

2 Years of Blogging - 200,000 Pageviews - \$4,000 in Revenue - And More...

It really doesn't seem possible that it has already been two years. I was in a very different place and mindset two years ago when I started this blog, oh how much you can grow and learn in such a short period of time. Believe it or not, through sharing and self-reflection, this blog has helped me catapult in many areas of my life. Obviously, the biggest area and the focus of this blog is the growth that has happened financially (and continues to happen).

The growth in income and net worth has been absolutely mind-boggling. For those newer readers, this blog was created in September of 2014, and at the end of 2014 we had a net worth of \$181,364 and as I peck away at the keyboard our net worth has more than doubled to \$425,012 ([as of July 2016](#)). In that same time period, we have increased our income by almost 50% and are on pace to realize about \$315,000 in income for 2016.

What is really nuts, is the fact that our income is primed to increase another 50% over the next 12-18 months. This has far exceeded our wildest dreams!

Speaking of growth, the blog has now been around for 24 months, shall we take a look at the numbers?

Writing Statistics

The real test for any blogger is that of consistency. As a blogger, you have to consistently produce content at regular intervals if you want to have any chance of growing your audience outside of a few close family members and friends. It's both harder and easier than it looks. I honestly don't think it matters whether you write 3 articles a week or 1 article a month, as long as you do this consistently. There are blogs that I read that produce only 1 article a month and have millions of page views a month. While others post 3 times a week with a fraction of that. The important thing to do is to find what works best for you!

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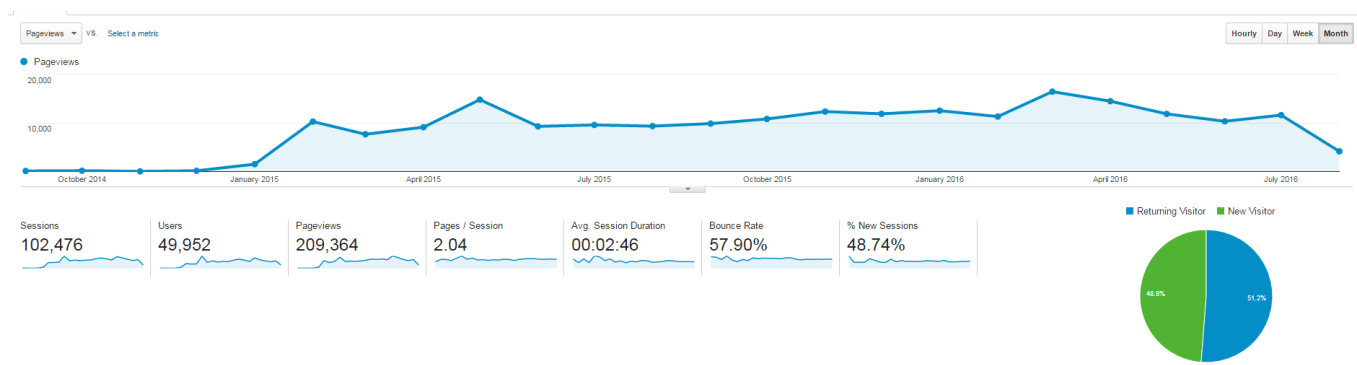
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(BTW, my favorite recurring spam comment is a link to “free animal sex,” how did they know???) ☐ ☐ ☐

The statistic that surprises me the most is the number of words that have been published. Reaching a million words is going to be a huge milestone, and based on my current pace it will take another 4 years before we reach that milestone...I’m in!!!

Are you in?

