Blogging 101

Interactive News - JR 220

Emerson College

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Types of Blogs

Types of Blogs

- Standard news/reporting

- Curation
  - Aggregation

- Commentary

- Live blog

Types of Blogs

- Standard news/reporting

Standard News/Reporting

- Straight news posted on a blog

- Largely reporting based

- Still contains links

Standard News/Reporting

- Notebook where each item is its own post.

- Good for breaking news coverage
  - Updated frequently
    - Either new top to the post or completely new post

Types of Blogs

- Standard news/reporting

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Curation

- Finding a story reported elsewhere and packaging it for your audience.

- Linking required.
  - If the story is based largely on a single post, make sure to link to the source.

- Not just reposting what is out there, but author should look to create own narrative.
  - Background, related stories, context, etc.

Curation vs. Aggregation

- Some will use terms interchangeably.

- Other will say that aggregation is done by computer/machine only.
  - Example: Google News

- My definition:
  - Aggregation is just re-reporting what is already out there.
  - Curation is advancing the story (even though you didn't break it) through your own reporting, research, insight.

Curation

- To some, there is a negative stigma around this practice.
  - That it's lesser journalism because someone else is often doing the hard news reporting.

- This is shifting as it becomes a more common practice.

- Integral part of journalism on the Web/blogging.

- Serve as a resource to your audience by find good/interesting/underreported stories.
  - Direct them to the source.
  - Offer context users can't get elsewhere.

Types of Blogs

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- Commentary

Commentary

- Opinion

- Much more room for voice
  - Even than in print commentary
  - While the blogosphere can be snarky, maintain journalistic integrity/standards

- Support your opinions/assertions

- Offer firm/clear opinions.

- Don't need to say "I"
  - Should be clear by writing that it's your opinion.

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Live blog

- Real time coverage of an event.

- Can include reporting, analysis and/or commentary.

- Frequent updates
  - Can be new posts, but generally within the same post (timestamped)
  - Can be done manually or using plugins or other software

- Can be written for the second screen experience or as primary source of information.

Content

- Ideas should be clearly formulated.

- Opinions should be supported with facts and arguments.

- Just because you are writing on the Web, doesn't mean standards/ethics are any different than other mediums.

Content

- Blogs should adhere to grammar and AP style rules.

- Spell check your post.

- Read your post over after it's posted.

Headlines

- Headlines should be engaging.

- Headlines should use an active voice.

- Headlines should convey what your post is about.

Tone

- Blog tone can be less formal than standard journalistic writing, but it doesn't have to be.

- Don't write anything you wouldn't say to someone's face.

- Don't be overly conversational.

- Use your own voice.

Citing

- Do not copy large chunks of text from someone else's story, add a sentence or two of your own, and count that as "your blog."

- If you're using a quote and you did not get it firsthand, cite where you found the quote.
    - "I wanted to be the greatest defensive lineman ever to play the game," Haynesworth **told ESPN**.

Sourcing

- When the post is based on a single story, identify the original source in your post and link to the source.

- There are two ways you can do this:
  - According to Reuters, Cairos is in talks with the NFL about the possibility of **inserting the chips into balls**. (Linking to key idea.)

  - **According to Reuters**, Cairos is in talks with the NFL about the possibility of inserting the chips into balls. (Linking to the source.)

Links

- All blogs should have links. Links make blogs interactive.

- Links can strengthen your piece, but choose links wisely.

Links

- Links can be used to:
  - Direct to a story central to your piece.
  - Direct to stories that will add supplemental information.
  - Add color, humor, offbeat angle, background, etc. to your piece.

Links

- Do not overuse links.

- As a rule, the text you are linking to should give an idea of where the link directs. You don't want to force your reader to click away from your blog.

- Link text should be five words or less.

Images/Video

- Using an image enhances blog presentation.

- Embedding video when relevant can also enhance presentation/the multimedia experience.

- Credit image/video sources.

Images/Video

- Creative Commons license.

- Social media images.

- Screen grabs.