


Blog

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It has been suggested that *Online diary* be merged into this article or section.
(Discuss)

A **weblog**, which is usually shortened to **blog**, is a type of website where entries are made (such as in a journal or diary), displayed in a reverse chronological order.

Blogs often provide commentary or news and information on a particular subject, such as food, politics, or local news; some function as more personal online diaries. A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, web pages, and other media related to its topic. Most blogs are primarily textual although some focus on photographs (photoblog), videos (vlog), or audio (podcasting).

The word *blog* can also be used as a verb, meaning *to maintain or add content to a blog*.



A screenshot of a typical blog.

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History

Chronicles, commonplaces, diaries, and perzines can all be seen as predecessors of blogs.

Before blogging became popular, digital communities took many forms, including Usenet, e-mail lists and bulletin board systems (BBS). In the 1990s, Internet forum software, such as WebEx, created running conversations with "threads". Threads are topical connections between messages on a metaphorical "corkboard".

1994 – 2001

The modern blog evolved from the online diary where people would keep a running



Brad Fitzpatrick, an early blogger.

account of their personal lives. Most such writers called themselves diarists, journalists, or journalers. A few called themselves escriptionists. The Open Pages webring included members of the online-journal community. Justin Hall, who began eleven years of personal blogging in 1994 while a student at Swarthmore College, is generally recognized as one of the earliest bloggers.^[1]

Other forms of journals kept online also existed. A notable example was game programmer John Carmack's widely read journal, published via the finger protocol. Websites, including both corporate sites and personal homepages, had and still often have "What's New" or "News" sections, often on the index page and sorted by date. One noteworthy early precursor to a blog was the tongue-in-cheek personal website that was frequently updated by Usenet legend Kibo.

Early weblogs were simply manually updated components of common websites. However, the evolution of tools to facilitate the production and maintenance of web articles posted in said chronological fashion made the publishing process feasible to a much larger, less technical, population. Ultimately, this resulted in the distinct class of online publishing that produces blogs we recognize today. For instance, the use of some sort of browser-based software is now a typical aspect of "blogging". blogs can be hosted by dedicated blog hosting services, or they can be run using blog software, such as blogger or LiveJournal, or on regular web hosting services, such as DreamHost.

The term "weblog" was coined by Jorn Barger on 17 December 1997. The short form, "blog," was coined by Peter Merholz, who jokingly broke the word *weblog* into the phrase *we blog* in the sidebar of his blog Peterme.com in April or May of 1999.^{[2][3][4]} This was quickly adopted as both a noun and verb ("to blog," meaning "to edit one's weblog or to post to one's weblog").

After a slow start, blogging rapidly gained in popularity: the site Xanga, launched in 1996, had only 100 diaries by 1997, but over 50,000,000 as of December 2005. blog usage spread during 1999 and the years following, being further popularized by the near-simultaneous arrival of the first hosted blog tools:

- Open Diary launched in October 1998, soon growing to thousands of online diaries. Open Diary innovated the reader comment, becoming the first blog community where readers could add comments to other writers' blog entries.
- Brad Fitzpatrick started LiveJournal in March 1999.
- Andrew Smales created Pitas.com in July 1999 as an easier alternative to maintaining a "news page" on a website, followed by Diaryland in September 1999, focusing more on a personal diary community.^[5]
- Evan Williams and Meg Hourihan (Pyra Labs) launched blogger.com in August 1999 (purchased by Google in February 2003)
- First Indian Blog hosting Site was started recently in 2006 - mykarma.in

blogging combined the personal web page with tools to make linking to other pages easier — specifically permalinks, blogrolls and TrackBacks. This, together with weblog search engines enabled bloggers to track the threads that connected them to others with similar interests.

2001 – 2004

Several broadly popular American blogs emerged in 2001: Andrew Sullivan's AndrewSullivan.com, Ron Gunzburger's Politics1.com, Taegan Goddard's Political Wire and Jerome Armstrong's MyDD — all blogging primarily on politics (two earlier popular American political blogs were Bob Somerby's Daily Howler launched in 1998 and Mickey Kaus' Kausfiles launched in 1999).

By 2001, blogging was enough of a phenomenon that how-to manuals began to appear, primarily focusing on technique. The importance of the blogging community (and its relationship to larger society) gained rapidly increasing importance. Established schools of journalism began researching blogging and noting the differences between journalism and blogging.

In 2002, Jerome Armstrong's friend and sometime business partner Markos Moulitsas Zúniga began DailyKos. With up to a million visits a day during peak events, it has now become one of the Internet's most trafficked blogs.