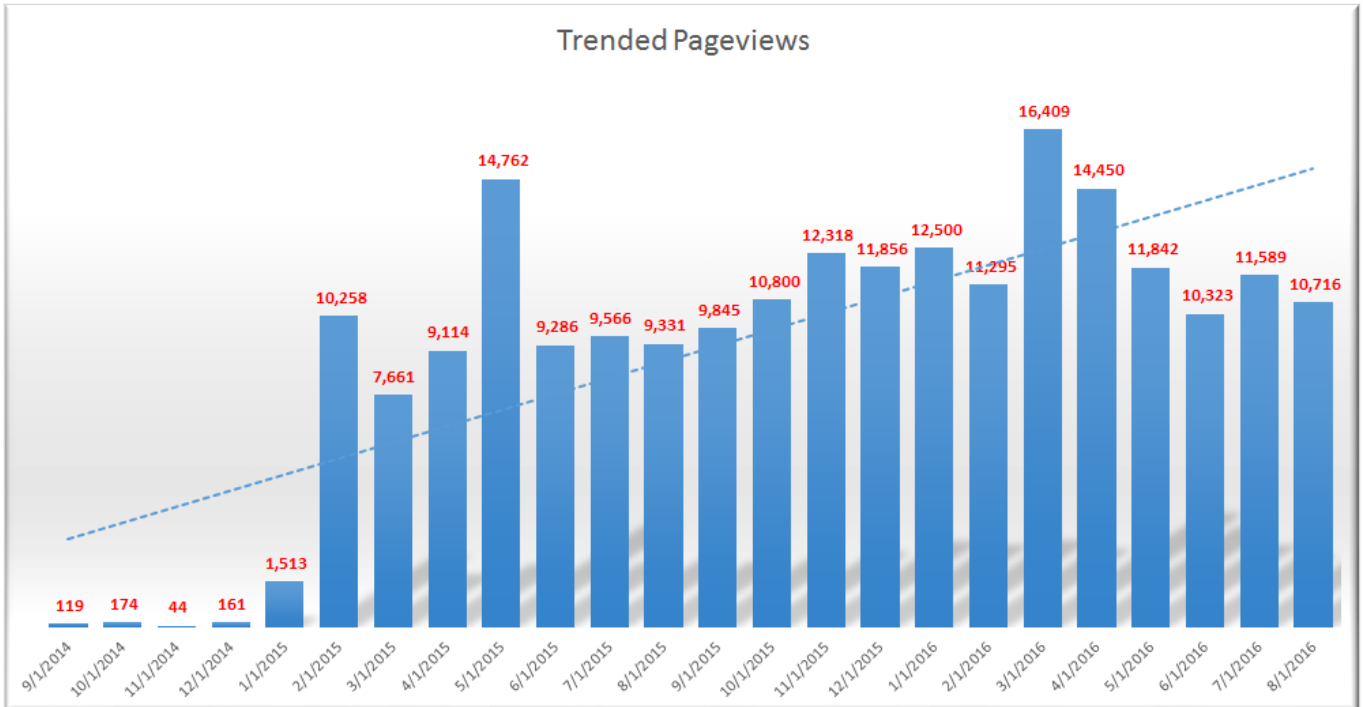
Traffic Statistics



We're getting close to a quarter million page views. Let's put this into perspective, I started my first blog back in 2009, and that blog took 8 years to reach 100,000 pageviews. However, to be clear, that blog was never intended to make it to the masses. It was really a tool that a friend and I created to share trading ideas back in the day when the markets were going to zero :), which today look like they will continue going up **FOREVER!** All of that to say, that it takes work and concentrated effort to grow a blog following. You can't really just build something and expect people to show up, at least not in a meaningful way.

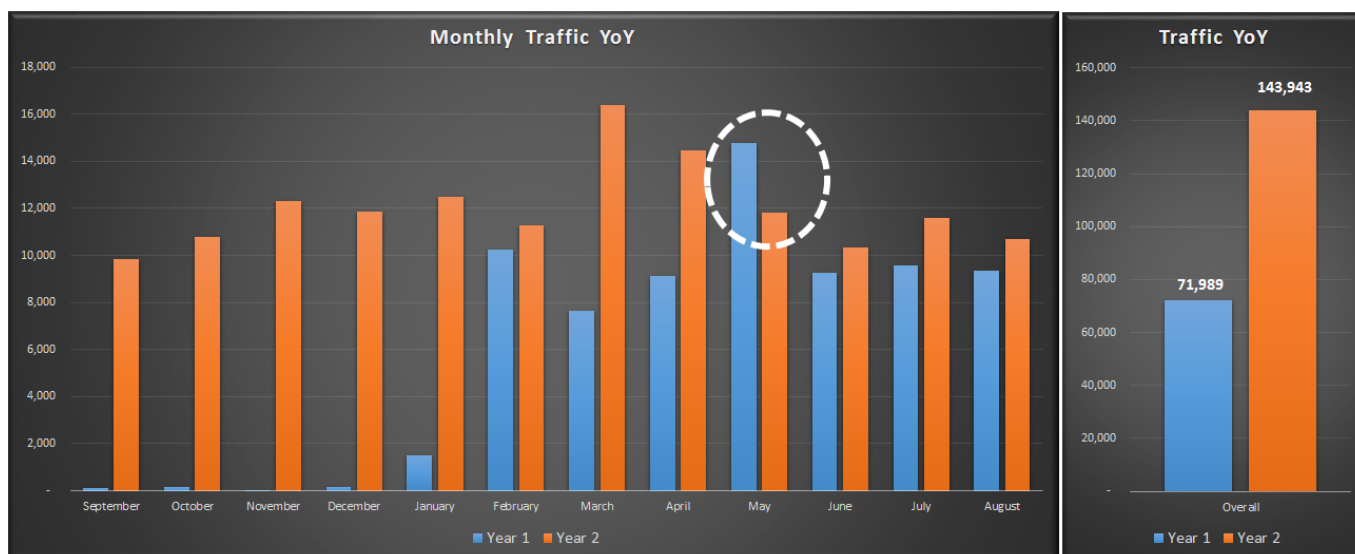
Don't pay too much attention to what appears to be a falloff in pageviews in August of 2016, as this was run on the 12th of the month, and therefore represents a partial month. One trend that I have noticed is that traffic tends to slow down going into the summer and starts to pick back up in September (at least that's what I am hoping for).

