

Why Blog?

Support a cause . . .

Make a difference . . .

Exercise your voice . . .

Stay intellectually alive . . .

You may need to for your career . . .

AND THERE'S ALWAYS:

I think, therefore I am

Dianne Levy

BLOGGING

Why Blog?

A VERY ROUGH DRAFT

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WHY BLOG?

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About the Author

Dianne is a media-marketing professional who worked in various capacities at *The San Francisco Chronicle* for a couple of decades. In addition to interviewing authors and movie stars (including *The Muppets* during a New York premiere), she started up events and public service projects for the newspaper, including *The Chronicle Season of Sharing Fund*, now in its 26th year and more successful and useful to the community than anyone's initially imagined.

Her focus is anything to do with information technology as a means of disseminating information to the widest possible audience. She has been working with public access information systems since 1983 when *The Chronicle* first ventured into "VideoText." She was one of the first few thousand people to build a Web site (around 1991). Since then, she has been involved with Web development, content editing, writing, photography, eMarketing, affiliate programs, and social networking.

She started blogging in 2006, didn't quite understand the concept of online networking or see the value of blogs. She now finds it an indispensable part of life . . . along with the Web in general.

Acknowledgements

Awareness of the importance of blogging and social networking came through workshops at Marin Professionals as a result of being unemployed (under-employed). Norma Wilcox Barnes, Marin Professionals Coordinator, enlists speakers to discuss issues and current skills needed by today's job-seeking market.

The majority of the presenters have indicated the importance of social networking and blogs.

However, the strongest emphasis on the importance of utilizing new technologies such as Web 2.0 (and the importance of having your own Web site) is a part of seminars presented by Dr. Chani Pangali (www.JobSuccess.org) and Dean Guadagni and Susan Hanshaw (www.InnerArchitect.com). These individuals have taken social networking to its extreme and offer workshops for those seeking new careers or to enhance the career they already have.

Phil Boland, Managing Director of Boland Resources, organizes Monday night professional seminars at Unity in Marin, Novato, CA. Phil's simple question: Why don't you have a blog?

The Disclaimer

DAN POYNTER



Even Mr. Poynter
is including
disclaimers.

Normally I would not have considered including a Disclaimer to anything I propose.

However, even noted author Dan Poynter has included them in his works . . . possibly due to the rapid changes in our economic world and technology, both of which have presented unique challenges. Therefore it seems prudent to join suit.

This manual is merely a brief overview of blogging and social networking as I understand it to date. It is a guide to help you get started with social networking and blogging.

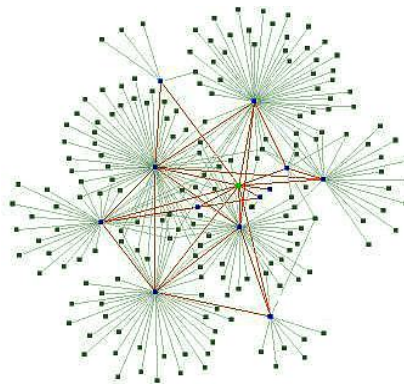
Amazon.com lists dozens of books on social networking and blogging. Given the direction in today's workplace, I highly recommend reading one or more of these publications . . . particularly anything written in the past 60-90 days given the rapid changes in the market.

Blogging for Your New Career

GET A JOB!

 Today's Job
Market

To get a job in today's market, to keep your job, to stay in touch through a vast network of contacts, to learn, to keep moving forward . . .



Many positions advertised today require social media and blog skills, including much desired positions in “green” companies and non-profits. Social networking/blogging is nothing more than six degrees of separation. The best careers are

found through networking. Networking on line is networking to the Nth degree.

A recent scan of 1,000 jobs listed on craigslist in the San Francisco Bay Area, indicated:

- 199 companies have social media as a requirement
- 405 companies refer to Web 2.0 as a component of the job

- 105 include “blog”
- 44 include “blogging”

Understanding social networking (including blogging) has landed me interviews resulting in part-time and consultative job offers. Little else in my substantial background is opening doors. The Internet IS the way the world is doing business.