Also in 2002, many blogs focused on comments by U.S. Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott. Senator Lott, at a party honoring U.S. Senator Strom Thurmond, praised Senator Thurmond by suggesting that the United States would have been better off had Thurmond been elected president. Lott's critics saw these comments as a tacit approval of racial segregation, a policy advocated by Thurmond's 1948 presidential campaign. This view was reinforced by documents and recorded interviews dug up by bloggers. (See Josh Marshall's *Talking Points Memo*.) Though Lott's comments were made at a public event attended by the media, no major media organizations reported on his controversial comments until after blogs broke the story. blogging helped to create a political crisis that forced Lott to step down as majority leader.

The impact of this story gave greater credibility to blogs as a medium of news dissemination. Though often seen as partisan gossips, bloggers sometimes lead the way in bringing key information to public light, with mainstream media having to follow their lead. More often, however, news blogs tend to react to material already published by the mainstream media.

Since 2003, blogs have gained increasing notice and coverage for their role in breaking, shaping, and spinning news stories. The Iraq war saw bloggers taking measured and passionate points of view that go beyond the traditional left-right divide of the political spectrum.

blogging by established politicians and political candidates, to express opinions on war and other issues, cemented blogs' role as a news source. (See Howard Dean and Wesley Clark.) Meanwhile, an increasing number of experts blogged, making blogs a source of in-depth analysis. (See Daniel Drezner and J. Bradford DeLong.)

The second Iraq war was the first "blog war" in another way: Iraqi bloggers gained wide readership, and one, Salam Pax, published a book of his blog. blogs were also created by soldiers serving in the Iraq war. Such "warblog" gave readers new perspectives on the realities of war, as well as often offering different viewpoints from those of official news sources.

blogging was used to draw attention to obscure news sources. For example, bloggers posted links to traffic cameras in Madrid as a huge anti-terrorism demonstration filled the streets in the wake of the March 11 attacks.

bloggers began to provide nearly-instant commentary on televised events, creating a secondary meaning of the word "blogging": to simultaneously transcribe and editorialize speeches and events shown on television. (For example, "I am blogging Rice's testimony" means "I am posting my reactions to Condoleezza Rice's testimony into my blog as I watch her on television.") Real-time commentary is sometimes referred to as "liveblogging."

2004 – present

In 2004, the role of blogs became increasingly mainstream, as political consultants, news services and candidates began using them as tools for outreach and opinion forming. Even politicians not actively campaigning, such as the UK's Labour Party's MP Tom Watson, who began to blog to bond with constituents.

Minnesota Public Radio broadcast a program by Christopher Lydon and Matt Stoller called "The blogging of the President," which covered a transformation in politics that blogging seemed to presage. The *Columbia Journalism Review* began regular coverage of blogs and blogging. Anthologies of blog pieces reached print, and blogging personalities began appearing on radio and television. In the summer of 2004, both United States Democratic and Republican Parties' conventions credentialed bloggers, and blogs became a standard part of the publicity arsenal. Mainstream television programs, such as Chris Matthews' *Hardball*, formed their own blogs. Merriam-Webster's Dictionary declared "blog" as the word of the year in 2004.^[6]



A WordPress test blog running Kubrick.

Blogs were among the driving forces behind the "Rathergate"

scandal, to wit: (television journalist) Dan Rather presented documents (on the CBS show *60 Minutes*) that conflicted with accepted accounts of President Bush's military service record. Bloggers declared the documents to be forgeries and presented evidence and arguments in support of that view, and CBS apologized for what it said were inadequate reporting techniques (see Little Green Footballs). Many bloggers view this scandal as the advent of blogs' acceptance by the mass media, both as a source of news and opinion and as means of applying political pressure.

Some bloggers have moved over to other media. The following bloggers (and others) have appeared on radio and television: Duncan Black (known widely by his pseudonym, Atrios), Glenn Reynolds (Instapundit) , Markos Moulitsas Zúniga (Daily Kos), Alex Steffen (Worldchanging) and Ana Marie Cox (Wonkette). Hugh Hewitt is an example of a media personality who has moved in the other direction, adding to his reach in "old media" by being an influential blogger.

Some blogs were an important source of news during the December 2004 Tsunami such as Medecins Sans Frontieres, which used SMS text messaging to report from affected areas in Sri Lanka and Southern India.

In the United Kingdom, *The Guardian* newspaper launched a redesign in September 2005, which included a daily digest of blogs on page 2. Also in June 2006, BBC News launched a weblog for its editors, following other news companies ^[7].

In January 2005, *Fortune* magazine listed eight bloggers that business people "could not ignore": Peter Rojas, Xeni Jardin, Ben Trott, Mena Trott, Jonathan Schwartz, Jason Goldman, Robert Scoble, and Jason Calacanis.

Types of blogs

There are various types of blogs, and each differs in the way content is delivered or written.

