

Bloggging for People Who Should

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Review: Blogging as conversation

Figuring out who you are, what you have to say.

Listening to existing conversations.

Contributing something meaningful.

Monitoring how your message is received, and promotion.

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Review: Listening online

Why are we “listening”?

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- To learn more about things we are interested in**
- To find something to write about**
- To find something to respond to**
- To find who else is talking about our issues**

Review: Listening online

What are we listening for?

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- What our fellow bloggers are writing about**
- When someone mentions you or your blog**
- When someone writes about a topic you are interested in**

Agenda for this week

- 1. What makes a good blog post?**
- 2. Two classifications and 7 types of blog posts**

Break

- 3. Your content strategy**
- 4. Images: how to find and use them**
- 5. Copyright, excerpts and attribution**

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Elements of a good blog post

Good title: Audience, RSS, search engine and social bookmarking friendly

It's Getting Harder to Hate Wal-Mart



Today's idea: It's getting harder to hate Wal-Mart, recent articles suggest. Its shift to locally grown organic crops now yields produce to rival Whole Foods's, one says, while another says the chain's stores may help curb obesity in poor neighborhoods.

Why So Many Terrorists Are Engineers



Today's idea: From the underwear bomber to Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, students of engineering or applied science become terrorists because they have "a greater intolerance of uncertainty," an Israeli analyst argues.

What type of Tweets get retweeted most? Bites of Wisdom

7 Reasons Every Business Needs to be on Twitter

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Elements of a good blog post

“Inverted Pyramid” style

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Get to the point pretty quickly, or at least hook people in!

From newspaper journalism, and the assumption that people won't always read the whole article.

ALSO, pulls readers in.

Not always the case: you can build toward a story, but either way you need to hook the reader quickly with info or a question or mystery

Elements of a good blog post

Conversational tone

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??What is conversational tone??

Write as a letter to a friend - or at least visualize someone when you are writing

Helps to read it aloud - finds out pretty quickly what is not working

Don't use jargon or buzzwords

Conversational doesn't mean you can ramble!

Elements of a good blog post

Solicits comment / feedback

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Elements of a good blog post

Links! Links! Links!

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- to sources, more information, etc.
- Give some good indication what's at the other end of the link: PDF, music, where in video clip mention occurs, etc.
- Don't put "Read more": use keywords
- Link internally as well: keeps people on blog longer!

Elements of a good blog post

Scannable and (usually) brief

No More Websites. Only Publishers.

Websites are not websites anymore.

When a brand manager sits down to evaluate what she or he is doing online and in the mobile channels, the first realization they have is usually it's not up to snuff with the massive amount of online usage that consumers are engaged in. And, more often than not, they must also grapple with what their peers and competitors are doing in these spaces as well.

As brands continue to try to out-design competitors, there could also be a bigger, scarier realization: your website is not important anymore.

- and brief, if possible.
- use subheadings, whitespace, images to make the post scannable
- How to write longer post: break up into several posts, do a series, make a short video synopsis,
- Example is at : <http://www.twistimage.com/blog/archives/no-more-websites-only-publishers/>

A few classifications of blog posts

“Original”

“Referential”

These are not mutually exclusive, but points on a spectrum

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Referential

- Can be easier and less time consuming to create than entirely original content
- Has good potential to attract links and comments
- Not as likely to establish authority or voice

“Original” blog posts

Written by the author and consisting of insights, ideas and information unique to that person.

eg. *My trip to New York*

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Original

- Establishes authority and personality
- Time consuming and more difficult to do consistently and well

“Referential” blog posts

Written in reference to something published elsewhere online.

eg. Top websites to learn about blogging

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Referential

- Can be easier and less time consuming to create than entirely original content
- Has good potential to attract links and comments
- Not as likely to establish authority or voice
- Some of the most visited blogs simply link to other work, with brief comments

Two types of content



photo: ell brown - flickr

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Evergreen vs. Deciduous

Refers to how long the content stays 'current': some things are timely, while others are timeless.

Is it a time-sensitive post or will it still be relevant in a year or two?

Evergreen



photo: ell brown - flickr

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This would be reference material that people will link to.
Think of a question that a lot of people ask you about the topic of your blog, and write a guide / checklist / cheat sheet / top ten list of advice.

