

### How to Blog: Best Practices 18 January 2017

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### This is Me



### Katy Dickinson with students Mother Board Workshop, February 2016, in Gaza City

# My History as a Blogger

- Writing Katysblog since 2005.
- 1,743 posts so far (on Katysblog).
- 2,171 regular readers (blog subscribers). Many more read Katysblog through LinkedIn, Twitter, and Wordpress.
- Contribute articles to other blog sites from time to time.
- My company *Mentoring Standard* uses Wordpress as a website platform: *mentoringstandard.com*

# What is a Blog?

- A **Blog** (or web log) is a discussion or information site on the World Wide Web made up of entries or posts, with the most current displayed first. Blogs can be:
  - Original or curated
  - Contain only text or text with images
  - Written by one or many authors
  - Interactive (with readers leaving comments) or not.
  - Popular free services: Wordpress, Medium, Ghost, Joomla.
- A **Microblog** is a form of blog that is smaller in size. *Popular free services: Twitter, Tumblr*.
- A **Photo Blog** is focused more on images than text. *Popular free services: Instagram, Flickr, Pinterest.*

## Why Blog? To Be Heard!



#### Wordpress stats:

409 Million people view more than 22.4 Billion pages each month. 73.9 Million new posts and 49 Million new comments each month. *Image from https://wordpress.com/activity/* 

# Why is a Blog Useful?

- **Communicating** with community, family, friends.
- Enlarging your circle, telling your story through personal experience, informing the world in your own words about your culture, community, context.
- **Learning** how to write for a big audience, interacting with readers.
- **Improving** your research and writing composition skills through regular practice.
- Having fun!

# Group Blogging

To write a blog with a group, you need *Structure* and a *Schedule*. Harpswell will post the blog entries, and provide some writing help. Decide:

### 1. Structure

- Who is your audience?
- What are both you and your audience interested in? (*Suggestions:* School work, Home life, Music, Local culture, Cooking, Fashion, and Beauty)
- Does each person write, or are there teams of writers?
- What language or languages will this blog be in?
- Who is the **Editor**?
  - *Job*: Refining expression, Consistency of voice and presentation, Fixing grammar and spelling, and Gatekeeping between writers, Harpswell, and their audience.
  - *Must be*: A good writer / composer, detail oriented, very organized, diplomatic.
- Who is the **Photographer**?
  - *Job*: Illustrating her own and others' blog posts.
  - Must have access to a digital camera, or a smart phone with a camera.
  - *Must be*: Creative, excited by form/color, detail oriented, very organized, diplomatic.

### 2. Schedule

- Frequency of posting: Weekly? Twice Monthly? Monthly?
- Schedule for each person or team to write a post.

# How to Write a Blog 1

- Every writer must find her own voice, style, and audience.
- The best way to learn to blog is to read other people's blogs, then write your own.
- Blogs from Cambodia to read for comparison:
  - <u>http://blog.andybrouwer.co.uk/</u> (Temples, Books, Films...)
  - <u>http://blueladyblog.com/</u> (Travel, Food, Films...)
  - <u>http://www.chamnanmuon.com/</u> (Marketing, Entertainment, Business...)
  - <u>http://www.khmerbird.com/blog/</u> (Travel, Movies, Books...)
  - <u>http://sumsithen.com/</u> (Movie Reviews)
  - <u>http://tharum.com/blog/</u> (Technology, and Coffee)
  - <u>http://www.vuthychour.com/</u> (Technology, Business, Food...)
  - <u>http://wheninphnompenh.com/</u> (Travel)
- A consistent publishing schedule, images, and quality writing make your readers want to come back.

# How to Write a Blog 2

- In putting together each blog entry, focus on 3 areas, in this order:
  - Topic
  - Images
  - Writing Composition
- Consider a single topic for each entry, starting with a subject of special interest.
- Within that general requirement, each entry topic must also be one or more of the following:
  - Entertaining
  - Educational or Historical
  - Newsworthy

# How to Write a Blog 3

- Decide what matters to you and your audience, then write about it.
- If you enjoy taking pictures: a photo will often inspire a blog entry with text expressing what is of interest in that image.
- Once you start composing, work to ensure that **not one word is wasted**. Be respectful of your reader's time and precious attention by being succinct and clear.
- Three words of advice for successful bloggers:
  - Be authentic.
  - Be respectful.
  - Be brief.
- Once you have established your blog, ask your family, friends, and community to read it and send you comments.

### What to Avoid

There are topics and behaviors you need to avoid as a student blogger on the Harpswell website:

- Do not take other people's words or images without permission. This is *plagiarism* and *copyright infringement*.
- Avoid politics, personal ridicule, vulgarity, fake news, gossip, and too-private information.
- Remember: you are speaking for your school and community and want them to be respected.

### What a Blog Looks Like: Outside

#### **KatysBlog**

Search

Email Subscription

Join 2,171 other followers

Sign me up!

Click to subscribe to this blog and receive notifications of new posts by email.

AAUW Africa Algeria birds Brazil Cameroon cats Central Asia China CMU Disabilities Dogs

Education for Ministry Egypt Eleanor Episcopal

church Ethiopia Foothill

College garden Geeks

General Convention House

Work Huawei insects Jail

Jessica John Jordan

Kazakhstan Kenya Kyrgyzstan Lair of

the Bear Lebanon marriage

Mentoring Mexico Middle East Morocco

Matthew Melville

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#### JANUARY 11, 2017 · 4:17 PM | EDIT

#### Being the Only Woman in the Room



This week I met the Rev. Liz Milner, new <u>CIC</u> Chaplain for <u>Elmwood Jail</u> where I hold a weekly <u>Education for Ministry</u> (EfM) seminar in a men's medium-security dorm. During this introductory conversation, I mentioned to Liz that I was comfortable working as the EfM Mentor in a men's facility. After so long working as an executive in Silicon Valley technical companies, I would have to be comfortable being the only woman in the room! <u>NCWIT</u> reports that only <u>25% of US professional computing jobs are held by women</u>, with numbers much lower at senior levels.

