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50 Shades of Yay!

50 things you could do today to
promote your website

by

Nikki Pilkington

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Intro

If you can manage to put down Mr Grey, and drag your mind back to your business ;) let's take control of your website.

As a small business owner it's easy to feel shackled to your website, chained to Google, and to tie yourself in knots worrying about how to bring in the traffic.

My 50 Shades of Yay! will give you release from all of that frustration, allowing you to fulfil your potential and giving life to your website.

50 Shades of Yay!

Here are 50 things you can do to promote your website today - you can pick one from each section, choose more than one if you like from one section, or, if you're feeling naughty, do the whole damn lot at once ;)

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Yay! 1 –SEO

Find out more about SEO by reading the [30 Day SEO Challenge](#) by Nikki Pilkington

1: Check your page titles

Your page titles are the words that appear at the top of the browser window. For example on the front page of [my website](#), mine says 'Social Media Marketing Support - NikkiPilkington.com - Internet Marketing Expert UK'. Titles are one of the most important aspects of SEO, as they tell Google where to put you. Change yours to describe what you do, not just to say 'MyCompany.com'. Make each page's title different. You should be able to do this in your Content Management System.

2: Work on your META descriptions

Although general theory says that the description tag isn't used in determining where a website is placed in a search engine, it is still an important part of SEO. Your description is the thing that will make people click through to your site - if it's dull, people won't click. Again, every page should have a different description tag, and you should be able to do this through your CMS.

3: Add in some internal links

Have a look through the pages on your website and see where you can then link to OTHER pages on your website (Google loves internal links). For example, if I were talking to you about how to title your blog posts, I might link to this blog that I wrote about [titling blog posts](#). That's a link to another page on this site - so it's an internal link. The link to my website in point one above is an external link. Go through your pages and see where you can add internal links.

4: Look at your page names

The name (address) of the original blog post promoting this ebook is <http://www.birdsontheblog/50-shades-of-yay-50-things-you-could-do-today-to-promote-your-website>. Now look at your website page names - do they accurately describe what is on your page? Page names such as /about, /contact, /services aren't helping your SEO at all. Change them to more descriptive names: /about-your-company-name, /contact-for-xxx-service, /xxx-services-in-place for example.

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5: Sort out your image alt tags

If you have images on your pages, take the time to use the alt tag to describe them. This not only helps with SEO, but helps with accessibility for certain types of website readers (for the blind for example). You should be able to do this in your CMS. Don't keyword stuff them, but do describe them accurately. For example: 'the xxx company logo', 'picture representing xxx service'.

6: Check your Webmaster Tools account

If you don't have one, [sign up for one now](#). Once your site is verified your WMT account is a veritable mine of information. It can tell you where you're listed, who's linking to you, any errors on your site etc. It's also invaluable if you run a Wordpress setup and get hacked at any time, as you'll need to resubmit your site to Google through a Webmaster Tools account

7: Vary your incoming link anchor text

There was a time when SEO companies recommended that you used a single phrase as anchor text for your incoming links. ([What's anchor text?](#)) However, with the recent Penguin update this has changed. It's now recommended that you vary the text on your incoming links to get the best effect.

8: Change your content

Once the main pages of your website are there, it's tempting to just leave them - after all you may have spent a long time or a lot of money putting them together, right? However, for SEO purposes it's good to change things around a little occasionally - not whole swathes of text but maybe the odd paragraph here and there to show that the page is being updated semi regularly.

9: Add in H1 headlines

If at all possible, use your main keyphrase for each page as a H1 heading. (A different keyphrase for each page, remember?) Only use one per page though – any more could be seen as spam. H1 has the double advantage of letting the search engines know that that phrase is important, and drawing your visitor's attention to the headline, reinforcing their belief that they are in the right place

A H1 heading appears between two H1 tags, which look like <H1> and </H1>

10: Review your results

There's no point doing lots of SEO work if you don't track your results. How many visitors are you getting? Are they coming in for the phrases you're optimising for? Are any of your



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phrases not working? Use something such as Google Analytics on your site (I use [Clicky](#)) and check it regularly. You've done the work - review and measure the results. You'd be surprised how many people don't, and only care about their positions in Google.

