

Web Sites For Advocacy and Community Organizing: Basics, Essentials, and Best Practices

Blogging Basics

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Learning Goals

- ▶ Define “blog” and “blogging”
- ▶ Learn blogging best practices
- ▶ Appreciate the need for “proper” blog URLs
- ▶ Explain key concepts, including “blog rolls”, “permalinks” and “trackbacks”
- ▶ Understand RSS (“Real Simple Syndication”)
- ▶ Survey categories of blogging tools

Blogging

► What is it?

- “Blog” is short for “web log”
- Blogging is a web publishing model
 - More of a writing/publishing style than a technology
- It is a personal conversation between you and your readers
 - Show humanity and write in first person
 - Express opinions loud and often; passion matters
- A small dedicated blog audience can be more important than high traffic

Blogging

► Blogging best practices

- Post early and often
- Engage in the “blogosphere”
 - Link to other blogs
 - Post on other blogs and know what's going on
 - Commenting on other blogs can help your credibility
- Have RSS and Atom feeds
 - Titles matter: Skimming nature of RSS readers
- Link, link, link to other sites
 - Allies, resources, coverage, etc

Blogging

► Blogging best practices

- Allow readers to comment on your blog entries
 - But know that it's a garden you have to weed
- Comments are important for credibility and user interaction
 - Shows that blog is read
 - Discussion in comments can add quality content
- Watch out for comment spam
 - Capcha technology helps, but hinders visually impaired readers

Blogging

- ▶ Have a “proper” blog address
 - It's easy to get
 - [yourorg.wordpress.com](#)
 - It's much more desirable to have
 - [blog.yourorg.org](#)
 - This can point anywhere, including [yourorg.wordpress.com](#)
 - When the address is under your domain, you control the long-term direction of the blog
 - When it's not you don't...

Blogging

- ▶ Concepts (definitions from Wikipedia)
 - Blog rolls
 - Collection of links to other blogs
 - Permalinks
 - Points to a specific blogging entry even after the entry has passed from the front page into the archives
 - Trackbacks
 - Mechanism for communication between blogs
 - When blogger refers to another blog, can notify the other blog with a "TrackBack ping"

Blogging

- ▶ RSS: The killer blog technology
 - Blog content is “syndicated” using RSS
 - RSS is Real Simple Syndication (and variants)
 - RSS “feeds” allow interested users to see when there's new content on your blog or site
 - RSS “readers” which “aggregate” are used to track a collection of feeds
 - RSS is a **critical** outreach/publicity feature

Blogging

- ▶ Blogging tool survey
 - Hosted
 - Blogger.com
 - LiveJournal.com
 - MySpace.com
 - Hosted/installable
 - Wordpress.com
 - Typepad.com
 - Most CMS: Drupal, Plone etc

End Of Section

- ▶ Questions?
- ▶ Comments?

Thank You!

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