

Blog: A useful tool for disseminating the information

Pushp Lata^{1*}, Somvir²

¹Library Assistant, ²Librarian, ^{1,2}Dept. of Library, ^{1,2}Ganga Institute of Technology and Management, Jhajjar, Haryana, India

***Corresponding Author: Pushp Lata**

Email: pushplatadabas17@gmail.com

Abstract

In recent years social networking sites are accepted among the professionals for the information dissemination. Organizations are using these sites as new strategies to promote their public relations programs after when the social networking sites allowed the organizations to create profiles and become active members. Organizations are using these sites to promote their new launch products and services. Blog are started as an essential tool for the information dissemination by different organizations/ information centers/ libraries due to the opportunity to connect freely with information seekers. In this paper the historical background, the advantages, disadvantages and future of the blogs described by the authors. The legal implication and how blogs can be beneficial for information disseminators, also presented by the authors.

Keywords: Blog, Legal Implication, Creation of Information centre Blog.

Introduction

Bolg is an upcoming tool, gaining popularity day by day and it has become the perfect platform to espouse ideas, publish thoughts online, influence society, engage in global discussion, and promote oneself as a thought leader online. Blog helps out not only to get connected to the institution but to the outside world as well. Blogs have a particular format, style and tone which make them unique and different from typical websites. The format of a blog can vary from simple bulleted lists of hyperlinks to summaries or complete articles along with user reviews and sometimes, rating. Some blogs are straightforward while the others allow comments from visitors. Blogs can be internal, i.e. restricted to people within an organization or public, which is accessible to anybody surfing through the internet. For any institutions the library is a pivotal key due to its important role in the success of any organization by a continuous flow of information the end users. The Librarian's/ Information Officer's duty is to provide the right information to the right user at right time at right place at right cost and in today's information society blog is the most easiest way for this.

Definition

A blog can be defined as a web-based publication, which consists of periodic articles or information generally in the reverse chronological order. Blog is variously defined as: an online journal comprised of links and posting in reverse chronological order, meaning the most recent posting appears at the top of the page; a journal that is available on the web; and a web application that contains periodic, reverse chronologically ordered posts on a common web page. According to wikipedia "A blog (a blend of the term web log) is a type of website or part of a website. Blogs are usually maintained by an individual with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video. Entries are commonly displayed in reverse- chronological order. Blog can also be used as a verb, meaning to maintain or add content to a blog."²

History of Blog

Justina Hall can be considered to be the father of blogging, who started blogging in 1994, while he was studying in Swarthmore College. The term "Weblog" was coined by another blogger named Jorn Barger in 1997.³ Peter Merholz, who used to have the phrase "We Blog" in the site bar of his personal Weblog, coined the shorter and more common version "Blog" in early 1999. Later on, the word "blog" was given a verb version – "to blog" meant "to edit a weblog or to post something on weblog". Though Blog had started gaining attention by 1999 but it was only the 9/11 incidents, which helped the blogs to expand their readership and reach new frontiers. They became a source of information and an avenue for people to express their views against terrorism. After the September 11, 2001 attacks, many blogs which supported the US "War on Terrorism" quickly gained readership among a public searching for information to understand that event. Blogging came to India through volunteers after the Tsunami disaster.

Characteristics of Successful a Bog

A blog is word that has been used before and you must have come across it, it became synonymous with the emergence of internet. A blog is a simple diary where an individual notes down his activities, it is not just a normal diary but an online diary that resemble a typical website with some different features.⁴

1. A blog is written in a chronological order with the most recent post being at the top of the page.
2. Blogs articles have dates indicating when they were written.
3. Blog has got few navigation links compared to a normal website.
4. Blog provide information on a daily basis – updated regularly unlike a website.
5. Blogs have comments section unlike the normal website which do not allow for comments.
6. Blog is an interactive platform where you can exchange views with the blogs owner.