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Yay! 2 - Blogging

Find out more about blogging by reading the [30 Day Blogging Challenge](#) by Nikki Pilkington

1: Write a new blog post

I know, you have better things to do, can't think of anything to write about, don't see the point, etc etc etc. Just do it :) See [this blog post](#) for how to find ideas on what to write.

2: Brush up on your blogging SEO

It's amazing how many people spend an age on the SEO for the main part of their website but ignore their blog posts. If you're using Wordpress, use an [SEO plugin](#) to make it easy. Use the thoughts in the first Yay section and SEO your blog posts too.

3: Sort out your tags and categories

Tags are like keywords for your blog – you should add 4 or 5 to each blog post. Let's say you wrote a blog post about children needing sunblock in the summer – your tags could be: children, kids, summer, sun care, skincare.

Categories are there to help you and your readers, so use them. They're different to tags in that they can be more generic, and relate to areas of interest, topics, rather than specific posts. So, a telemarketing blog may use categories such as these: telemarketing, telesales, appointment setting, business development, lead generation. All related to telemarketing, but in different areas.

Tags and categories help search engines and readers - use them!

4: Remember your old posts

How many of us write a blog post, promote it like mad, then forget about it because we're on to the next one? (I've done it, I'll put my hand up.) Your old blog posts can be a great source of traffic months, even years after they've been written.

Promote your old blog posts alongside your new, tweaking them if they're a little out of date. Tweet them, Facebook them, remind people of them. If you use Wordpress you can use the [Tweet Old Post plugin](#) that does this automatically for you.

5: Add in your author bio

Your author bio shows at the end of every post and allows you to tell the reader a little more about you, as well as giving you the chance to promote anything you want. [Fancier Author Bio](#) is a great Wordpress plugin that allows you to let the bio box look a little nicer.

6: Ask for a guest blog post

Stuck for a post? Ask someone to guest post on your blog; you and they get new readers, you get content, they'll promote your blog and you'll promote their guest post - win win all round.

7: Update your plugins

As plugin developers advance their products, they release updates - but many many people don't ever bother updating their plugins, or even know how. If you go to the plugins part of your dashboard on your Wordpress blog and it says some need updating - update them! Otherwise they're a security risk, as well as there being a risk they will stop working or start interfering with other plugins. Update one at a time and check everything is still working OK before moving on to the next one.

8: Add some new plugins

I'm a bit of a plugin addict, as is our lovely Sarah, so we're always playing with new ones. You may not be the same, but it's always worth looking at what's out there and can enhance your blog. Browse through articles about [must have Wordpress plugins](#), try out plugins you see on other people's sites, maybe install the ones I've spoken about in this blog post.

9: Write an editorial calendar

If you're rubbish at blogging, the best thing you can do is put together an editorial calendar. This is a document that plans your blog posts for the next month, 3 months, however long you want. It not only makes you think about what you're going to write, it gives you a sense of responsibility to then write it :) Wordpress has a great plugin called [Editorial Calendar](#) that allows you to look at each month at a glance and enter topic ideas for the future. Or just make your own in Word and stick it above your desk!

10: Write a guest post

For all the same reasons that receiving a guest post is great for your blog, submitting one elsewhere is fab. You get a whole load of new readers, the receiving site owner will promote your post, and you get to have links into your own site or blog. Just remember, you'll be expected to promote it to your audience too. Why not [submit one to Birds on the Blog?](#)

Yay! 3 - Twitter

Find out more about Twitter by reading the [30 Day Twitter Challenge](#) by Nikki Pilkington

1: Update your profile

The chances are, you set up your Twitter profile, thought hard about your short bio, and then left it – I know I did for a long time! However, your bio is one of the things that decide which searches you show up in, and how Twitter recommends you to other Twitter users, so it's worth experimenting. Think about the kind of thing you would use when you sorted out the SEO on your site – the keyphrases you would use. It's all nice and quirky to have some obscure film quote, or to tell people you're a dad of 3 and like gardening, but if those things are nothing to do with your business then you're not helping yourself!