In the screenshot above from Google Analytics, you can see the overall numbers, but it's really hard to see what the trend is, because of this I like to export the data to Excel. Let's take a look at several additional visualizations for pageviews:



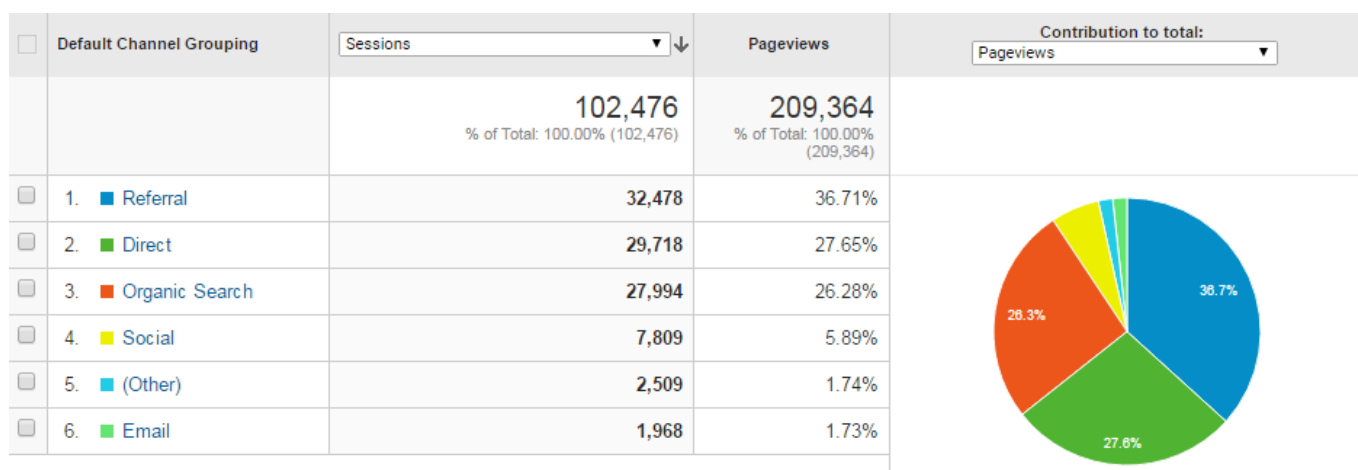
In the chart above it is much easier to see the pageviews monthly trend. The trend is unmistakably up, with May-2016 showing the only YoY decrease, and that's because in May-2015 we got shared on the Facebook page of a very large site (creating a one-time spike). Speaking of YoY, let's look at this from yet another perspective:

Note: I have converted August-2016 into a full month by dividing by 12 and multiplying by 31 as a proxy for the month.



In the white circle above, you can see the YoY difference I pointed out for May. Overall, traffic is up 100% in year 2 vs. year 1 (woo hoo!).

Where has the traffic come from?



In the early days of the existence of this blog, we had 75% or more of the traffic coming from the Referral channel (i.e other blogs). This is partially explained by the fact the site was very new, but I was also much more active commenting on other blogs, which drove a significant amount of traffic back then. These days I still read a lot of PF blogs, but my commenting has been a fraction of what it was. To be honest, this means I am leaving thousands of pageviews on the table. More importantly, it means I am missing out on many opportunities to connect with other bloggers audiences. I do hope to get back into being an active participant on other

PF blogs once work settles down a bit.

