money from your free blog.

Here is Your Homework

Decide on a platform, choose a domain name and create a free blog. If you are not interested in a free blog, check out the next chapter where I will teach you how to create a self-hosted blog.

Chapter 2: How to Create a Self-Hosted Blog

Now, one of the best decisions I have ever made was to move from a free blog to a self-hosted blog. As I stated in the previous email, you do not necessarily have to move. There are a few free blogs which are making reasonable cash. From my experience, self-hosted blogs tend to make more money than free blogs, especially due to the fact that there is no limitation to the things you can do.

Below are the steps to creating a self-hosted blog:

1. Register a Domain

In the previous chapter, I taught you how you can choose a domain name for your blog. With a self-hosted blog, you will have to buy and register your domain name. The most popular domain name registrar is Namecheap . In case the domain name you want is not available, feel free to use the Namecheap suggestions or create another domain name.

In Namecheap, a domain name will cost you approximately \$10.

[Click here to register your domain with Namecheap](#)

Alternatively, you can try out [GoDaddy](#) or [Affilorama Domains](#).

2. Hosting

Once your domain name is set up, you will need to host it somewhere.

I personally host most of my websites with Hostgator. If you would also prefer to host through Hostgator, use the coupon code `freelancerkenya` and you will get a \$9.95 discount. Follow the steps below to visit Hostgator and set up your hosting with the above discount:

- [Click here](#) to go to Hostgator
- Click on "View web hosting plans"
- In case you want to only host one domain, you can choose the Hatchling Plan. If you feel like you would want to add more domains to your hosting later, choose the Baby Plan. I don't think at this level anyone needs to set up anything higher than the Baby Plan since it allows you to host unlimited domains. This is the plan I personally use and you'll get the first month at \$0.01 if you use my coupon code.
- Click on "Order Now"
- On the box that says "I Currently Have a Domain Name", enter the domain name you bought and registered with Namecheap or your preferred registrar.

- The coupon code SPRING is automatically entered, allowing you to get 20% off in your first month. To get \$9.94 off (which is 99.9% off in first month), delete that and write **freelancerkenya**. Refer to the image below:

HostGator
we eat up the competition

Toll Free: **1.866.96.GATOR**
Local: **1.713.574.5287**
Now hosting over 5,000,000 domains!

LIVE CHAT

Step 1: Choose a Domain

Step 1 » Step 2

Register a New Domain

Help me **register** a new domain name.

Enter Domain Name:

createawebsite com

CONTINUE TO STEP 2

or

I Currently Have a Domain Name

Use an existing domain name.

Enter Domain Name:

CONTINUE TO STEP 2

Enter a Coupon Code

Coupon Code: freelancerkenya You have chosen our most valuable coupon!

- Since you already had your domain name set up, you will put it in the second box above, and then enter the coupon code **freelancerkenya** circled in red.
- Click on "Continue to Step 2"
- Enter your billing details. In case you enter your debit card number and it is rejected, call the number on the card and ask your bank if your card is enabled to do online transactions. If it isn't, ask them to enable it then try again. You can also opt to pay via PayPal if you have a PayPal account. Click here to read my article on how to "deposit" to PayPal. If you have a close access to DTB, you can buy and use the NationHela card which comes ready for online transactions.
- After you finish the payments, Hostgator will send you a confirmation email together with your Hosting details. Keep that email well as you'll need those details later. Hostgator may ask you to call to verify your account. Feel free to do this at Sh. 3 per minute from your Safaricom or Airtel line.
- Log back in to your domain registrar for the DNS settings below.

3. DNS Settings

Once you have purchased your hosting, you will need to change the DNS settings of your domain name to point to Hostgator or your preferred hosting service. To do this, follow the steps below:

- Log-in to your domain registrar e.g. Namecheap
- Click on your domain name
- Click on "Domain Name Server Setup"
- Enter the nameserver details you received on mail. These should go to the first and second field.

In a few hours, your domain name will be linked to your hosting account and you will be geared up to start your blog or website.

Chapter 3: Installing WordPress

What is WordPress

WordPress is the most used content management system in the world.

The reason for this is the fact that it is easy to optimize it for search engines and very easy to use. With WordPress, you can add your website's pages, posts, photos and any other content without doing any coding whatsoever.

The WordPress CMS (content management system) is developed by **WordPress.org** and not the free blogging platform **WordPress.com**.

Its features are similar to WordPress.com but you can add a lot of customizations to it as opposed to WordPress.com's where you can do very little.

How to Install WordPress with Fantastico

The following steps will work with Hostgator. In case you are using a different hosting provider, the steps should be similar with minor adjustments. If you cannot find something similar in your web host, contact their support team and they'll be happy to help.