2: Set up some searches

Most of you will be using either Hootsuite, Tweetdeck, the main Twitter.com website, or some other management tool. All of these options give you the chance to set up searches. In Tweetdeck and Hootsuite you can add columns with specific searches, on Twitter.com you can use the 'saved searches' option – it's all pretty straightforward. So, set up some search columns to find people who are looking for what you offer. As an example, 3 of the 15 search columns I have are for searches such as 'Twitter help', 'seo help', 'blogging help'. Any time someone mentions these phrases in their Tweet, they appear in my columns – even if I'm not following them. This allows me to find people looking for what I offer, and to point them in the right direction. (That doesn't mean spam them :))

3: Follow 10 new people

Sometimes we're so hooked on GETTING followers that we forget to actually go out and follow people ourselves! Find 10 new people to follow - maybe someone who has retweeted you, or messaged you. Maybe someone from the searches you set up before. Maybe use the search facility to find people in your area. Build your contact list on Twitter and your followers will grow too.

4: Speak to 3 people...

... you don't really know. I see little 'cliques' forming all over the place on Twitter - people that only speak to each other and everyone else is ignored, yet they're the first to moan when no-one answers their questions or clicks on their links. So spend some time having conversations with 3 people you don't usually speak to. It doesn't have to take long, you could reply to a question they've asked, ask them a question, respond to a link they've

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sent - anything, just spark up a conversation. Some of my best Twitter friends (and clients!) have come from a randomly started conversation.

5: Recommend a Tweeter

Have a look through the people you follow – who are you finding yourself making a point of reading, reTweeting or replying to? Those are the people engaging you, so tell everyone else about them (yes, even if they're competitors!) TELL people why they should follow the person you're recommending – one Tweet per recommendation, not just a list of useless names. Try it – you'll be surprised how many people reciprocate and how this can help to grow your followers.

6: Schedule some Tweets

If you're short on time, it's worth spending a few minutes every morning to schedule some promotional Tweets throughout the day. Jump on when you can and have conversations too, but scheduling can really help you keep control of your account. [Read more about scheduling here.](#)

7: Retweet a competitor :)

Yeah, I know, it sounds crazy, right? Why on earth would I be recommending that you promote people you're supposed to be in competition with? Well, to my mind, reTweeting (or promoting on Facebook, your blog, etc.) something that your competitors have written that may be good for your potential clients makes good business sense. You're showing potential clients that you're secure in your own business and that you want to help them, and the competitor is more likely to promote you too.

8: Ask for the business

We're so bombarded with people telling us that we shouldn't use Twitter to sell, and social media is about being social, that we're scared to put a foot wrong. I'm not saying those statements are wrong – anyone who has known me for any length of time knows I'm a great believer in the 'Social' in social media. However, most of us are there to build our businesses – we're not just in it for a laugh. So I'll be interested to see how many of you take up my next challenge – which is to ask for the business. Not from your followers, but from people they know. In the true spirit of networking, ask your followers if there's anyone they could refer you to:

- Who do you know who needs xxxx, I'd love an introduction
- If anyone says they're struggling with xxxx pass them my way, I may be able to help
- Do you know someone looking for xxxx, please introduce me to them

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No hard sell, no desperate please, just straightforward networking. If you see others posting this kind of thing, think about whom you've seen or know who has been saying they have that particular problem recently, and introduce them. I get a lot of my suppliers from Twitter, but I also post Tweets looking for suppliers that get no response – one of those could be one that could have brought you business. So go on, ask for the business – I dare you ;)

9: Set up some lists

The Twitter list facility is pretty impressive, allowing you to categorise people into specific lists. My current lists are:

- New – people I am following who are new and I haven't decided about them yet
- Listen – people I regularly listen to and don't want to miss their content
- Clients – self explanatory
- Suppliers – self explanatory
- PR Companies
- Marketing
- Kids' Stuff
- Celebrities :)

I have each of these lists in different columns on Tweetdeck so I can scan down them when I want and don't miss anything in the main stream. Set up some lists to help make sure you don't miss out on anything.