What to Write On Your Blog?

Anyone researching today's job market, thinking about career changes, reading about "green" companies or nonprofits is coming across new information daily . . . information that might help others or that is just worth storing somewhere in case you need to review it at another time.

As you come across valuable information, type it into your new blog. You will start sounding knowledgeable and this could lead to a job offer.

Or perhaps you have a cause you support; talk about that on your blog. You'll be learning and helping at the same time.

Information herein is a quick overview. You might find it worthwhile to read just one book on [Social Networking](#) or [Blogs](#).

This information may look like a lot, you probably will get frustrated, but just go step-by-step. It may take a couple of hours to set up, you may hate it initially, but once you discover the power of your own voice in a world marketplace, you will probably find this fascinating once you get the mechanics out of the way.

Start Here

WordPress is purportedly the easiest to use and it is currently the most popular. Because I am most familiar with it, it is the focus of this “beginning blogging” primer.

You do not need new software. Blogs are a perfect example of “cloud computing,” which simply means using the internet to access software running on someone else’s hardware.

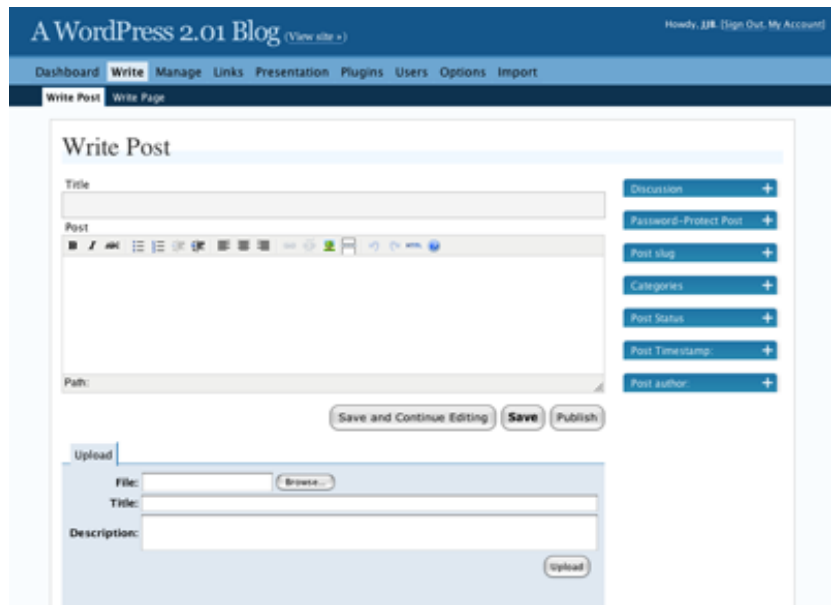


FIGURE 21.1 The Administration page (Dashboard) on a WordPress Blog.

WordPress.com/WordPress.org

RECOMMEND



WordPress.org to
make it easier to
remember

Wordpress.com is free. However, you end up with a clumsy url, i.e. `yourname.wordpress.com`. If future employees (or your family/friends) forget to include WordPress after your name, they will not find you. I don't recommend this version unless your budget prohibits any other method.

Wordpress.org requires that you have your own url and hosted web site. This is the recommended way to proceed as it is a direct path to your blog, i.e. `www.YourName.com/wordpress`. That will take people directly to your blog. If you are new to the Internet, Blogs are far easier to manage than is a Web site. Following are two sites that are run as WordPress blogs only . . . NO Web site:

- www.FacesOfForeclosure.com (set up by a professional designer who decided a blog was easier than a Web for this project)
- <http://www.energyoutofwaste.com/> (for use by a Web novice who easily updates his own sites)

Steps to Setting Up a Blog

Because I have found GoDaddy to be relatively easy to use and because there is ALWAYS someone at the other end of the phone, I've stayed with them for 12 years. There are links from my various sites, i.e. DianneLevy.com (in the blog section).

Site Name: Most Important

BIG TIP



No “dots,”
“dashes,” or
“underscores” in
your Web name.
Absolutely no one
remembers them.