Ok, here we go with installing WordPress with Fantastico in Hostgator:

- Log in to your Hostgator cPanel. The link to your cPanel should be in your Hostgator welcome message.
- Go to the Control Panel and then scroll down to the Software and Services section, click on Fantastico De Luxe
- On the left, select WordPress and then choose New Installation
- Fill in the form and click "Install WordPress". Once you are done, click on "Finish Installation"
- Go back to your cPanel home and then to the File Manager
- Scroll down to the public_html folder and double click on it. Delete the folder called "default.html". Once this is done, you can type your domain name on your favorite browser and you'll be able to see your WordPress site online
- To access your WordPress administration section, type `example.com/wp_admin` (replace example with your domain name).

Once you install WordPress, you can feel free to customize it the way you want. Try out different themes and choose the best one for you. Make sure you do a little SEO research so that you can still manage to drive visitors to your site through search traffic. Nearly

75% of the people who visit FreelancerKenya every day come through Google. This means I get 100-200 daily visitors purely due to my SEO efforts.

In case you can afford to, hire someone to do search engine optimization for you later.

Post regularly

Make sure you post regularly so that you can get a steady following and get better rankings in the search engines. Make sure your posts are over 500 words. It has been discovered that anything below this may be ranked poorly by Google and appear in the lower pages of Google where no one bothers to check.

When starting out, don't churn out numerous posts e.g. a post per day; even 3 per month is fine. Spend most of your time marketing your blog so that you can get readers to the posts you make.

Adding Plugins

Plugins are little pieces of code or software that add functionality to your blog. There are unlimited plugins that you can add to your blog and there is a lot of information out there about plugins. For example, if you want social buttons, just Google "social buttons plugin" and you'll be spoilt for choice.

To add a plugin, all you need to do is to log in to your WordPress dashboard (which is what you'll be using to add all your content) through yourwebsite.com/wp-admin. Use the username password you created in Fantastico. Scroll down to "Plugins" and then click "Add New". Here you can either search for a plugin or upload one from your computer.

Personally, I recommend the plugins below:

- Google Analytics for WordPress by Joost de Valk - For Adding Google Analytics to your blog
- WordPress SEO by Joost de Valk - To make sure your blog is visible to search engines
- GetSocial - Social networking buttons
- WP MashSocial Widget - For adding a Mashable style widget on your sidebar where people can like your Facebook Page, recommend on Google+, follow you on Twitter etc.

The trick I use is to check out a WordPress blog that I like and borrow plugin ideas from them. Most blog owners will share freely if you ask them about how they got a specific

functionality. For example, you can simply ask me on walter@freelancerkenya.com how I got a certain feature on FreelancerKenya, I'll then quickly respond and tell you which plugin I used.

Chapter 4: Driving Traffic

We can never talk enough about traffic. There are tons of things that you can do to drive traffic to your site.

Here, I will mention some that I use and you can feel free to do your own research for more.

Here is the list of what to do to drive traffic to your site:

- Post quality content
- Share your posts on social media; especially Facebook, Twitter, Google+
- Add links to social bookmarking sites such as Delicious and Digg among others.
- Make sure your posts are search engine optimized and can be found on the first page of search engines. Not all will be able to do this at first but strive for as many as possible. You will have to do some research on current SEO methods. I will keep updating that on my mails too. Meanwhile, use the "WordPress SEO" plugin to make sure each of your posts are optimized for search engines.
- Submit articles to article directories such as EzineArticles and ArticlesBase. Make sure they include a link back to your site.
- Join Web 2.0 sites like Squidoo and HubPages. Write articles (or hire writers to write for you) there. Remember to include your link. Don't put your link on text such as "Click here" try as much as possible to put them on something relevant such as "click here for weight loss articles".
- PPC (Pay Per Click) advertising - Advertise on Google AdWords, Facebook and Yahoo.
- Join different Forums on your niche and include your links on some of your content and signature.
- Email marketing - Create a product or a series of training emails and give it off for free using AWeber

To keep people on your site, make sure you always post quality content. Everything else is secondary to this.

Chapter 5: Monetizing Your Blog

Below is how you can monetize your blog, whether free or paid. Note that you can also find these two chapters on my blog.

How to Make Money with a Free Blog

There are different methods which you can use to make money with a free blog. These include:

1. Using Google AdSense and Other Advertising Networks

In Blogger, you can set up a [Google AdSense](#) account and start making money with your blog. You can also search for other advertising networks that work with Blogger. Generally, AdSense is considered the best.

2. Advertising Your Product or Service

You can start a free blog that focuses on your business or service. We can look at the example of a restaurant owner's blog. The owner can set up a free WordPress blog, give it a great theme and be posting updates about his own restaurant. Therefore, you can create a product, such as an eBook and market it in your own free blog.