A couple of great articles on using lists:

- <http://www.jonworth.eu/why-you-should-use-Twitter-lists/>
- <http://mashable.com/2009/11/02/Twitter-lists-guide/>

10: Track your results

As in anything, it's nice to see how well you're doing on Twitter. There are many tools out there to measure Twitter impact, both free and paid. **Twittercounter** – www.Twittercounter.com will track the amount of followers you have, predict how many you'll have in X days and allow you to see how many Tweets you're sending a day. **Tweetstats** – www.Tweetstats.com – this is an amazing free application that will graph your Tweet stats for you. **Tweetreach** – www.Tweetreach.com – will tell you how many



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people your Tweets reached, counting reTweets – well worth playing with. **SocialMention** – www.socialmention.com – allows you to track mentions of your name in various social media and is very addictive! There are many paid Social Media tracking systems out there – of these, in my opinion, **Sprout Social** is the best – www.sproutsocial.com. Pricing starts at \$39 per month.

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Yay 4! - Facebook

Find out more about Facebook by reading the [30 Day Facebook Challenge by Nikki Pilkington](#)

1: Update your description

I see many Facebook Business Pages not using their description effectively. The 'about' description is the text that will appear when someone shares your page on their profile - use it to fully describe your page so people will know what it's about. Change it regularly and track what works best.

2: Get (or change) your vanity URL

A vanity URL is the difference between a long, drawn out URL for your Facebook page, and a short, easy to remember one (such as www.facebook.com/internetmarketingbynikki ;))

If you haven't set yours yet, [then do](#). If you did set it but would like to change it, [you can now do that](#).

3: Change your profile or cover picture

You're probably happy with your business profile picture and cover picture. But did you know that if you change it, then this fact will appear in the news stream of people following you? I wouldn't advise doing it all the time, but it's worth doing occasionally to draw a little extra attention to yourself ;)

4: Highlight a post

Once you have written a post on your Facebook page, if you hover next to your name and click the star, this 'highlights' the post. What this means is that the post is made double width and thus gets more attention from visitors to your page. I've used this to good effect to promote my 30 Day Challenge books, so it's well worth doing for important posts.

5: Make an offer

At the time of writing you can post highlighted offers on Facebook at no cost. You simply nominate a URL for the offer, write a short description, upload a thumbnail picture and set the timescale. These appear with dotted lines around them in timelines. When an offer is taken up, it then appears in the buyers timeline too. The more people that buy, the more people that will see it. Bigger companies are using this to great effect, but I've seen some

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smaller companies using it too, and they seem to be selling (it states how many people have bought the offer).

6: Post a picture

It's easy to get into the habit of just posting comments or links, telling people what you're doing, linking to your blog posts. But it's a bit dull and doesn't encourage interaction. Studies have shown that posting a photograph or picture along with a comment increases the amount of likes or comments. So post a picture - it could be a quotation, a picture of a product you sell, a picture of you! Make a habit of doing it regularly and see how it works for you.

7: Ask a question

Similarly, asking questions occasionally will increase interaction, likes and comments. You could ask general questions (How is everyone today, What are you all doing today) or questions related to your business (I ask What are you doing to promote your website today? quite regularly and it gets a great response.)

8: Share your page

It's worth sharing your Business page on your own profile or any other Business pages you have every couple of weeks, especially if you add new contacts to your personal profile quite regularly. Remember when you post something to your personal timeline, not everyone following you will see it, so posting regularly increases the chances of people seeing it and then liking your Business page. Give it a go by clicking on the cog icon top right, then choosing 'share'.

9: Welcome new 'likers'

Admins of Business pages can now see at a glance who has recently liked their page. Try welcoming your new 'likers' by name, tagging them in the post - ask them something about themselves to encourage them to interact, encourage them to post details of their own business page so you can check it out too. You're developing a relationship with them and they're more likely to see and respond to your posts in the future.

10: Track your results

Make a point of looking at your Insights - they give you a whole load of information. You can see the reach of your page, where your likers are from, how many people actually saw each post (useful for finding out the best times to post on your page), the virality (shares) and more. Check this weekly - play around with the things I've talked about above,

Yay 5 - Extras

Find more challenges at the [30 Day Challenges website](#) by Nikki Pilkington & others

1: LinkedIn - update your profile

I have to be honest here and say I'm the worst for not updating my LinkedIn profile. But do as I say, not as I do ;) Every time you update your profile, it appears in the news stream, and you also have the opportunity to email your network and let them know. You can add skills, websites, update your photo, add your employment history - all of these updates will make you more visible, so spread them out :)

2: LinkedIn - join some groups

It's well worth checking out the groups at LinkedIn - there are groups for all sorts of interests, professions, areas and more. Join a group local to you and network as if you would offline, online. Join a group linked to your profession and share news views and advice. Answer questions, help people, show your expertise - there's a lot of business to be had on LinkedIn if you do it right. Nigel Morgan has written a brilliant [30 Day LinkedIn Challenge](#) that it's well worth checking out.