Reserving your name (url – “uniform resource locator”) costs about \$10/year; anything more than that has a markup. My favorite: GoDaddy.com.


This is extremely important. Once you build your audience to your site . . . which can take weeks or months . . . you don’t want to change that name and lose them. I watched a site lose 80% of their audience in six months (and that included the loss of 100% of their international audience; given that they are in real estate and buyers in the U.S. are scarce, this severely damaged their bottom line).

Give lots of thought as to what you are going to name your site. Anything with one word is probably gone, i.e. “diamonds.” (Or available at great cost – I think that sold a few years ago for \$20 million or so). If you have a “common” name, it is probably gone, so decide on a business name that will last. Write down several idea and versions. This exercise may take you longer than it does to set up your blog.

Register your name (or if your own name is gone, a clear and memorable name). Please avoid dots, dashes and underscores – people just do not remember them . . . all of us have way too many “addresses,” passwords, etc. in our minds now. Also, stick to a “.com” name as people automatically type “.com” after a Web name, i.e. YourName.com.


NOTE: Be ready to reserve your site once you have found your name. You risk losing it within 24 hours if you don’t. I’m not sure why . . . probably has to do with search engines and people looking to buy/resell domain names.

A URL extension such as .tv is about \$20 and .mobi, is \$7.99. GoDaddy.com sells names in bulk at discounts. Common consensus is that it’s best to register all versions of your name if you can get them, i.e. JaneDoe.biz, JaneDoe.net, JaneDoe.us, JaneDoe.tv and JaneDoe.mobi.

<p>. M O B I</p> <p> .mobi is gaining popularity because of the growing use of mobile devices.</p>	<p>Note that .mobi is gaining popularity because of the growing use of cell phones and other mobile devices to access Web content, particularly with Asian clients where two-thirds of all Internet access is through a mobile device.</p>
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GoDaddy can also host your new blog; hosting is less than \$5 per month. GoDaddy's site isn't particularly attractive, and it has a confusing array of options, but all you need do is to reserve your chosen name and sign up for a hosting package. You do not need any of the additional services. GoDaddy is set up so that you can download Wordpress from their site so that you have the appropriate paths and do not have to fuss around with codes (which are complicated to find and complicated to use).

Research and Reserve Name(s)

G O D A D D Y	“How to” and References are at the end of this
 Reps are available 24/7.	booklet, however, if you decide to work through GoDaddy, I’ll step you through this.

Once you have figured out what name you might like, go to <http://www.godaddy.com>:

Of course, you can use who you want. But these instructions are specifically for GoDaddy. I have been using their services for 12 years. No complaints. Well, a couple. It isn’t the most attractive site, although they have been improving it greatly during the past year (include a new eMail look, which is nice): however, but the prices are the best, they are the best, there are no hidden charges, and after 12 years, I have not outgrown them.

- From GREEN bar on top, select Domains and Register from the drop down
- Begin your search by following instructions (Enter a domain name)
- When you find one that works for you (or several . . . they are about \$10 each to reserve and you only need to pay hosting for

one site), register that name for at least one year. You don't need any extras. Just register the domain name for now and worry about extras later. An eMail account comes with each domain.

GoDaddy is in Arizona, always there, and will help you get started if you become confused (which is easy at the outset): 480 505 8877.

GoDaddy charges about \$10 per year for reserving your chosen name and around \$5 per month for hosting for their economy package. . . the site offers many add-ons for additional fees, but you do not need them. It also is set up so that you can download Wordpress from their site so that you have the appropriate paths and do not have to fuss around with codes (which are complicated to find and complicated to use).

Reserve Hosting

1. This takes 2-24 hours to become active
2. Select Hosting from the control bar, then Web site hosting. Note, you can also use WordPress hosting, but I always go with the Web site hosting to reserve maximum flexibility. I use their defaults (i.e. Linux) and I generally pay for a year although GoDaddy will bill in three month increments.
3. Choose ECONOMY PLAN (if you grow beyond 10 GB, you can always add).
4. Click 3 (or 12 months), select ADD.
5. If you want to find out everything about their services, read the rest, however, I go to bottom and hit the grey NO THANKS bar to go to checkout.
6. You will receive eMail notification of your purchase.

