

eAdvocacy: Basics, Best Practices and New Tools

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
 - It is an alternative channel to email for reaching your audience(s)
- Blogs generally have an area of focus/expertise
 - Identity of the author(s) matters

Writing for Blogs

- ▶ Blogs have distinct editorial style
 - Show humanity and write in first person
 - Express opinions loud and often; passion matters
 - Share what you've been learning, reading, doing
 - Post more short entries, not fewer big ones
 - Re-post content from other blogs/sites
 - Take feedback via comments

Blogging

▶ Blogging best practices

- Post early and often
 - Fresh content is essential to engagement
- 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
- Link, link, link to other sites
 - Allies, resources, coverage, etc
 - They'll hopefully link back to you

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 by passionate users
 - Discussion in comments can add quality content
- Watch out for comment spam
 - Capcha technology helps, but hinders visually impaired readers

Blogging

► Blogging best practices

- Get Involved in Blog Communities
 - Know where your audience hangs out
 - Get accounts early
 - Participate in commenting
- Distinguish between official vs unofficial blogs
 - Both have value, with **very** different control dynamics
- Target writings to micro audiences
 - Engage small passionate subgroup

Blogging

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

Blogging

► Concepts

- 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
 - Subject lines **matter**: readers skim RSS feeds

Blogging

▶ Blogging tool survey

- Hosted/installable
 - Wordpress.com
 - Moveabletype.com
- Hosted
 - Blogger.com
 - LiveJournal.com
 - MySpace.com, Facebook.com
- Most CMS have blogs: Drupal, Plone, etc

Blogging

▶ Multimedia “Blogging”

- Audio Blogs
 - Podcasts
 - iTunes integration
- Video Blogs

▶ Your mileage will vary widely

- Production costs may likely outweigh benefits

End Of Section

- ▶ Questions?
- ▶ Comments?

Thank You!

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