7. Blog is used as a teaching tool since most people get frequent updates through newsletter

Functions of a Blog

1. Teaching Tool
2. Personal Diary
3. Office Diary
4. Company Marketing Tool
5. Hobby Writing
6. Vacation Planning
7. Online Money Making with Google AdSense

How to Make Better Blog

Some basic tips for creation of a library blog are given below-

1. Post regularly, but don't post if you have nothing worth posting about.
2. The content should be updated regularly
3. Use a clean and simple theme if at all possible
4. Enjoy blog for fun, comment on other people's blog in a civilized manner.
5. Before uploading the information, judge the type of users and their area of interest.
6. Be swift- design and execute every day.
7. Stay focused- content should focus the requirement of users and be consistent.
8. Be a good guest
9. Be diverse- fulfills the needs of diverse user community.

Library Blogs

The new information, materials, services, databases, etc. can be disseminate via blog. In the digital environment, to promote awareness of the library programs and services, blog is very useful tool to broadcast the information to end users due to it's very fast and simple way to post content online. To create awareness amongst the users especially in the costly resources like online databases, the blog is very helpful tool. The users can be motivated to take advantage of library resources more frequently and more effectively by the library professions via blog. The thoughts, ideas and suggestions about the library resources and its services, can enter by the users through the library blogs and librarian can also know the user's views, ideas and thinking about library resources and services and its utility. A library blog entry might contain text, images or links to other blogs and web page. Any library user can publish a blog post easily and cheaply through a web interface, and reader can place a comment on a blog post. With the increase use of ICT in the library filed the use of blogs has been increasing day by day.

Issues in Creation of Library Blog

Bair and Cranston identified following issues for the successful library Blog.^{[1][6]}

1. Scope/Vision- Decide on the focal point of a library blog, which includes specific resources.
2. Audience- Identifying primary and secondary audience.

3. Highest Priorities- Subject heading is assigned to the available library resources using in library classification system.
4. Sources for new content- Define the source of content whether it is coming from public blog, websites, open source resources.
5. Time- Supporting tools are used on fixed time frame.
6. Ideas for launching and advertising- The proper time in the academic environment is important, whenever planning for launching any new resources in a blog.
7. Evaluation Criteria- Surveying the targeted audience, monitoring the regular visitors, analyzing the suggestions is important.
8. Editorial Guidelines- Try to adopt any of the popular journal publication guidelines and standards
9. Publication Guidelines- Maintain the regular updating of a library blog through proper guidelines for content publication.
10. Measuring Success- Measurement is based of the feedback given by the patrons in the form of comments and suggestion.

Handling the Library Blog

Launching the library blog on a strategic platform is not enough. The maintenance and measurement of blog is more important than having it.

1. Regular Posting- Blogging is conservation. Therefore, organization should provide posting as set time period. Usually, frequency of posting depends upon the visitors flow into the Library blog and strength or need of the organization.
2. Freshness- The library blog can be achieved only when the responders are involved heart soul. The involvements of responders depend upon the fresh discussion subjects, content and materials.
3. Prompt listening- the Library blog responders ask many relevant and irrelevant questions and ask for quick actions from the organization. Therefore, the organization should listen in-depth and take quick action regarding services and other information.
4. Humanizing Efforts- Blogging communities of a library blog are emotional ones, though they are attached with the blog. Therefore the responses from the organization should have a human face from all perspectives.
5. Benchmarking- There is inborn competition among various industry blogs. The organization should also monitor other blogs ad its others features also vis-a vis their own blogs in terms of unique visitors, and other terrains of awareness.
6. Feedback- It is essential to take the help of experts for correct feedback of maintaining the library blog.
7. Frequent monitoring- the reviewing committee of the library blog should adapt a fixed frequency of monitoring other relevant blogs as par of benchmarking.
8. Meeting the goals- time to time, the organization should review that the set goals are being met by the library blog or not. In case the goals are not being met, the

organization should go for the root cause and should take corrective measures.