3. Affiliate Marketing

This is not allowed in WordPress.com sites and may lead to suspension of your account. In WordPress, you may be excused if you have a few occasional affiliate links but as you increase them, you risk being suspended by the WordPress staff. Check out the WordPress [advertising policy](#), you will not that some certain affiliate networks are strictly prohibited. In Blogger, you can use affiliate links and banners to make money online.

4. Mentions

Once you have a popular blog, you will get people who will pay you to just mention them in your site. I therefore recommend that you always include your email address in your blog so that people can contact you for all sorts of stuff. Be very careful about mentions. I personally would not mention a poor product or a product I have no information about; no matter how much money I am being paid.

How to Make Money Blogging in Kenya with a Self-Hosted Blog

The methods are actually endless. Below I have highlighted some of the must-have options.

1. Advertising Networks

There are different advertising networks you can use. The main one is [Google AdSense](#). Almost 90% of bloggers are signed up with AdSense. Truth be told, unless you get droves of traffic on your site, you may not earn as much from this method. The good thing about it is that it is passive and no one would mind a surprise \$100 from Google on a rainy day, even if it has taken you months to get it.

2. Affiliate Marketing

Affiliate marketing is where you put special links or banners in your website that refer visitors to merchant sites. If a web visitor buys a product from the merchant, you earn a commission. You can make a lot of money online as an affiliate. An advertising network may pay you 0.1 per click whereas a merchant site which you are affiliated to can pay you \$10-50 when someone makes a purchase or spends a certain amount on their products.

Affiliate marketing is a super and highly recommended method for all who want to make money blogging. In fact, most people earning 6 figure incomes are affiliate marketers.

3. Selling Your Own Offline Product

You can create and sell your own products. You can even create a website that solely revolves around your product. Whether you are a musician, a writer or a restaurant owner, you can get a lot of business through your blog. In Kenya, you can use services such as PayPal or the local PesaPal to collect payments from your web visitors.

4. Selling Digital Products

There is nothing as sweet and rewarding online as selling your own digital product. The good thing with digital products is the fact you will use minimal capital. The easiest digital product to start with is an eBook. For example, I have sold a lot of copies of my eBook, How to Make REAL Money Online in Kenya. Even if someone would want to order that book in 2013, I will not have to publish more copies of the book. They will just order it and I will be able to earn from it. Therefore, you can write an eBook about anything you are good at, whether you have devised your own weight-loss or money making method. Make sure the digital product you create is relevant to your website and is of the highest quality.

5. Mentions and Marketing Opportunities

An authority blog will attract authority requests for mentions. I have gotten huge deals out of this blog. A mention could be something as simple as just putting a link to another website in one of your top posts. I know a famous Kenyan blogger who once got \$300 to just mention a certain site in his blog. As stated before, never mention poor products or put poor, spammy links in your content as it will poorly affect the ranking of your blog.

On the marketing opportunities side, you will get lots of opportunities in your inbox. Someone may want to create a website just like yours, place a banner on your blog or give you opportunities to consult. You can provide all these services for a fee. The income you get from these cannot be quantified as you can get requests to do all sorts of stuff.

6. Be a Consultant

If your blog has had incredible following for a long-time, you can become a consultant in your field. One famous, profit-making blogging niche is the weight-loss niche. If you have personally lost a lot of weight and have detailed a lot of exclusive stuff in your website on how other people can also lose weight, you can easily become a weight loss consultant. The more authoritative your website is, the more you can charge.

7. Having a Services or Hire Me Page

Most people start a website for this very reason. Outline all the services that you can offer that are related to your website. You can check out my [hire me](#) page to see how I have done it.

8. Email Marketing

This is one of the most powerful ways to generate income from your site. You will start by creating a list using different list building providers. I personally use [AWeber](#). Building a list is one of the best ways of getting targeted traffic. Whenever you launch your product, there are high chances that 80% of your buyers will be people from your list. You can sign up for AWeber using my affiliate link below. You'll only be charged \$1 for one month free trial. Afterwards you'll be charged \$19 per month for up to 500 subscribers.

<http://freelancerkenya.com/go/aweber>

9. Job Boards

Jobs are hot topics worldwide. A great Kenyan site that has a lot of listings and traffic is [Kenyan Jobs](http://kenyanjobs.blogspot.com/) [http://kenyanjobs.blogspot.com/]If you would like to use job boards, you can charge advertisers to place their listings on your site.

10. Donations

You can include a PayPal donate button in your website. People who would want to just donate an amount to you can then send you cash using this button.

Conclusion

Remember to take action with whatever you learn here to be able to succeed.
Meanwhile, stay tuned to my blog FreelancerKenya.com for more great stuff coming up.

See you on the other side,
Walter