

Bloggging



Blogging

- The web has become saturated with 'blogs'.
- Since about 1999 this phenomena has grown and grown.
- You will have noticed that a lot of people are posting to their web sites in a particular way.
- Like a diary or journal
- This way is known as 'blogging'.

Why blog?

- Is this the new way to create for the web?
- Should we abandon editing the HTML?
- Blogging is 'Personal Publishing'

How many are there?

- Well go to weblogs.com and see how many have been updated in the last 10 minutes!
- Each time a weblog is posted then this site can be optionally 'pinged'

The word 'Blog'

- started as weblog or log of journey of the web
- Blogging, blog, weblog are all used in this context.
- In some ways the word 'journal' means the same but 'blogging' is 'disruptive' and not traditional in the same way that a journal is.
- Journals tend to be more corporate
- Blogs are more personal
 - Although can have multiple authors

History:

- [Rebecca Blood's](#) site has a good article on the history of blogging
- Started around 1999 as diaries of web surfing
- A publishing of bookmarks / favourites
- Much is technology based
- Much is about the web

What does a blog look like?

- It has become common practice to:
 - put the latest post / article at the top
 - have a headline and a short intro which is then linked to the full article
 - Put 'thumbnail' images into the text and have larger images available on popup

Posting to the blog

- Post often.
- your thoughts and ideas down quickly and frequently.
- The best approach is to think of it as conversation rather than full blown academic writing.

Format

- latest on top
- expansion to detail
- Headline
- Body
- More
- Comments (optionally enabled)
- links

Subjects

- Anything goes.
- Domain name is important
- I had this idea that I should separate personal with professional, so I have 2 blogs:
 - <http://www.chrisjennings.net/>
 - <http://www.pagetoscreen.net/>
- originals blogs were journals of web findings
- Blogging as journalism

Community

- can help develop community sites by:
 - comments
 - forum
- Multiple authors
- Memes
- WIKIs
 - Anyone can edit anything posted by anyone

Techniques

- No more:
 - edit the HTML / FTP to the server
- Better to:
 - post your content from a web browser.
- You don't need to carry around with you the content of your site
 - It's all kept on the server.
- The HTML and code stays the same
 - The content is in a database.
 - The web pages are populated with content from the database as the pages are loaded.

Systems:

- Systems such as PHP / MYSQL combinations are used.
- posting from browser
- In the early days of blogging some people were using a system of dated entries to create the archive of posts
 - Management of such a system quickly becomes cumbersome.
- a desktop application can be used to post entries.
 - Not all client software works with all blogs.
 - The blogger.api (protocol) has become a standard and the client application needs to write to this format.
 - Radio
 - Tinderbox
 - Archipelago
 - iBlog

Server side software

- pMachine
 - This needs to be installed on the web server which in turn must support PHP and MYSQL.
- Movable Type
 - Movable Type requires PERL and MYSQL (although another database is supported)
- Greymatter
- LiveJournal
- WordPress
 - This gives a full list of blogging software:
<http://www.blogroots.com>

Content

- You'll find that the content of blogs is mostly text but it has a particular flavour.
- dividing the text into chunks so that readers can choose whether to just read the summary or get the full detail.
 - inverted pyramid.
 - you tell the ending of the story first. Or, put another way, the conclusion comes first
 - the title of the article and the first sentence or 2 needs to be very compelling
 - choosing a title is really key here.

Visual Imagery

- Photos are used a lot on blogs and some sites specialise in posting photos and caption only
- I prefer to use a bit of both.
 - But you need to keep the file size small by using thumbnails.

PhotoBlogs

- Most 'blogging' software can be used for photo display, there are other more specialised tools for the organising of photo archives.
- PhotoPost
 - See www.inspiresoxford.net
- Coppermine
- Photostack
- Gallery

Style

- in keeping with the non-HTML editing approach
- the phenomena of downloadable templates / themes or skins has evolved.
- Some bloggers even provide different themes right there on their sites
 - [CSS Zen Garden](#)

Content management

- 'Blogging' introduces the concept of management of content
- Through the web server
- Focus on writing and content
 - Not coding
- Multiple authors

Blogging in education

- Good opportunities for:
 - Teachers/Lecturers to self publish for students
 - Students to deliver assignments
- blogs may:
 - Bond classes
 - Invite comments

**Blogging is content
management for the rest of us**

**Blogging is easy online
personal publishing**