



Blogs and How to Use Them for Marketing

What exactly is a Blog?

A Weblog or Blog is kind of like an online diary or daily newsletter. Some Blogs are personal in nature and some are like online newsletters, some even have an ongoing conversational thread. What ever you choose your Blog to be, know that they are HOT!

Businesses are using Blogs to promote products, circulate information about their company and products, and to target new prospects. With the tight integration of Blogs and RSS/XML feeds we see nothing but growth for the Blog arena.

Blogs are moving into the mainstream. Television media even interviewed popular Blog authors after the Presidential debate for their spin on the debates in October, bringing even more attention to this emerging medium.

How can I use a Blog for my business?

Consider your Blog like an online newsletter. Write about topics that interest your client base. Consider doing a tips and hints Blog for your market sector. Think about having your key staff members do a Blog to create an online sense of community and to put a human face on your corporation. You may want to align your Blog with information that is on your web site and talk about market trends or new products in your business sector. The possibilities are endless.

Isn't a Blog hard to update?

No, when you use an online Blog center like www.Blogger.com, they make it easy for you to add to your Blog and to customize it for your needs. The most highly trafficked Blogs are updated daily.

Consider just a few paragraphs on a topic to get started and get in the habit of updating it daily. Check out the McCord Web Design Blog for suggestions on creating your own Blog.

How do I try a Blog out?

You can set up a Blog for free at www.Blogger.com which is owned by Google. Set up is complicated and requires use of FTP and knowledge of your web directory set up, so it is best left to a web expert initially, but it is possible for a tech savvy individual to self set up. If you do not have an existing Web site, you will probably need to purchase server storage space with a Blog service like Blogspot if you plan on archiving your Blog or having it include images.

Once your account is set up and configured, you can Blog away to your heart's content and with one click publish your musings on the Web. Updating your Blog is as simple as typing text into a window and clicking a publish button.

Blogger even has a very cool "Blog This Button" integrated into the Google Toolbar that allows you to be web surfing and to add to your Blog by clicking the "Blog This Button". Clicking the button opens a small Blog publishing screen automatically. Now you can comment on anything you see on the Web and easily add to your Blog at the same time!

RSS/XML Feed Integration

Blogger has a tight integration and automatic registration with Atom and turns your Blog into a syndicable RSS/XML feed for users to subscribe to using their News Aggregator. Visit our RSS/XML

Feed page in our Web Design section for more information on that topic. In no time at all, you can have a regular Web-following, people who receive your Blog automatically every time you update it.

What is the potential for Blogs?

We see Blogs replacing e-newsletters in the future. There is a huge growing interest in RSS/XML feeds and Blogs are closely aligned to them. More and more Web viewers are tiring of the influx of spam in their e-mail boxes that has not abated even with the new legislation that went into effect January 1, 2004. Congress is even considering a Do Not Email List which would effectively move marketing away from email saturation making Blogs even more important.

People are looking for a way to have the information that they want without having to give out their e-mail address. Blogs and feeds are perfectly tailored for this clientele.

Check It Out for Yourself

After having done our own Blog for nearly one year daily, we have found that the benefits are most realized when you stick to a schedule and really try to update your Blog daily. Utilizing Urchin web statistics, we have found that our site traffic has increased dramatically, we have syndicated our content widely over the web, search engines spider our site more frequently, and our content is always fresh. Those are just a few of the tangible benefits that we have identified.

With Blogs moving to the forefront right now, there is no better time than today to try one out!