How to write effective blogs

There is no doubt that a blog explosion has occurred. Anyone with internet access can effectively write down their thoughts on any subject and share those thoughts with the entire world.

It's no surprise that many businesses have entered the blogosphere to try to capitalize on potential prospects and connect with their client base on a more personal level. In an age where social media is growing exponentially (and, make no mistake, blogging is in fact a social media platform), it would almost be a mistake for businesses not to engage their audiences through blogs.

It's good to remember that any form of writing is a craft that must be learned, nurtured and grown. In that spirit, I've created a short list of items to think about when you're blogging for your business. I call it the "5 Be's for Business Blogging":

1. **Be professional.** You wouldn't send an email to a client with misspellings, bad grammar or swear words. You shouldn't blog like that either.
2. **Be informative.** Don't assume that everyone reads your blog religiously every day or every week. If you're announcing a new product or upcoming event, use the journalistic code in your writing: Who, What, When, Where, Why and How. I like to throw in an addition to that code and I call it What's Next? Make sure those questions are answered and you're well on your way to an effective blog.
3. **Be assertive.** It's okay to project confidence about your company, services and products because it's your specialty. If you aren't confident about what you do, why would customers or clients come to you? However, remember it's considered bad form to talk negatively about your competitors.
4. **Be conversational.** Give your writing tone some character when it's appropriate. Consider the products or services you provide and the customers who buy them. Define your niche and integrate that into your blog.
5. **Be interactive.** The biggest mistake some businesses make is that they don't encourage their readers or followers to interact. Ask your readers for comments and suggestions and (here's the big one) *answer them back*. You will find that your customers and clients will appreciate the special attention you give them and respond positively.

The best way to think of blogging is as another form of customer service. You would do all of these things listed above if a customer was physically standing at your service counter. Treat your written words the same way and you'll see results.