

# Trust Me, I'm Lying Summary

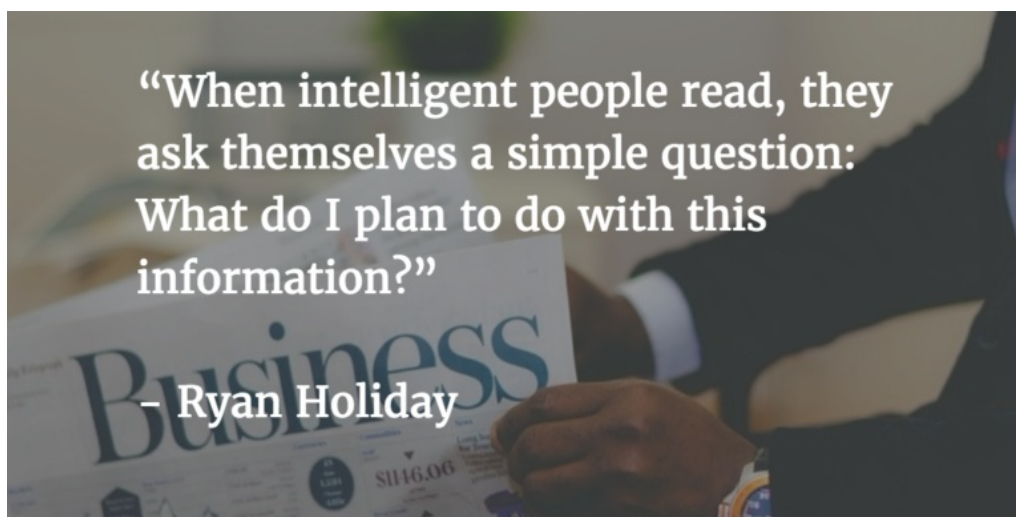
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 [fourminutebooks.com/trust-me-im-lying-summary](https://fourminutebooks.com/trust-me-im-lying-summary)

**1-Sentence-Summary:** *Trust Me, I'm Lying* is a marketer's take on how influential blogs have truly become, why that's something to worry about, and how the internet is broken, which includes his own confessions of how he gamed the very same system to generate press for his clients.

**Read in:** 4 minutes

**Favorite quote from the author:**



As I said before, Ryan Holiday is a jack of all trades. While he's more focused on writing right now, some of his media stunts he pulled for his clients were nothing shy of genius, including his idea Tucker Max use sponsored tweets to promote his new book, which turned ugly, but remained effective nonetheless.

*Trust Me, I'm Lying* is part confession, part revelation, as it explains how influential blogs have become, and why most of them abuse their storytelling powers for a quick buck, which Ryan knows because he draws on experience.

Here are 3 lessons from the book to keep in mind about blogging:

1. A blog is a business. Always.
2. Blogs will publish crap as long as it turns heads.
3. The blogging industry is the new stage for public witch hunts.

Want to learn how most blogs *really* work? Here we go!

**Lesson 1:** A blog is a business. And a business always needs to make money.

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Nowadays, very few people blog as a hobby. Most bloggers do take their blogs very seriously, because they want them to make money. Whatever you're doing, if you want to make money with it, it becomes a business.

The way most blogs make money is through advertising. For example you can use Google AdSense to place banner ads on your blog, and then get paid for each impression of the banner, meaning **every time someone visits your blog, you get paid a small amount of money**.

However, it requires hundreds of thousands of visitors per month to actually arrive at a point where your blog makes a decent income, and only few blogs with millions of visitors actually earn a six-figure annual income with ads alone.

But that might not be your endgame. Maybe you have something else entirely in mind: **selling your blog for millions of dollars**.

For example, did you know that the Huffington Post was sold to AOL for \$315 million? And The Washington Post was sold to Amazon for \$250 million. But in reality, very few single-owner blogs are ever bought for such extraordinary sums. Joel Brown is one of the few to have received offers for over a million dollars for his blog, Addicted2Success, but repeatedly turned them down.

## Lesson 2: As long as it gets a blog readers, it will publish anything, even if it's crap.

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To get to that many page views, it takes a lot of content. A few dozen blog posts won't do here, you need hundreds, if not thousands of posts to attract that many visitors – **which means a lot of blogs will publish anything, as long as it creates buzz**.

It matters less whether a post is accurately researched or has a positive spirit, than whether it gets people to click, and it shows. That's why you see so many fluffy, meaningless headlines, along the lines of "5 Pics That Will Make You Even Angrier At Your Step Mother" or "Did He Really Spit Her In The Face?".

A very common practice is to start with an attractive headline, which is then filled with useless content, mainly to make sure it gets clicks, without worrying about how readers will actually get value from the content.

## Lesson 3: Blogs are the new stages for public witch hunts in the 21st century.

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The practice of publishing almost anything, as long as it turns heads, leads to blogs fostering and supporting something that's been a problem for centuries – **public witch hunts**. While better than gladiator battles in ancient Rome, supposed witches being burnt at the stake or guillotine beheadings in the 1700's, public shaming can still have dramatic consequences.

We point fingers and assign blame to people we've never heard of let alone personally spoken to by venting our anger in the form of comments and sharing stories across our social profiles. Sadly, blogs like to take the stage all too much which is why **they're happy to demonize anyone, as long as it means money into their pocket.**

This is a problem, because it turns innocent victims into targets. For example, big blogs like Gawker covered the story of Wikileaks and Julian Assange in a very positive light – until the first suspicions arose. As soon as he was (falsely) accused of being a sex offender, Gawker tore him apart in its posts, without ever justifying or correcting them later – thus massively damaging his public image in an irreparable way.

## Trust Me, I'm Lying Review

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Running a blog like this one with a daily publishing model, this makes me worried that publishing quality suffers – but not to the degree *Trust Me, I'm Lying* describes. I do spot the problem though, although this has changed a bit in recent years, since ads have become a very unattractive source of income for blogs.

Most smart bloggers now focus on building an email list, and then creating products for their subscribers, as the amounts of traffic needed are too ridiculous to ever justify the effort of potentially never getting there. Blogs still have a lot of power in the public eye though, and you should know that with lots of power, there comes lots of responsibility.

Very refreshing read, good summary, and a thrilling book. If you want more, I've written about another 14 lessons on my blog.

[Read full summary on Blinkist](#)

[Get the book on Amazon](#)

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## What else can you learn from the blinks?

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- Which source first reported Osama Bin Laden's death and how a joke ended up on CNN
- What iterative journalism is and why it works well for blogs, but should be exercised with caution
- How big blogs hook you on their articles and which emotions are the most powerful to address
- Why you almost never see blogs in their most updated form and what damage that does
- How one blog made a lot of money on a presidential campaign, before it even happened

## Who would I recommend the Trust Me, I'm Lying summary to?

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The 31 year old blogger, who might not exactly be publishing quality content, and thinks she

could probably publish better posts if she spent more time on them, the 62 year old who might want to stick to his newspaper after reading this, and anyone who's reading big news blogs on a regular basis.