

Got Blog?

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Tuesday, 29 November 2005
Last Updated Thursday, 08 December 2005

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In 1999 I asked my friends and colleagues if they blogged. The responses I received ranged from odd looks to questions about the blogging practice. The end results of my findings was "Blog" was a new term and not highly recognized. That was then, a half million blog users ago.

Blogs have become and I do believe will continue into their plight of greatness for sometime, until a new technology slides into place. For the time being, blogs are a great way to define who you are to your visitors and provide dynamic content that the search engines go nuts over.

Clogged email boxes and spam eaters have taken a dramatic effect on the once powerful email marketing tool. As email marketing loses its effect, marketers and small businesses are seeking ways to fulfill this lost art of communication between staff and customers. Blogging could be that much needed answer for you.

SO what is a blog?

Blogs are a time and date stamped, easy to search, web based journal or self publishing tool. Blogs can have a corporate style, but in most cases are written by one person in a relaxed, candid atmosphere. True personality usually shines through in the opinions of the blog writer. You do not have to be a writer to produce a blog. Even so, many blogs owners become recognized as small journalists, as the writer speaks their mind or offers self analyzed materials on their preferred subject matters.

You may think at this point, that a blog does not sound like a business tool.

Let's take blogging into a business approach and see how we can benefit.

Problem:

Many marketing methods and advertising spiels fall on blind eyes and deaf ears across the net today with such a medium we have created where advertising is abundant and often shoved at us in every direction.

Solution:

Visitors will come to your blog of their free will to read your newest content of choice, giving you a higher ratio of targeted visits.

Problem:

Email marketing is losing ground. Overflowing email inboxes and spam filters that don't deliver your ezine.

Soultion:

Using your blog as a web based area for your product and service announcements and updates. When someone subscribes to your blog or RSS feed, they will receive automatic updates that include the headline, summery and URL of your new entries.

Bonus:

Email gets deleted ... Blogs get indexed in search engines!

Problem:

Internet marketing can be a nonpersonal medium, gaining trust becomes increasingly harder and more important to gain new customers.

Solution:

Blogging can give your visitors, existing and potential customers a great area to gain insight about the face you present to the world. If you're a small business owner to a large corporate business, you can benefit by giving your company or web site personality via blog.

Now let's take a look at blogs from another angle. Rss and/or live feed. You may be thinking, do I Really Need to Know About Rss?

Yes, but we are not going to give a full history of RSS here. What you need to know is that RSS is the "code" that underlies a blog. It includes a headline, a short summary of the entry and the URL of the page that the new story has been posted to. In order for users to subscribe to RSS feeds they will need to download a news aggregator. There are many available for free, we recommend NewsGator <http://www.newsgator.com> for its ease of use within Microsoft Outlook.

Visitors and other websites can syndicate your RSS feeds to their desktop, their email, newsreaders and on their own websites. Talk about getting the word around! Submitting your RSS feed, can get you listed in hundreds of new emerging RSS feed directories. Of course this will bring traffic to see what your feed is about to those looking to syndicate them to their own sites or readers. Also creating more links pointing to your site.

Let me touch on one of the most important features of a blog. Search engines love them. Most bots including google will visit and reindex blog pages daily. Yahoo will index your RSS free and quickly.

There are many ways and places you can begin your blogging journey. You should first decide if you want to house the blog on your site or let other sites manage your blog system. For this we recommend www.blogger.com, now owned by Google. The google toolbar has a one click Blog This button that can make blogging quick and painless. You can set the blogger.com blog files to ftp to your host for you so that your files are housed on your server. There are many blog services online today, and

there are many free and low cost scripts that you can easily run your own blog from your site without the need of any other service provider.

If you would like to find out more about blogs and blog services we invite you to visit our resource section at <http://www.masteradvertising.com>.

We hope to provide many learning materials and resources for the online promoter using blogs and rss feeds for the online advertising medium.

About The Author

Dawn Wentworth has been providing insight to site promotion sense 1994. <http://www.masteradvertising.com>

