

## What is it?

*Blog* (an abridgment of the term web log) is a website, 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. As of December 2007, blog search engine Technorati was tracking more than 112 million blogs.

Many blogs provide commentary or news on a particular subject; others 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. The ability for readers to leave comments in an interactive format is an important part of many blogs. Most blogs are primarily textual, although some focus on art (artlog), photographs (photoblog), sketchblog, videos (vlog), music (MP3 blog), audio (podcasting) are part of a wider network of social media. Micro-blogging is another type of blogging which consists of blogs with very short posts (e.g. Twitter). (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blog>)

More info:

<http://www.prologger.net/archives/2005/02/05/what-is-a-blog/>

## Why use it?

Blogging can be used for a variety of reasons:

- ✓ quickly and easily create a place on the web where people can find you, learn about you, and interact with you;
- ✓ stay connected;
- ✓ easily share updates;
- ✓ quickly post recent information;
- ✓ promote upcoming events;
- ✓ provide a forum where users can interact by posting comments;
- ✓ boost your search engine rankings

More info:

<http://www.wordpressutorials.com/whyblog.shtml>

### **Why the community service and volunteer field should use it:**

How to boost your community service or volunteer program by blogging:

1. Encourage members or volunteers to blog so they can share their stories of service. This has the potential to increase recruitment for your volunteer and member programs.
2. Use blogging to keep the community informed on what your agency or program has going on in order to provide a forum where they can interact and post comments.
3. Use a blog to disseminate best practices and share resources with your community.

## How to do it?

1. *Determine a theme.*
2. *Select a service.*
  - a. TypePad.com, Xanga.com, Blogger.com, LiveJournal.com, Blog-City.com, MSN Spaces, SquareSpace.com, BlogIdentity.com, and Bubbler.com are just a few of the services available.
3. *Set up your blog.* Most of the blogging services make this a very simple process. Don't be put off because it sounds technical. It usually isn't.
4. *Write your first post.*
5. *Publicize your blog.* You'll want to make sure you're "pinging" the major weblog tracking sites. Most of the blogging services handle this automatically, as do the offline blogging clients. Don't worry if you don't understand this process. You don't need to understand it to use it.
6. *Write regularly.* The more regularly you post something, the more your readership will grow.

More info:

[http://michaelhyatt.blogs.com/workingsmart/2005/04/how\\_to\\_start\\_a\\_.html](http://michaelhyatt.blogs.com/workingsmart/2005/04/how_to_start_a_.html)

## Examples

 Community service and volunteering examples:

*NCCC Team Blog* – Follow this NCCC Team on their year of service from the central region campus in Denver, CO. <http://www.americorps.gov/ncccblog>

*VISTA Member Blog* – Follow this VISTA member on her year of service in Indianapolis, IN. <http://starfishvista.blogspot.com/>

*Volunteer Maine Blog* – Keep up with discussions in volunteer management from a wide range of guest bloggers on this blog sponsored by Volunteer Maine. <http://www.volunteermaine.org/blog/>

## Keep in mind

The emergence of blogging has brought a range of legal liabilities and other often unforeseen consequences. One area of concern is the issue of bloggers releasing proprietary or confidential information. Another area of concern is blogging and defamation. A third area of concern is employees who write about aspects of their place of employment or their personal lives, and then face loss of employment or other adverse consequences. A number of examples of blogging and its sometimes negative or unforeseen consequences are cited here.

More info:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blog#Blogging\\_consequences](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blog#Blogging_consequences)