If we dive a level deeper, we can see the top 25 sources by channel:

Source / Medium	Sessions	Pageviews
	102,476 % of Total: 100.00% (102,476)	209,364 % of Total: 100.00% (209,364)
1. (direct) / (none)	29,718	27.65%
2. google / organic	26,488	24.91%
3. financialsamurai.com / referral	6,207	8.26%
4. 1500days.com / referral	4,965	6.50%
5. t.co / referral	2,343	1.85%
6. GEN Y FINANCE GUY / email	1,968	1.73%
7. m.facebook.com / referral	1,789	0.97%
8. mydividendpipeline.blogspot.com / referral	1,777	1.50%
9. rss / rss	1,474	1.05%
10. feedly.com / referral	1,330	1.02%
11. thinksaveretire.com / referral	1,265	1.47%
12. rockstarfinance.com / referral	1,203	1.59%
13. fifighter.com / referral	1,082	1.47%
14. feedly / rss	961	0.63%
15. floating-share-buttons.com / referral	736	0.38%
16. yahoo / organic	719	0.65%
17. whitecollarfreedom.com / referral	715	0.85%
18. frugalwoods.com / referral	714	0.87%
19. bing / organic	706	0.67%
20. facebook.com / referral	694	0.60%
21. financiallyalert.com / referral	591	0.91%
22. evenstevenmoney.com / referral	561	0.69%
23. retireby40.org / referral	474	0.63%
24. rootofgood.com / referral	441	0.70%
25. genyfinanceguy.wpengine.com / referral	430	0.47%

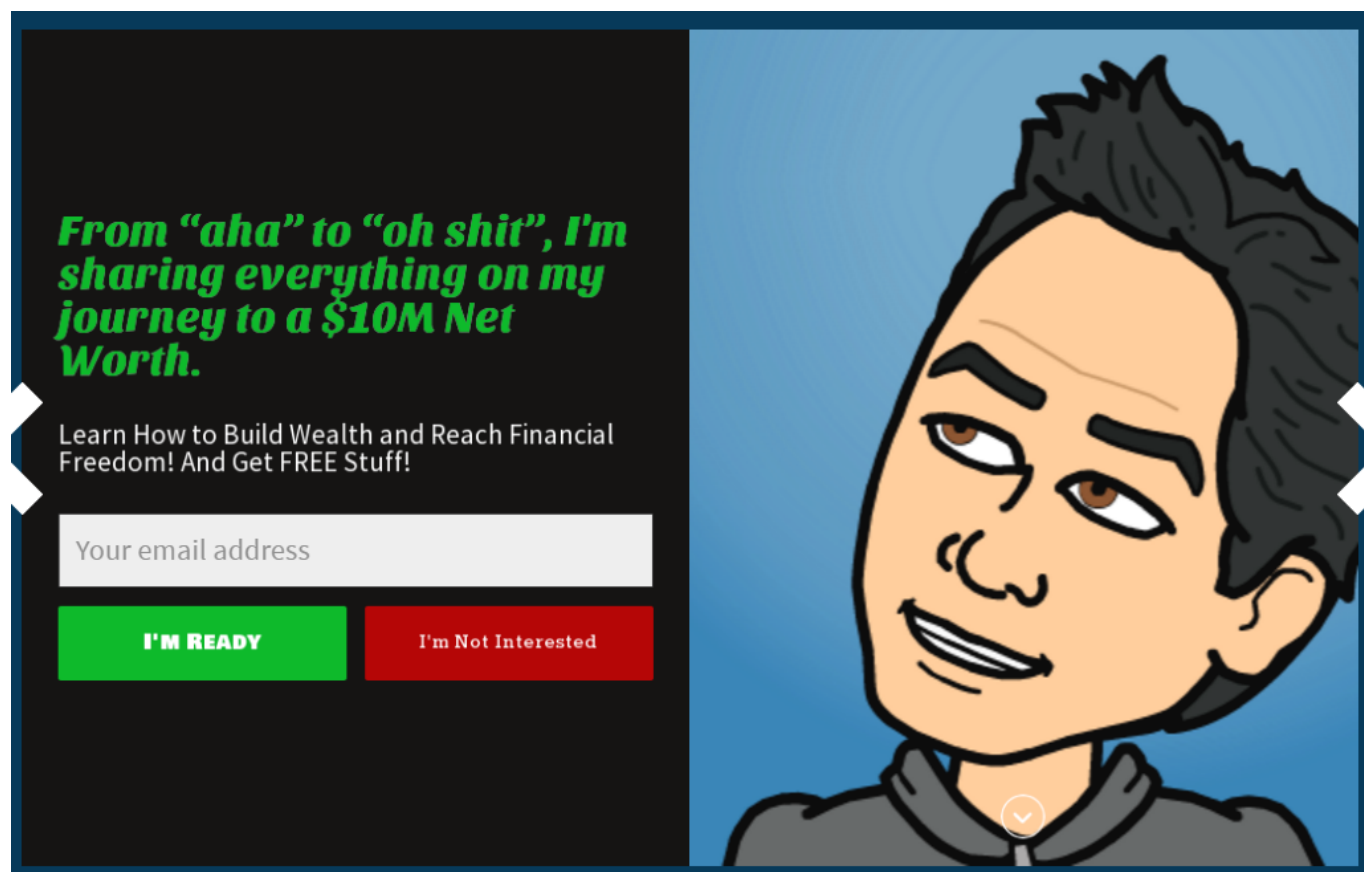
Number 1 really surprises me the most, as I would have never guessed that this many people would be coming directly to the site. Does anything else surprise you?

