



## Blogging

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**Blogging - or weBLOGGING - has been in use on the Internet for several years - but since 2004 has become increasingly popular.**

**But - what is it, and how might businesses use it to their advantage?**

**Our E-Business Advisers discuss:**

### 1. What is Blogging?

Blogging is the periodic online publishing of articles, snippets of news, web links etc. They usually are listed in reverse chronological order, most recent first.

They are often produced in both a web based format, and as news "feed", whereby the information is routed to you.

Another common route is for you to aggregate all the blog feeds that you like together on one web page - companies such as Bloglines allow you to do this for free.

Blogs can be on any topic, e.g. political campaigns, issues about law, which books somebody has read, right through to corporate information, designed to keep stakeholders up to date with what's happening within a firm.

For example, GM Motors Vice Chairman Bob Lutz is an enthusiastic blogger on the GM blog site at <http://fastlane.gmblogs.com>

Blogs can be the thoughts and writings of one individual - or you could allow other people to add their comments, views and web links onto each article too.

What blogs **aren't** is objective, stuffy or forced -

they are a free interchange of ideas. Bloggers often like to describe blogs as a conversation.

You don't even have to have your own blog - subscribing to a relevant blog will help you to keep up with what's happening in your industry, or in your private life.

Making a relevant and pertinent entry on somebody else's blog - with a link to your site - can also be a great way of driving traffic to your web site.

Blogging is still relatively unknown in the UK - but usage has mushroomed in recent years in the USA.

The blogger search site Technorati estimates that there are currently over 14 million blog sites in the "blogosphere", with over 86,000 new blogs created worldwide **every day** - one every second!.

It seems very likely that usage in the UK will follow the American example.

### 2. How do you set up a blog site?

Creating a blog site is easy: there are numerous web sites, listed in the Useful Links section which will allow you to do this.

It's also possible to update blogs via mobile phone - moblogs.

For example, for Singapore's National Day 2005 - August 9 - a moblog site was created at <http://moblog.ndp.org.sg>.

Singaporeans were encouraged to record what they, their family and friends were doing on that



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day via their mobile phone cameras - and moblog it to the site.

These images were shared on video walls as part of the nation's celebrations.

### 3. How could I use blogging for my firm?

In addition to the possibilities of driving traffic to your web site by putting a relevant entry on another person's blog, (with a link to your site), you can use blogs to promote your business and engage with your customers.

You need to think of blogging as another possible tool in how you can both promote your firm and interact with customers. As such, it needs to be incorporated into your business marketing strategy.

The web site, [www.corporateblogging.info](http://www.corporateblogging.info), has defined several advantages for businesses getting involved in blogging:

#### Become the Expert

You can position yourself and your company as leading firm in your area of business.

#### Customer Relationships

Blogs are an ideal way to provide tips and insights on product usage and to receive customer feedback.

#### Media Relations

Blogs provide a medium which media will regularly check: instead of just being passive recipients of yet another press release.

#### Internal Collaboration

As it's possible to have a passworded blog, you could use a blog as a workspace where project members keep each other updated, without constant emailing to and fro.

#### You could test ideas or products

As blogging is informal, it could provide you with a measure of value. If you publish an idea, see how much interest it could generate.

#### Improve your ranking in search engines

Google and other search engines ranking systems favour sites that are updated often, that link to other sites and that have many inbound links - all of which a blog will achieve.

### 4. Useful Links

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blogging> - Web article detailing the history and usage of blogging

[www.bloglines.com](http://www.bloglines.com) - Allows you to create a personalised page, to aggregate all the feeds from the blogs you subscribe to.

[www.corporateblogging.info](http://www.corporateblogging.info) - Web site with many articles, links and references for company bloggers

[www.blogger.com](http://www.blogger.com) - Owned by Google, this is a free, quick and very easy way of creating your own blog

<http://moblog.ndp.org.sg> - Singaporean National Day 2005 moblog site

<http://fastlane.gmblogs.com> - GM Motors blog site

[www.technorati.com](http://www.technorati.com) - Blog search site - you can search for blogs of interest via this site

[http://dear\\_raed.blogspot.com](http://dear_raed.blogspot.com) - The blog site of Salam Pax, also known as the "Baghdad Blogger". Posted anonymously (for personal safety reasons) during the war in Iraq, Pax's blog site gave an ordinary Iraqi's view of



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the war and its aftermath.

Entering “blogging” into Google or any other search engine will also bring up an extensive list of sites and resources.