Blogger user guide for writers

Document plan

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Summary

The proposed document aims to explain how to set up a basic free website using Google's Blogger platform.

Audience

Published writers who wish to develop an online presence with minimal financial outlay, but who are not particularly technical and do not wish to monetise their platform at this time.

Document Specifications

The document will be both an online guide (either in the form of linked topics or as a screencast, or both) and a PDF document that may be printed out and reviewed independently of the users' computer. Different people can have different – and preferred – ways of learning how to accomplish a task. A screencast could cater for the users who prefer to see it being done, the web topics would cater for the people who like to scan content, while the PDF would cater for the readers.

Project Breakdown

Due date: 14 December 2018

As I see it now, there are three main steps to this documentation project.

1) Research stage:

a) Research specific user needs and goals.

b) Find out software functions and limits. Try using software.

c) Find out what's involved in setting up a website using this tool.

2) Preparation:

a) Run through the set-up and take notes. Take screenshots as well.

b) Script the screencast and rehearse it.

c) Create an outline of the topics needed. Map out the document.

3) Execution:

a) Write a rough draft of the relevant topics. Redraft several times until the text is concise and accurate.

b) Format the topics according to the intended output.

c) Create the screencast.

d) Add visual aids to the screencast. (Arrows or text overlays, etc.)

e) Do final copy edit.

f) Send to guinea pigs for testing, then rewrite based on their feedback.

g) Final edit.

Risk Factors

The biggest risk with this documentation problem is the gap between the author's technical ability and the anticipated user's experience. The user will most likely be a novice, and steps that might seem obvious to someone used to cloud-based website platforms might be overlooked. Also, I might need to account for a slightly more advanced user, who is comfortable with online social media platforms but simply hasn't used this one before. In that case, I'll need to have a separate entry point into the documentation for the intermediate user. Both of these risk factors can be mitigated during the review cycle, by finding guinea pigs to test the documents and giving feedback. Specifically, asking them if any step was missing, if anything lacked clarity, or was incomplete for them. Did they get stuck anywhere?