By media type

A blog comprising videos is called a vlog, one comprising links is called a linklog^[8], or one comprising photos is called a photoblog^[9].

By device

blogs can also be defined by which type of device is used to compose it. A blog written by a mobile device like a mobile phone or PDA is called a moblog.^[10]



A photo of Joi Ito's moblog

Genre

A political blog deals mainly with politics; a travel blog would deal with travel.

Legal status of publishers

A blog can be private, as in most cases, or it can be for business purposes. blogs, either used internally to enhance the communication and culture in a corporation or externally for marketing, branding or PR purposes are called corporate blogs.

Business models

While the great majority of blogs are non-commercial, full-time bloggers have struggled to find a way to make a profit from their work. The most common and simplest method is to accept targeted banner advertising. However, some bloggers have been hesitant to use this because of negative reader response to the ads. A more discreet form of advertising is for bloggers to promote merchandise from other sites, receiving a commission when a customer buys the item after following a blog link.

Others have tried a click-to-donate model. Prominent political blogger Andrew Sullivan claimed at one point that accepting voluntary donations to his blog was more lucrative than his magazine work for *The New Republic*. Following the practice of public television, Sullivan boosted donations with periodic "pledge drives," one of which was reported to net him \$120,000. Sullivan's attempt at securing corporate sponsorship for his blog fell apart after strong negative reader response to the deal.

No other high-profile blogger has accepted a single corporate sponsor since Sullivan's failed deal. However, In the early

twenty-first century, many magazines and newspapers began sponsoring personal blogs by their employees. The business model in this case is essentially the same as that of a traditional newspaper columnist. In a creative extension of the model, employees at other media companies began blogs focusing on the companies' products. For example, many actors in pornography blog about their work on company sites, creating a sense of personal connection between consumer and product.

Anatomy of a blog entry

A blog entry typically consists of the following:

- *Title*, the main title, or headline, of the post.
- *Body*, main content of the post.
- *Permalink*, the URL of the full, individual article.
- *Post Date*, date and time the post was published.

A blog entry optionally includes the following:

- *Comments*
- *Categories* (or tags) - subjects that the entry discusses
- *Trackback* and or *pingback* - links to other sites that refer to the entry

Comments

Comments are a way to provide discussion on blog entries. Readers can leave a comment on a post, which can correct errors or contain their opinion on the post or the post's subject. Services like coComment aim to ease discussion through comments, by allowing tracking of them.

Blog popularity

Recently, researchers have analyzed the dynamics of how blogs become popular. There are essentially two measures of this: popularity through citations, as well as popularity through affiliation (i.e. blogroll). The basic conclusion from studies of the structure of blogs is that while it takes time for a blog to become popular through blogrolls, permalinks can boost popularity more quickly, and are perhaps more indicative of popularity and authority than blogrolls, since they denote that people are actually reading the blog's content and deem it valuable or noteworthy in specific cases.^[11]

The blogdex project was launched by researchers in the MIT Media Lab to crawl the web and gather data from thousands of blogs in order to investigate their social properties. It gathered this information for over 4 years, and autonomously tracked the most contagious information spreading in the blog community. The project is no longer active.

Blogs are also given rankings by Technorati based on the amount of incoming links and Alexa Internet based on the web hits of Alexa Toolbar users. In August 2006, Technorati listed the most linked-to blog as that of Chinese actress Xu Jinglei and the most read blog as group-written Boing Boing.^[12]

Searching blogs

Several blog search engines are used to search blog contents (also known as the blogosphere), such as blogdigger, Feedster, and Technorati. Technorati provides current information on both popular searches and tags used to categorize blog postings.

Blogging and the mass media

Many bloggers differentiate themselves from the mainstream media, while others are members of that media working through a different channel. Some institutions see blogging as a means of "getting around the filter" and pushing messages directly to the public. Some critics worry that bloggers respect neither copyright nor the role of the mass media in presenting society

with credible news.

Bloggers' credibility problem, however, can be an advantage for the bloggers and for the mainstream journalists who take an interest in them. News organizations are sometimes reluctant to tell stories that will upset important people. But when bloggers or activists make sensational claims, then they become stories themselves, and journalists can use them as cover for reporting the underlying scandals.

Many mainstream journalists, meanwhile, write their own blogs -- well over 300, according to CyberJournalist.net's J-blog list. The first known use of a Weblog on a news site was in August 1998, when Jonathan Dube of The Charlotte Observer published one chronicling Hurricane Bonnie.^[13]

Blogs have also had an influence on minority languages, bringing together scattered speakers and learners; this is particularly so with blogs in Gaelic languages, whose creators can be found as far away from traditional Gaelic areas as Kazakhstan and Alaska. Minority language publishing (which may lack economic feasibility) can find its audience through inexpensive blogging.