5. The comment feature of Blog is vastly over rated than content.

Advantages of the Blog

1. Posting on a blog are almost always arranged in a chronological order with the most recent additions.
2. To engage customers and push fresh content to user.
3. Email spam filters do not block Blogs because they are not an email communication.
4. You can make as many Blogs as you like on any subject.
5. Blogs can be accessed from anywhere and any time.
6. Blogs have the potential to develop a stronger sense of community across different groups of individuals who may seldom meet in person.
7. Instant feedback mechanism is possible in Blog.
8. A blog is also a good way to keep track of articles on a site.
9. Marketing the library services.
10. Blogs gives unlimited space to users.
11. A typical Blog combines text, images and links to others blogs, web pages, and other media related to its topic.

In the library profession blogs are useful for providing right information in the right time to both librarians and library users. The following benefits are given below-

1. Enhancement and progress of library services- Blogs gives updated information about any changes and updates in library policy and upcoming programmes.
2. Impressive Image- Maintains Blogs gives an indirect impact and the image of the libraries and librarians with technological advancement.
3. Library Co-operation- Blogs can be used as a way of sharing resources and information among colleagues and fellow librarians. Collaborative Blogging allows a community of people with similar interest to contribute to a collective beneficial resource. It also helps to build a community who shares common interests. It also helps in Consortia formation.
4. Providing Information Support- The blog fills in an extends information outlined in existing library information structures.
5. Building and connecting Knowledge- Blogs are often highly structures static, and/or inflexible. Blogs are free flowing, continuous and dynamic.
6. Providing Flexible Information- in the most basic sense, blogs are dynamic listings of frequently asked questions, with a multitude of functionality and uses.

Drawbacks

1. Commenting of Blogs is an odd form of Communicating.
2. It depends on Internet connection and Internet Speed.
3. It is a personal webpage and the organization is not responsible for any of the content.
4. It creates a hard to define community where people come and people go.

Legal Issues

The biggest problems arise when bloggers reveal proprietary of confidential information, and post content that defames the person. Organization has to establish their own blogging policies to protect themselves from unpredictable bloggers. Legally organizations are held responsible for the blogs written by their employee's. A number of employees are losing their jobs for violating company policies over their blogs. Though there is no particular law to handle and monitor blogs, most of the issues raised by blogs are related to copyright infringement, defamation and intrusion of privacy. The nature of blogs is now considered dubious particularly with the growing number of defamation cases. The most frequent following of blogs are Americans as compared to any other country. The US has made special provisions in their laws, considering the growing issues related to blogging. Indian law does not have any provision for the issues related to blogs till now. As the usages of Blog are increasing every day, there is a need for a clear view on issues related to blogging, and how to handle them. In 2009, NDTV issued a legal notice to Indian blogger Chetan Kunte for "abusive free speech" regarding a blog post criticizing their coverage of the Mumbai attacks. The blogger unconditionally withdrew his post, replacing it with legal undertaking and an admission that his post had been "defamatory and untrue" which resulted in several Indian bloggers criticizing NDTV for trying to silence critics.⁵

Future of Blog

Blog have become very popular now these days and have stirred the corporate, media, doctor and political world. The blogs are using by the celebrities. The way some Blogs are growing, it looks like they may have a more pronounced effect in the future. The people have freedom to express themselves by the blogging. They are the authentic voice of people who want to be heard. However, on the flip side, Blogs are also misused to leak company secrets and confidential information.

Summing Up

Now days the uses of blogs are increasing at high rate, people are reading and writing blogs. It is globally expected that blogs will be more famous among the users. For the library professionals, blogs is the fastest and efficient way to stay up to date and to disseminate the information on time. To share thoughts and sometimes to get views or know the user's perspective about the content, Blog is the most powerful tool and it is effective tool to contribute knowledge to the organization. Now these days all over the world other professionals as well as library professionals are using blogs effectively. To post content online access to the internet Library blogs provide very fast and simple way. Librarian motivates users to take advantage of library resources more frequently and effectively and provides all latest event information, new acquisition, useful links, links

to open access periodicals etc. through the library blogs. The usage of library blog would definitely meet the changing/diversified needs of 21st century library users we can say on the basis of the above cited discussion.

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