3: Pinterest - rename your boards

When you first start with Pinterest, it's tempting to give your boards funky and funny names - but that's going to do you no good in search. Look at your boards and give them names that mean something and are likely to show up in a search. As an example, my board called So True is never going to turn up in a search (which doesn't matter because it's only quotations and funnies) but my board named Business Blogging Beginner To Pro, and the one called Facebook for Business, does show up. Don't just give your boards generic names such as 'blogging' and 'telemarketing' - think this through as an SEO exercise and use your keyphrases where you can.

4: Pinterest - follow some people you don't know

Pinterest will recommend people for you to follow, but this is based upon people they think you may know. I'd recommend using the search function to search for people in your industry, area, people you share interests with who you don't already know on every other network. Follow a few a day. Don't worry if they don't follow you back; once you start repinning, liking and commenting on their pins, they will :)

5: Forums - change your signature

Often when you sign up to a forum such as [UK Business Labs](#), you're entitled to use a signature file with links. You set it up, include a bit of HTML to create a signature, and Bob's yer uncle, your signature is set in stone, to be appended to any post you make. If

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you're like most people your signature will stay as it is for months, maybe even years, with no change. But if you regularly change your forum signature you not only create interest within the forum itself, you'll be developing varied links into your site (which Google loves).

6: Forums - give some help

Pop along to a forum and read a few threads. Is there someone there asking for help that could benefit from your expertise? Give them some help. Some see this as giving information away for free - it's not; it's proving credibility, helping to develop loyalty, and if you're any sort of 'normal' person, it'll make you feel good too ;) Oh, plus you get that extra link to your site through your signature.

7: StumbleUpon - recommend a post

Found a blog post you like? Either pop along to StumbleUpon, log in (or register) and submit a review, or use the StumbleUpon icon on the post (if there is one) to give it the thumbs up. For every 'non-you' 5 posts you recommend, recommend one of your own. Don't spam!

8: Amazon - write a review

Read a book from Amazon lately? Whether a physical book or a Kindle electronic book, go along and give a review on Amazon. This not only helps the author, but you can include links to your own site (where appropriate - don't spam) within the review. If it's a business book, it's perfectly acceptable to say something along the lines of 'This book has helped me massively with my [blogging business](#) and I wish I had read it 10 years earlier'

9: You - ask for reviews / testimonials

Too few people ask for testimonials yet they are one of the best forms of marketing around. Ask 3 people who have worked with you recently to summarise their experience, and give you permission to use this on your website. You will, of course, link to their website. If you're feeling particularly brave, ask them if they'd be willing to let you use the testimonial in a blog post, or even blog it themselves.

If you have a book on Amazon, and people tell you they have bought it, ASK them to review it. If they need a little persuasion, tell them about point 8 above :)

10: This ebook- share it on your networks ;)

Yes, that benefits me, of course. However it also benefits you. Why? Well, for one, your networks will appreciate the share and probably remember you for it, making them more likely to recommend your content in future. Secondly, if you tell me that you've shared it, *I'M* more likely to promote your content and share your tweets etc in future.



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So, go ahead, Tweet, Facebook, LinkedIn, Stumble, Digg, Pin, Blog and more - and if you'd like to offer this ebook as a free download on your own website please drop me a line on nikki@nikkipilkington.com

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About the author

Nikki Pilkington has been promoting websites for almost 19 years, since way before the days of Google.

Offering higher search engine listings and internet marketing initially, her services expanded to include social media marketing, blogging and more.

She now offers a [Social Media & Internet Marketing Mentoring](#) service, as well as various [Blogging](#) and [Social Media services](#).

Author of many [30 Day Challenges](#), Nikki loves to help out other small businesses and can often be seen giving out free advice on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and beyond.

You can contact her at nikki@nikkipilkington.com, or on Twitter @nikkipilkington. She would love your feedback on 50 Shades of Yay!

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