

Creation of Library Blogs

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ABSTRACT

A blog provides a quick and simple way to post content online that is available anywhere there is access to the Internet. Blogs devoted to a certain topic, system, or product are a very interesting way to learn more about the subject, share tips, find out what people think, learn about new developments or describe research in that area. The creation of Library blogs have real potential for promoting library services to the targeted community. This paper outlines the concept of blogs in general, available tools, the concept of library blogs, steps involved in creating a library blogs with its advantages.

Keywords: Blogs, Weblogs, Library blogs.

INTRODUCTION

The Internet is the most important medium for information dissemination. Blogs are a new technology relatively like the web. Tim Berner-Lee, the inventor of web, created the first blog in 1992 when he built the first web page (Oatman 2005). Blogs are simply “web logs”, written by people that want to comment on special subjects of interest and wish to post news, information and points of view in the Internet (Tirapat 2006). A blog is a simplified form of web publishing that allows anyone with a computer and Internet connection to post content online. As noted by Rebecca Blood, almost all weblogs are non-commercial ventures: they don’t make money for their maintenance, and in fact probably cost them a little (Blood,R 2002). The blogs are like a personal diaries, dedicated to a particular area of interest,

such as politics, education, business, or entertainment etc. A blog entry typically consists of a short, descriptive title, a body with the main content, and the date and time it was posted. Some blogs may be annotated with comments by the blog readers (Tirapat, Espiritu and Stroulia 2006).

Weblogs (or blogs) are becoming a “new form of mainstream personal communication” for millions of people to publish and exchange knowledge/information, and to establish networks or build relationships in the world of all blogs, the so-called “blogosphere”. Blogging is part of the process that started with the Internet and that is changing the global communications. It is one way for individuals to publish material on the internet for everybody to read. The History of web logs or weblogs is murky, but the term “weblog” is generally conceded to have been coined in December 1997 by Jorn Berger in his Robot Wisdom weblog.” The term was quickly shortened to “blog”.

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DEFINITION

Blogs are simply “web logs”, written by people that want to comment on special subjects of interest and wish to post news, information

and points of view in the Internet, similar to a diary.

The term Weblog was first used by John Barger (1997) and was defined as “ a web page where a blogger ‘logs’ all the other web pages he/she finds interesting.

According to one of the blogging pioneer Winter (www.scripting.com), the weblogs have the following characteristics.

Personalised

It is designed for individual use and in some cases there is collaboration “team blog” offered

Web-based

It is easy to maintain, accessible via web browser and updated frequently

Community-supported

It can link other weblogs and websites, enabling linkage ideas and stimulating knowledge generation, sharing between bloggers.

Automated

Automatic blogging tools are available to help bloggers in writing HTML code.

BLOGGING TOOLS

There are several free and open source blogging tools available. These are categorized in to three types (Du and wagner 2006).

The first type tools provides basic content presentation features for creating link-driven text diaries. Although their interfaces are relatively less attractive, their easy to learn and use editing functional capability fits well to those who simply wish to have a channel for expression of opinions.

The second type tools focuses on providing rich interface (or multimedia capability) to share more than just content with the same click-and-post ease, and on supporting or hyperlinking. Most of the bloggers are using this tool.

The third type of blogging technology is providing improved content distribution and between-blog connectivity. These includes integrated applications such as project

management or workflow features, to enhance social networking and community building.

LIBRARY BLOGS

Blogs and wikis are some of the popular social tools (Farkas 2007).The existing blogs and bloggers have been motivating the libraries to start and make use of the resources. Blogs are place to disseminate and also place to get the feed back of library resources and services. The blog used to motivate users to take advantage of library resources more frequently and more effectively- especially those electronic databases that are costly to lease and maintain. The blogs ultimately helping the students achieve intended learning outcomes (Ramsey and Kinnie 2006).

Library blogs are risk free and generally causes no harm and fun to create. The creation of library blog to courseware is giving awareness about the education in the rapidly evolving technologies of blogging, news aggregation, social networking and search personalization. A good library blog is a long term commitment. A clear scope, a well defined audience, a professional look, and regular maintenance required. The policies should include blog scope, intended audience, administrator, authors and publication schedule.

There are many library blogs are available, few of them listed here

1. Librarian.net - <http://librarian.net/> - a blog where librarians share their experiences.
2. LISNews.com - <http://www.lisnews.com/> - blog dedicated to current events & news in the world of library & information science.
3. Library Stuff - <http://librarystuff.net/> - Steven M. Cohen's blog on current and professional development information for librarians, since August 2000.
4. LibraryPlanet - <http://libraryplanet.com/> - A Librarian's look at the world at large. Librarian's views on varied topics such as biographies, KM, Intellectual Freedom, Technology, War and Terror, etc.
5. The ResourceShelf - <http://www.resourceshelf.com/> - A site where

librarians & researchers share the results of their web searches for resources & information.

6. The Shifted Librarian - <http://theshiftedlibrarian.com/> - Musings on Libraries, librarianship and current happenings in LIS around the world.

STEPS FOR CREATING LIBRARY BLOG

Bair and Cranston (2006) identified 10 steps for the successful library blog.

Scope/Vision

Decide on the focal point of a blog which includes specific disciplines, selection of relevant content, type of contributors, expectations of visitors, etc.

Identify the primary and secondary audience

Identifying the primary audience help to set a tone and clearly speak to its interests and adopting blogs as an information source.

Determine high priority topics

The subject heading is assigned to the available library resources using a library classification system

Sources for new content

In this step define the source of a content-whether it is coming from public blog, web sites, open source resources, repositories, open access journals, news papers, listserves etc. In this section needs to execute the RSS feed reader.

Time Frame

It is fixed based the supporting tools used

Ideas for launching and advertising

The proper time in the academic environment is important, whenever planning for launching any new resources in a blog. This is advertising in the form of e-mai and using listservs.

Evaluation Criteria

Surveying the targeted audience, monitoring the regular visitors, analyzing the suggestion are important

Publication guidelines

Maintain the regular updation of a blog, ensuring the proper guidelines for the content publication.

Editorial guidelines

Try to adopt any of the popular journal publication guidelines and standards.

Measuring success

The measurement is based of the feed back given by the visitors in the form of comments and suggestions. The relevant content, up to date maintenance, technical expertise is very important in measuring the success of any blogs.

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL LIBRARY BLOG (BELL 2005)

1. Update regularly- the content should be updated regularly
2. Provide quality content
3. Be a good guest (librarian)
4. Be diverse- fulfills the needs of diverse user community
5. Be swift-design and execute every day
6. Stay focuses- content should focus the requirement of users and more consistent

CONCLUSION

Blogs are generally written in a quick, informal style and include links to other web sites and blogs, instead of reiterating what has already been said. Bloggers like any writers, need to know their audience. The benefit of this technology is decided by the people, librarians and the users. Blogs are not the answer to better communication of our library resources, but they are part of it. There are many disadvantages in case of library blogs and its creation.

REFERENCES

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