

BLOGS: WHAT ARE THEY??

Blogs are a contemporary form of journalism. To answer the title question, we may build our reply using several of the questions journalists are trained to address.

When did blogs appear on the scene?

The term blog has its earliest direct roots in on-line diaries which appeared in 1994 (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_blogging). It was not until 1997 that the term “weblog” was coined to describe this form of communication; by 1999, it finally morphed into simply blog. In 2004, Meriam-Webster cataloged the word blog as a legitimate dictionary denizen.

Ian Ring is credited with being the inventor (or parent) of the blog in 1997. As noted above, in its earliest years the blog appeared primarily as an on line diary or serial of the life and times of its author(s).

Today’s blogs are adolescents in linguistic terms and they have outgrown all of their early childhood clothing to take on a host of very different appearances. An early Ted Talk includes commentary on the young years of blogging. Mena Trott in 2006 recounts some of her early experiences with blogging she began in 2001 (https://www.ted.com/talks/mena_trott_tours_her_blog_world).

Now, some 10 years after this Ted Talk, blogs have undergone explosive growth in both content and numbers, achieving a stature only dimly envisioned by their parents. We now encounter blog as just one of a whole host of terms building upon it including blogger, blogging, liveblogging, photoblog, microblog, moblog and a host of others.

What purposes can blogs serve?

Want to inform, teach, convince, amuse, sway, share, sell, defend, support or refute something?

- Long and short of it – blogs are contemporary forms of journalism in the broadest sense of the art.
- In fact, blogging may your **best** method of choice to speak to the largest audience around the globe.
- Blogs foster interactive, real time, response among blog authors and readers of their material.

Why is this blog on KMOO.com, a broadcast radio web page?

Blogs can drive attention to the station web site by their word choice. Search Engine Optimization (SEO) can aid in putting your website on the first page of Google searches when the terminology of your blog is carefully crafted:

- <https://moz.com/beginners-guide-to-seo>
- <https://support.google.com/webmasters/answer/35291?hl=en>

Being on the first page of Google search results is a BIG DEAL in promoting the radio station and in highlighting its marketing advantages for commercial advertising. Think of effective blogs as electronic forms of good word of mouth for the station!

Portland Radio Group exploits blogs in their webpage very effectively as discussed by Larry Julius at the 2015 TAB conference in Austin, Texas (<http://marketing.portlandradiogroup.com/radio-results>).

Blogs sponsored by KMOO or another station provide the reader knowledge about both the station and the content of the blog, thus serving two advertising aims. First, by providing background on the station itself, confidence is built in the reader in the qualifications and details of the station they are considering advertising on. Second, the blog content can clarify details of radio broadcast advertising and allay potential fears or uncertainties of the client regarding the process of radio advertising.

How important can blogs be in attracting advertising for a station?

Some statistics on blogs are both interesting and revealing with respect to answering this question:

<http://wearesocial.net/blog/2015/01/digital-social-mobile-worldwide-2015>

The classical method upon which soliciting radio advertising is founded is an approach that stirs feelings of frustration in the advertising executive and irritation or anger in the potential client. You have all been the recipient (or victim, perhaps more aptly put) of this marketing technique – the dreaded COLD CALL – or marketer, the TELEMARKETER. Call to mind fond memories?

Blogs have the potential to provide an advertisement marketing route that is at once less painful for the client and for the advertising team member. Rumbaуска's book on cold calling includes a lot of information and advice on the topic of blogs and radio ad sales:

http://www.amazon.com/Never-Cold-Call-Again-Greatness/dp/0471786799/ref=sr_1_2?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1439595974&sr=1-2&keywords=no+more+cold+calling

HOW can you tailor you blog to appeal to readers?

Preparing a great blog (a much better goal than producing a mediocre or blighted blog!) is not a skill we are born with.

The best blogs include

- concise language
- engaging visual/audio inclusions
- links to related materials

Want more specific guidance?

A useful guide to creating and polishing blogs is found at <http://firstsiteguide.com/bloggingintro/>

The length of blogs most appealing to readers, and of other forms of on-line communication, is a matter of some debate at present. Articles, titles, videos, etc. that are too long or too short risk exceeding your viewer's attention span or seem too trivial to follow up on. Some guidance on optimal lengths for various offerings is presented in <https://blog.bufferapp.com/optimal-length-social-media>.

CONCLUSION

To answer our title question “**BLOG – WHAT IS THAT??**”,we can say a blog is today's tool to bring new dimensions to communication in our personal and business lives.

Impressive power for a funny little word!!

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