Deciduous



photo: ell brown - flickr

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This would be up to date content that is timely: a response to current events or online conversations.

Seven types of blog posts

- 1. Latest News post**
- 2. Link posts**
- 3. Instructional posts**
- 4. Review posts**
- 5. Interviews, profiles and case studies**
- 6. Review or prediction posts**
- 7. Challenge posts: surveys, contests, polls**

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Seven types of blog posts

1. “Latest News” post:

A personal story

How: Write in the first person a story that your audience will want to hear

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- "Hero(ine)" faces challenges and is transformed as a result.**
- Anecdote - Reflection (Context) - Anecdote**

Seven types of blog posts

1. “Latest News” post: An interesting development

How: Cover the “Who what why where when and how of a recent development

- Don't assume people are entirely familiar with the topic, especially if it hasn't been reported elsewhere**
- Write in ‘inverted pyramid’ structure, provide context and explain why it's relevant, with reference to stories of individual people if possible**

Seven types of blog posts

1. “Latest News” post:

Rewrite of a press release

How: Put your organizations press release into a more accessible and interesting format, while preserving the original information/intent

- consider the audience (it's no longer a journalist!) and how the post relates to them, write in a conversational tone**
- link to release for "the facts" and write your post about some concepts behind the story.**

Seven types of blog posts

2. Link posts

How: Find an interesting link, say something (briefly) about why it's good, give the reader a sense of what they can expect when they get there, and you're done!

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- Establish some authority on a topic**
- Consistently post to good quality links on specific topics**

Seven types of blog posts

2. Link posts: Resource lists

How: Research all the best instructional / informational posts on a certain topic, annotate briefly and post

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- Should be annotated, give a sense of the number of items, and emphasize quality over quantity**
- Very good for attracting links and search engine traffic**

Seven types of blog posts

2. Link posts: Links for the day/ week/month

**How: Keep track of the links you found most useful/
enjoyable for a specific period of time**

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- should be regular, consistent and high quality**
- less is more: quality over quantity**

Seven types of blog posts

2. Link posts: Media mentions

How: Set up a Google Alert for news about your topics, and post short annotated links to the best coverage

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- This can be effective way to bring traffic**
- Can become a curated source of news and issue updates**

Seven types of blog posts

3. Instructional posts

How: Explain how you or other people have solved a problem your audience might face

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- Short tips or longer instructional articles on how to do something**
- Provides obvious value to your audience**

Seven types of blog posts

4. Review posts

How: Review something of interest to your audience, giving your opinion

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- **Book reviews, contrast with this vs. that, "Best of" lists**
- **Make sure titles reflect the comparison**
- **This is a search engine and link friendly format**

Seven types of blog posts

5. Interviews, profiles and case studies

How: Find a person or an organization of interest and create a profile after interviewing them

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- Question and answer format**
- Can include case studies in this category**

Seven types of blog posts

6. Recap or prediction

How: Recap past events or make predictions for a specific time period

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- often at end of year, eg. “Top developments in film in 2009”

Seven types of blog posts

7. Challenge posts

How: Invite a response by posting a survey, contest, poll, or a straightforward challenge

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- Note that posts should often pose questions and invite response in the comments section, regardless of type

More ideas for posts

'Debate' posts

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Take someone on or take both sides yourself

More ideas for posts

Lists work well

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Top laptops, Best 5 blog platforms

They give a sense of the scope, are scannable and concise

More ideas for posts

Event blogging and Live blogging

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Event blogging: covering an event, but giving more analysis than live blogging

"Live Blogging": covering events while they happen, often quickly through Twitter

More ideas for posts

Series of linked posts on a theme

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“31 days to a better blog”

“Six part series on labour relations under Obama”

More ideas for posts

Guest blogging

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- **Write on a colleague's blog, or invite someone to post on yours**
- **Works well for vacations!**

After the break

Your content strategy

Images: how to find and use them

Copyright, excerpts and attribution

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Content strategy

Who is the content for and what does it need to communicate? (Personas and your blogging plan)

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Content strategy

Who is the content for and what does it need to communicate? (Personas and your blogging plan)

What content is needed? (Your blogging phrases from first session, and article titles for this session)

Content strategy

Who is the content for and what does it need to communicate? (Personas)

What content is needed? (Your blogging phrases from first session, and article titles for this session)

Who will create and edit all the content, and when? (This session)

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Content strategy

Who is the content for and what does it need to communicate? (Personas)

What content is needed? (Your blogging phrases from first session, and article titles for this session)

Who will create and edit all the content, and when? (This session)

How will search engine optimization and social networking affect the content? (Next session)

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How long is this going to take me?