Oh, and by the way, number 15 is spam traffic.

Email Statistics

I currently use [MailChimp](#) to manage my email list. The good news is that I set this up from the beginning, but it wasn't until the summer of 2015 that I really started to focus on building my email list. The SumoMe plugin has really been the game changer, and specifically the **welcome mat** that drops down on a visitors first visit

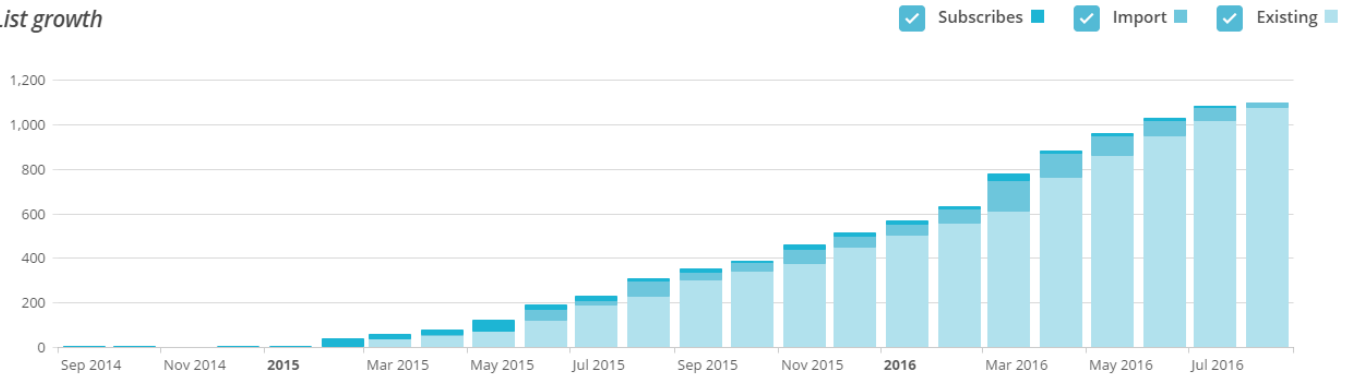
(see below). Prior to installing this, my email conversion rate was about 0.5%, and today it is closer to 2%.



Once a reader opts into the email list I have a series of 23 emails that get sent out over 23 weeks (all automated of course). Additionally, on the last day of the month, a blog digest also goes out automatically to the entire list (with all the posts published that month with a short blurb). Admittedly, I probably need to spend some more time improving the automated emails, but it was my first iteration. So, if you've signed up for the list and have seen all the emails, your feedback is welcome and much appreciated!

Below you can see that the email list continues to steadily grow month after month. We are currently 1,100 strong and growing.