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Pages/Tabs: Home, About ...

#### Home Page Theme Photo

Blog Title: KatysBlog

Left: Date/Time of Most Recent Post Right: Search Bar L: Blog Title L: Top Photo in Blog Post R: Subscription Button R: Count of Subscribers

*L*: Blog Content *R*: Word Cloud – Most Common Used

## A Blog Inside: Visual View



Left: Navigation Bar for Information and Design ("Nav") Middle: Blog Title Middle: Permalink, Control Buttons Middle: Visual of Post Content Right: Management Tools

## A Blog Inside: Text View

🛞 My Sites 🛛 🖬 Read	er	🗹 Write 📎 🔷
Dashboard	Edit Post Add New	Screen Options <b>v</b> Help <b>v</b>
📜 Store	There's an easier way to create on WordPress.com. Switch to the improved editor.	
🖈 Posts		
All Posts	Being the Only Woman in the Room	Format v
Add New	Permalink: https://katysblog.wordpress.com/2017/01/11/being-the-only-woman-in-the-room/ Edit Get Shortlink	
Categories		Writing Helper
Tags	Image: Add Media Image: Add Contact Form Image: Add Location Visual Text	Copy a Post
Copy a Post	b i link b-quote del ins img ul ol li code more close tags proofread	Use an existing post as a
93 Media	<a <="" th="" title="TAB, Sun Microsystems Technology Advisory Board, Greg Papadopoulos, Steve Ward, Ivan Sutherland, Danny&lt;/th&gt;&lt;th&gt;template.&lt;/th&gt;&lt;/tr&gt;&lt;tr&gt;&lt;th&gt;🖉 Links&lt;/th&gt;&lt;th&gt;Hillis, Dave Patterson, Mike Splain, June 2008"><th></th></a>	
Pages	<pre>href="https://katysblog.files.wordpress.com/2017/01/8389532811_e787d02d4a_o.jpg"&gt;<img alt="TAB, Sun Microsystems Technology&lt;/pre&gt;&lt;/th&gt;&lt;th&gt;Send Trackbacks&lt;/th&gt;&lt;/tr&gt;&lt;tr&gt;&lt;th&gt;Comments&lt;/th&gt;&lt;th&gt;Advisory Board, Greg Papadopoulos, Steve Ward, Ivan Sutherland, Danny Hillis, Dave Patterson, Mike Splain, June 2008" height="240" src="https://katysblog.files.wordpress.com/2017/01/8389532811_e787d02d4a_o.jpg" width="320"/></pre>	Send trackbacks to:
_	WIGHT SZO HEIGHT Z40 ////a/	
Feedback	This week I met the Rev. Liz Milner, new <a href="https://sites.google.com/cicministries.net/welcome">CIC</a> Chaplain for <a href="https://www.sccgov.org/sites/doc/Visiting/Pages/info.aspx">Elmwood Jail</a> where I hold a	Separate multiple URLs with spaces
🔊 Appearance	weekly <a href="http://efm.sewanee.edu/">Education for Ministry</a> (EfM) seminar in a men's medium-security dorm.	Trackbacks are a way to notify legacy
🖌 Plugins	During this introductory conversation, I mentioned to Liz that I was comfortable working as the EfM Mentor in a men's facility. After so long working as an executive in Silicon Valley technical companies, I would have to be comfortable	blog systems that you've linked to them. If you link other WordPress sites, they'll
Lusers	being the only woman in the room! <a href="https://www.ncwit.org">NCWIT</a> reports that only <a< th=""><th>be notified automatically using</th></a<>	be notified automatically using
	href="https://www.ncwit.org/sites/default/files/resources/btn_03092016_web.pdf">25% of US professional computing jobs are held by women, with numbers much lower at senior levels.	pingbacks, no other action necessary.
F Tools	For decades T designed and managed programs for ca href="https://en_wikipedia.org/wiki/Sun_Microsystems">Sun	

Left: Navigation Bar for Information and Design ("Nav") Middle: Blog Title Middle: Permalink, Control Buttons Middle: HTML of Post Content Right: Management Tools

#### **HTML Basic Tags:**

https://www.tutorialspoint.com/html/ html\_basic\_tags.htm

#### **HTML Cheat Sheet:**

http://www.simplehtmlguide.com/ cheatsheet.php

# Creating a Blog Post

Now, we will take a live tour of Katysblog, then create a blog post together. Decide:

- Who is our audience?
- What are both we and our audience interested in? Topics to consider:
  - School work
  - Home life
  - Music
  - Local culture
  - Cooking
  - Fashion and Beauty
- What is our blog post's Title?
- What do we want to say?
- What pictures do we want?
- Review and reconsider, edit as needed, then post.

### Next Steps

- During the next week, pick:
  - Editor
  - Photographer
  - First Writer or Writing Team
  - Topic for your first post
- Working with your Editor and Photographer, write your first blog post, with illustrations:
  - 2 to 4 paragraphs
  - At least 2 photos
- Send your blog draft to *dickinson@mentoringstandard.com* for feedback.



### Questions?

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