Answer: It depends on your goals

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How long is this going to take me?

Goal: Deepen engagement with your network/supporters

- More latest news, challenges and interviews/profiles posts**
- More emphasis on original than referential,**
- Mix of evergreen and deciduous content, with more of the latter**
- More personality in the stories**

How long is this going to take me?

Goal: Establish authority on specific topics

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- **More review, instructional and original thought pieces**
- **More original than referential, more evergreen than deciduous content**
- **Personality still important**

How long is this going to take me?

Goal: Tell your story in an engaging way

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- Focus on latest news, review, instructional and profile posts
- Original and personal are important
- Mix of evergreen and deciduous content

How long is this going to take me?

Goal: Increase traffic to your website

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- **Focus on instructional, link and review posts**
- **Go for mix of evergreen and deciduous content**
- **Personality still matters**

How long is this going to take me?

Goal: Show up on search engines

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- **Focus on links and list posts**
- **Personality less important than generating links**
- **Write with search engines in mind**

Worksheet: Content Brainstorm

To help you generate ideas for blog posts that will help you meet your goals

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The goals you set for your blog give you a good sense of what kind of posts you should be writing.

Seven types of blog posts and the time required to create them

- 1. Latest News post: one hour +**
- 2. Link posts: 5 minutes +**
- 3. Instructional posts: half hour +**
- 4. Review posts: one hour +**
- 5. Interviews, profiles and case studies: two hours +**
- 6. Review or prediction posts: one hour +**
- 7. Challenge posts: surveys, contests, polls: one hour +**

Using images

**Your own
photos**



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- best if you can get them: they tell your story and establish personality**
- make sure you still have the rights to them**

Using images

Flickr creative commons licensed images



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Complete guide to finding and using incredible flickr images

<http://www.skelliewag.org/a-complete-guide-to-finding-and-using-incredible-flickr-images-162.htm>

Using images

Flickr creative commons licensed images



- “Some rights reserved”: attribution, non-commercial, no derivative works, sharealike
- Search just among these works here:
<http://www.flickr.com/creativecommons/by-2.0/>

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Using images

Stock photo places



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- Can be convenient and quick, and you are sure you have the rights to use them
- Can look a little too canned, can get expensive

Dealing with copyright, excerpts and attribution

You cannot reproduce copyrighted works on your blog without permission.

You can post some copyright material on your blog if you are making ‘fair use’ of the material.

Dealing with copyright, excerpts and attribution

Fair use is tricky!

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But you should be safe if you:

- comment on the work to make a new point or critique (not just repeat the original work)**
- clearly attribute the work (link if possible)**
- don't reproduce the work entirely (only the relevant parts)**
- don't profit from the reproduction of the work**

Dealing with copyright, excerpts and attribution

You should be safe if you:

**Comment on the work to make a new point or critique
(not just repeat the original work)**

Clearly attribute the work (link if possible)

**Don't reproduce the work entirely
(only the relevant parts)**

Don't profit from the reproduction of the work

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Here's those points if you want to write them down.

Dealing with copyright, excerpts and attribution

Don't be too scared by copyright: don't flagrantly steal material without attribution or give away anyone's material they usually charge for, have a point to your use of the material and you should be okay.

Label your own work with a Creative Commons license available here:

<http://creativecommons.org/choose/>

Next week: Promotion and Evaluation

- 1. Make it easy to follow you: RSS, Twitter, email etc.**
- 2. Linking to your social networks: Integration of Facebook and Twitter**
- 3. Making sure people can find you: Search Engine Optimization**
- 4. Google Analytics and Webmaster: your friends**
- 5. Identifying what's working (and what's not)**

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Homework

- 1. Write two blog posts complete with all the elements mentioned - title, links, inverted pyramid, conversational, links, scannable, preferably brief, solicit links - and record how much time it takes.**
- 2. Post your entries, complete with pictures, to your blog.**