How blogs are made

A variety of different systems are used to create and maintain blogs. Dedicated web applications can eliminate the need for bloggers to manage this software. With web interfaces, these systems allow travelers to blog from anywhere on the Internet, and allow users to create blogs without having to maintain their own server. Such systems allow users to work with tools such as Ecto, Elicit and w.bloggar which allow users to maintain their Web-hosted blog without the need to be online while composing or editing posts. Blog creation tools and blog hosting are also provided by some Web hosting companies (Tripod), Internet service providers (America Online), online publications (Salon.com) and internet portals (Yahoo! 360° or Google). Some advanced users have developed custom blogging systems from scratch using server-side software, and often implement membership management and password protected areas. Others have created a mix of a blog and wiki, called a bliki.

Legal issues

The emergence of blogging has brought a range of legal liabilities. Employers have "dooced" (fired) employees who maintain personal blogs that discuss their employers.^[14] The major areas of concern are the issues of proprietary or confidential information, and defamation. Several cases have been brought before the national courts against bloggers and the courts have returned with mixed verdicts. In *John Doe v. Patrick Cahill*, the Delaware Supreme Court held that stringent standards had to be met to unmask anonymous bloggers, and also took the unusual step of dismissing the libel case itself (as unfounded under American libel law) rather than referring it back to the trial court for reconsideration. In a bizarre twist, the Cahills were able to find the ISP address of John Doe, who turned out to be the person they suspected: the town's mayor, Councilman Cahill's political rival. The Cahills amended their original complaint, and the mayor settled the case rather than going to trial.^[15]

In Singapore, on the other hand, two ethnic Chinese were punished under the country's anti-sedition law for posting anti-Muslim remarks in their weblogs.^[16] Internet Service Providers, in general, are immune from liability for information that originates with Third Parties (U.S. Communications Decency Act and the EU Directive 2000/31/EC).

In Britain, a college lecturer contributed to a blog in which she referred to a politician (who had also expressed his views in the same blog) using various uncomplimentary names, including referring to him as a "Nazi". The politician found out the real name of the lecturer (she wrote under a pseudonym) via the ISP and successfully sued her for £10,000 in damages and £7,200 costs.^[17]

Mark Cuban, owner of the Dallas Mavericks, was recently fined during the 2006 NBA playoffs for criticizing NBA officials on the court and in his blog.^[18]

Ellen Simonetti, a US airline attendant, lost her job after posting photos of herself in uniform displaying more cleavage than ordinary on her blog "The Queen of the Sky".^[19] Simonetti took legal action against the airline for "wrongful termination, defamation of character and lost future wages"^[20].

In India, blogger Gaurav Sabnis quit his job at IBM after his posts exposing the false claims of a management school, IIPM, led to management of IIPM threatening to burn their IBM laptops as a sign of protest against him. ^[21] ^[22] ^[23]

Blogging terms

Blogging has developed a specialized vocabulary that has evolved into almost seemingly casual conversations between acquaintances, and has even found its way into some schools. See List of blogging terms.

Trivia

- The most popular blog in the world

It was reported by a chinese media Xinhua that the blog^[2] (<http://blog.sina.com.cn/m/xujinglei>) of Xu Jinglei receive its 50,000,000 clics, and claimed to be the most popular blog in the world.^[3] (http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2006-08/24/content_672747.htm),which also In mid 2006,had the most incoming links of any on the Internet, according to Technorati.^[4] (http://blogs.guardian.co.uk/news/archives/2006/08/15/internet_killed_the_tv_star.html)

See also

- blog search engines
- blog software
- blogebrity
- Buzzword
- Corporate blog
- Political blog
- Online diary - the precursor to blogs
- Virtual Community
- Massively distributed collaboration
- Citizen journalism
- Content Management System
- Google bomb
- MySpace - social networking site
- Windows Live Spaces - Microsoft's Social Networking platform
- News aggregator - client software that uses a web feed to retrieve syndicated web content such as weblogs, podcasts, vlogs, and mainstream mass media websites
- Podcasting - a method of distributing multimedia files, such as audio programs or music videos, over the Internet
- TagWorld - a MySpace competitor
- Yahoo! 360° - a personal communication portal
- List of social networking websites - includes many blog and journal sites



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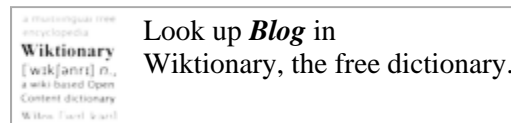
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Retrieved from "<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blog>"

Categories: Articles to be merged | Cleanup from August 2006 | Articles lacking sources | Articles with invalid ISBNs | Blogs | Digital Revolution | Internet culture | Internet terminology | Neologisms | Politics and technology | Technology in society

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