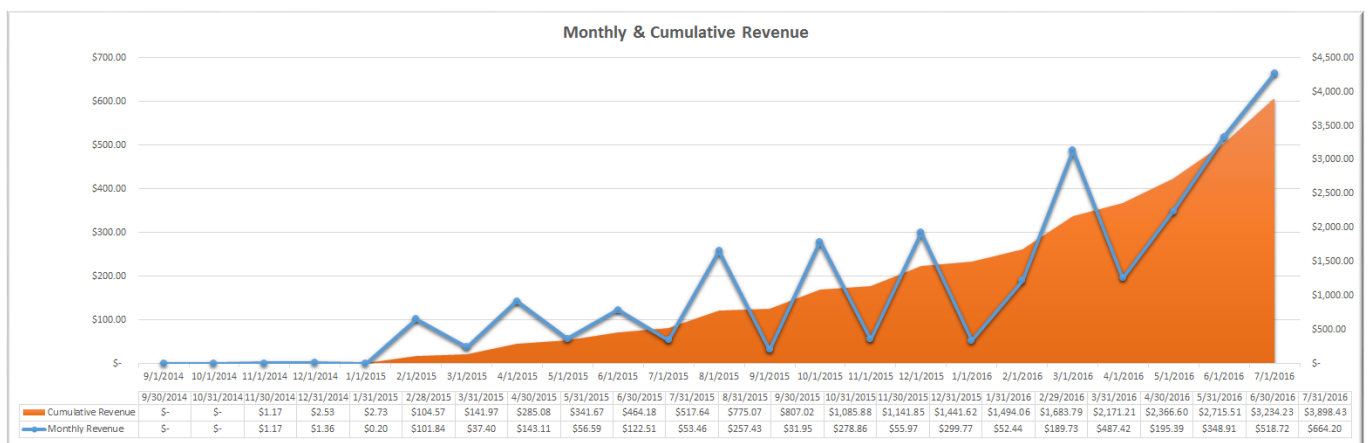
List growth



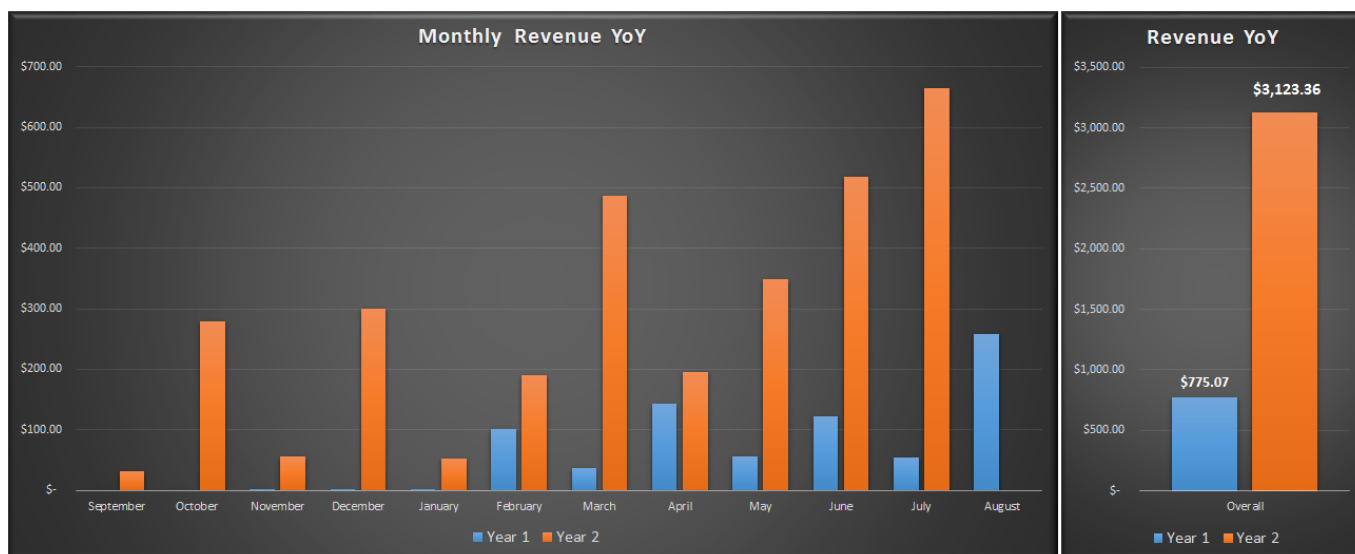
Income Statistics

And the best for last. I know this is the only reason you clicked through to this post, **especially you new bloggers**. It amazes me that my blog can make money, given the fact that I don't even sell anything. More amazing, is that I'm getting paid to share my thoughts in what I consider to be my public journal.