Set Up Hosting

7. Setup your account: GoDaddy will help with this if you get confused (which is easy to do initially): 480 505 8877. (Note that they do not give specific support for blogs as it is an external “product” available through GoDaddy.)
8. Select Hosting/My Hosting Account
9. Click on “Manage Account” to the right of your new account
10. Click YOUR APPLICATIONS on top.
11. Click on Blogs on the Left.
12. Click on WordPress.
13. Click the INSTALL NOW orange button and follow instructions for name and password. This automatically sets up WordPress on your site.

To WordPress

You now have a basic blog. You will want to change its appearance.

Note, I don't there is a live person at WordPress. As with all blogs, you are pretty much on your own. If you get stuck anywhere, just type the issue or error code into google.com. I promise you that someone has posted the solution as we've all hit the same roadblocks.

While WordPress has user forums, I find them clumsy and have had much better luck with google.com

1. Go to: <http://YourSiteName.com/wordpress/wp-login.php> and sign in with the Username and Password you selected when you downloaded your WordPress blog from GoDaddy.
2. This is the basic blog. You will probably want a new one. The easiest way is to select one from WordPress as it will be uploaded for you without having to use external software.
3. Select Appearance on Left/Add New Themes

4. Install Themes: Find Themes. This opens hundreds of tested themes that you can use. Find one you like and select “Upload” on top of the page.
5. Note: Many WordPress themes are available on the Web and you can also upload them after you have downloaded them to your hard drive. If you take a theme from the Web, MAKE SURE it is a WordPress theme.
6. Editor and Theme Files. I wouldn’t touch these unless you are familiar with HTML. These completely control the appearance of the page(s). One missing bracket and the page will not display. If you DO wish to change, say, the Styles (style.css, which controls colors, etc.), copy that code completely into a doc file and save the original. That way if you can’t repair it, you can always just put the original back online.

Your WordPress Dashboard

1. Click each selection to become familiar with what's there. This gives you quite a bit of leeway in setting up your blog.
2. Settings: Check each section for features. Here you will add your blog title and Tagline. You can also post via eMail (which I have not done as I like more control over the page than that allows)
3. Links: You will probably want to delete all of the links there; most go back to some type of WordPress group/blog and there's no reason to divert your audience.
4. Users: Set up your eMail address and title.
5. Posts/Categories
6. Add categories for your blog, i.e. Travel, Notes, Favorite Pubs, Career, Degrees
7. To add a new Post, click Add New and begin typing. There are lots of built-in codes for you to make it easy. If you know HTML, you can go into that section and tweak your work also. Save your work as a draft or Publish it immediately by hitting the Publish bar near the upper right.
8. Post Tags: Include anything of relevance to your post. If you are running a business from your blog, you will want to visit

google.com/analytics and/or searchenginewatch.com to find the most searched words. These help with positioning and driving your market to you.

9. Upload images.

More Information Than Needed

There is a lot to wade through.

Scan WordPress for topics you specifically need: “Lessons” and “First steps with WordPress.”

http://codex.wordpress.org/WordPress_Lessons

Here you will find WordPress for Beginners. Again, it looks overwhelming, but you don’t need to know any of the complicated coding, unless you want to take WordPress to its extreme.

http://codex.wordpress.org/First_Steps_With_WordPress

for an overview of setting up your site. This page has everything you will need starting with a free Theme which you will download from: <http://wordpress.org/extend/themes/>

http://codex.wordpress.org/Writing_Posts

for information on writing posts, to write your first post, details on how to accept/approve posts from others, and blocking spam. You can type in words to block, which will save your time dramatically in the spam arena.

References

Blogs/Webs

- www.WordPress.com
- www.w3.org: World Wide Web Consortium, the main international standards organization for the World Wide Web
- www.w3.org/2008/09/msnws/report.html: Overview of Social Networking
- www.eZine.com: Articles re the Web:
www.Ezine.com

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