I have a bunch of stats I want to break down for you guys, but first let's take a look at the overall results and trends:



By now you guys realize that I love visualizing data, it just makes it so much more consumable in my opinion. To date, through July of 2016, you can see that the site has earned almost \$4,000 over its 2-year life. What may not be as apparent from this first chart is that 80% of that has been earned during the last 12 months, which will be much more clear in the next visualization:



You will recall from the traffic section above, that pageviews are up 100%. Well, revenue is up 300% in that same period, and this doesn't even include any revenue for August yet! The first 5 months of this blogs life only yielded \$2.73 on a cumulative basis. I still remember my wife making fun of me, when I was elated at the fact that my site had earned \$1.17 during November of 2014 (I would seriously come home excited to tell her the site earned \$0.05 today).

Fast forward to July of 2016 and the site brought in \$21.43/day vs. the \$0.04/day back in November of 2014. **That is a crazy 53,474% improvement!!!** (would love to find an investment to get that kind of return in such a short period of time)

What metrics do I look at to evaluate revenue performance?

Besides the obvious of monthly revenue and/or total revenue, there is one main metric that I use to evaluate the health of my blog and its ability (i.e. effectiveness) to generate revenue. That metric is RPM, which represents the revenue the site earns for every 1,000 page views. You will notice in the table below, that I tend to look at this metric in total, and then split between ad revenue and affiliate revenue.

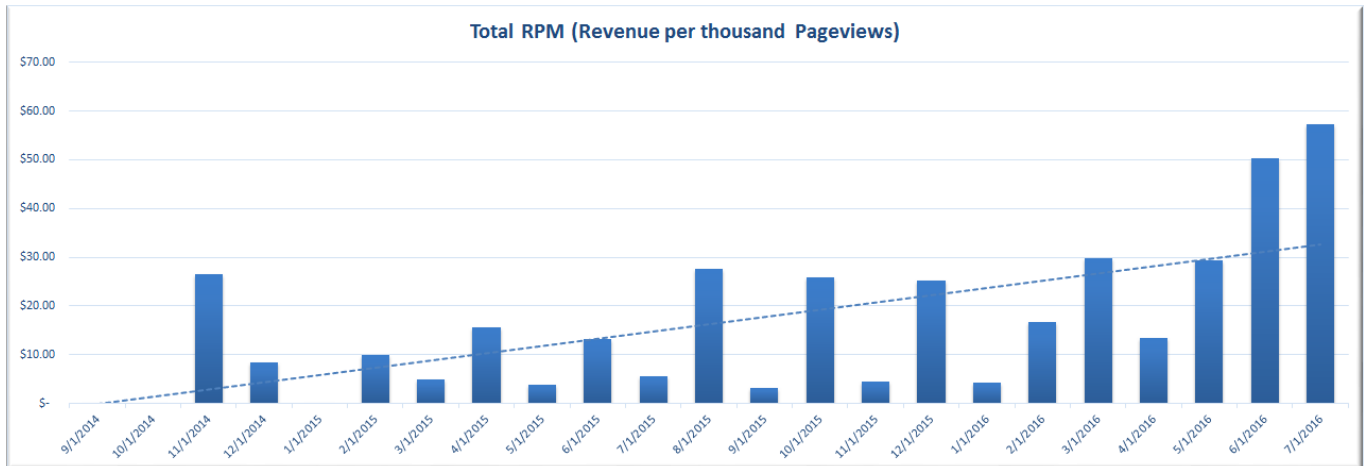
Month	AD RPM	Aff. RPM	Total RPM
9/30/2014	-	-	\$ -
10/31/2014	-	-	\$ -
11/30/2014	-	26.59	\$ 26.59
12/31/2014	-	8.45	\$ 8.45
1/31/2015	-	0.13	\$ 0.13
2/28/2015	-	9.93	\$ 9.93
3/31/2015	0.27	4.62	\$ 4.88
4/30/2015	0.93	14.77	\$ 15.70
5/31/2015	1.59	2.25	\$ 3.83
6/30/2015	1.84	11.36	\$ 13.19
7/31/2015	1.65	3.94	\$ 5.59
8/31/2015	2.07	25.52	\$ 27.59
9/30/2015	2.66	0.59	\$ 3.25
10/31/2015	3.54	22.28	\$ 25.82
11/30/2015	3.04	1.50	\$ 4.54
12/31/2015	3.78	21.50	\$ 25.28
1/31/2016	1.36	2.84	\$ 4.20
2/29/2016	5.73	11.07	\$ 16.80
3/31/2016	4.66	25.05	\$ 29.70
4/30/2016	4.05	9.48	\$ 13.52
5/31/2016	3.90	25.57	\$ 29.46
6/30/2016	3.21	47.03	\$ 50.25
7/31/2016	5.26	52.05	\$ 57.31
Overall	2.87	16.03	\$ 19.00

The sites ability to generate revenue has been much more consistent this year than it was last year. And the RPM metric has increased significantly. You can also see in the above table that the blog makes significantly more money from affiliate offers (like [Personal Capital](#)) than it does from ads. About 6 months ago, or a bit longer, I removed 70% of the ads I had placed throughout the blog in order to improve the site's performance (load time) and to improve the readers' experience (fewer distractions). There just wasn't enough revenue to justify the extra ads.

There is always going to be a trade off on site load time and reader stickiness when it comes to ads. As a blogger, you need to find the happy medium with your own audience.

I think it's amazing that the last few months have had RPM's in excess of \$50/1,000

page views. I really hope that is a lasting trend ☐



The last metric that I like to look at is Average Revenue per Post.

Average Revenue per Post = \$24.21

This has significantly increased since [my update 6 months ago](#), where the average was \$15.47. And [12 months ago](#) this average was at \$8.07. **Onward and upward as they say!**

Please excuse this brief interruption, but I've partnered with [Bluehost](#) to bring you a special offer, one **YOU should consider if you have even an inkling of starting your own blog**. You've seen from the stats I've shared with you above what's possible, and honestly, my results are nothing compared to what other bloggers are achieving (seriously, some are raking in \$10K+/month).



SEMI ANNUAL
SALE
ONE DAY - over 60% OFF!
FREE Domain Name
\$2.95/mo
Sale ends 4/27 at midnight!


Maybe this post has inspired you to create your own blog, if so, then you're in luck...because **TODAY ONLY** you can get a **FREE** domain name and 12 months of hosting at **\$2.95/month (THIS IS A BARGAIN)**.

Lastly, if you use [my link](#) to sign up for your blog with Bluehost, email me the domain name and I will schedule a free 30-minute call with you and me to talk about anything financial or blog related. I can only offer this to the first 10 people that email me at mrgenyfinanceguy@gmail.com.

If you decide to start a blog today or in the future, be sure to check out the **FREE** [step by step guide I created for YOU here](#).

Takeaways after 24 months of blogging

This section is a pure copy past from the update I gave at the 18-month mark because they are still just as true today as there were then. Sometimes in life, we don't always need new takeaways, instead, we need to be reminded of things we have already learned. **Reinforcement is a powerful force!**

1. Always be testing and measure everything you test. Then optimize!
2. Consistency pays off (literally).
3. Be in it for the long term.
4. Pay it forward by helping other bloggers when they reach out.
5. Guest posts should be win/win. Put just as much effort if not more for a guest

post as you would for your own site.

6. Writing helps solidify your own beliefs.
7. Sometimes it's fun to present content in non-conventional ways, whether you believe it or not...it also pushes your readers to think and if you really strike a chord, expect lots of comments.
8. You are not on this earth to prove anyone right or wrong.
9. Always be open to other perspectives.
10. There are rarely absolutes when it comes to answering personal finance questions.
11. Keep it 100 (this is a new one I learned recently and had to look up on urban dictionary)



TOP DEFINITION



keep it 100

to keep yourself real and true, to be honest and stick to the way you are, no matter what any one else thinks.

I gotta stay focused and keep it 100 these last few weeks of highschool so i can get into college. And that's real talk!

You don't have to like my decision. I'm gonna keep it 100 and do what I feel is right.

by [HightowerBrownSkinStar](#) February 17, 2005

-Gen Y Finance Guy



Gen Y Finance Guy

Hey, I'm Dom - the man behind the cartoon. You'll notice that I sign off as "Gen Y Finance Guy" on all my posts, due to the fact that I write this blog anonymously (at least for now). I like to think of myself as the *Chief Freedom Officer* here of my little corner of the internet. In the real world, I'm a 30-something former C-Suite executive turned entrepreneur turned capital allocator. I am trying to humanize finance by sharing my own journey to Financial Freedom. I believe in total *honesty* and *transparency*. That is why before I ever started blogging, I decided that I would share all of my own [financial stats](#). I do this not to brag, but instead to inspire motivate, and also to hold myself accountable. My goal is to be a beacon of hope, motivation, and inspiration for *you*, the reader, by living life by example and sharing it **all** here on the blog. My sincere hope is that you will be able to learn from me - both from my successes and my failures! [Read More](#)