

Setting up your library's blog

Sarah Houghton, Marin County Free Library



This presentation is available online at:
<http://www.co.marin.ca.us/library/blog.ppt>

What is a blog?

- Blog is short for “weblog”
- A “what’s new” website that is frequently updated
- Another way to keep your patrons updated on what’s happening at the library

Blog Glossary

- **blogger** : blog author
- **post/posting** : each chunk of content
- **permalink** : permanent link to a particular post
- **archives** : older posts
- **categories** : subject headings
- **blogroll** : list of favorite/recommended blogs
- **comments** : readers can comment on your posts
- **RSS**: Really Simple Syndication (news feed)

Some Library Blogs

- [Escondido Public Library](#)
- [Redwood City Library](#)
- [Waterboro Public Library](#)
- [Marin County Free Library](#)

What do I blog about?

- Library events & classes
- Recommended websites
- New additions to the collection
- Book lists
- Exhibits
- Local author readings
- Library databases
- New website features
- Open staff positions

Sample Posts



The Flying Calamari Brothers & Spooky Halloween Magic

Join us at the [Fairfax Library](#) on the day before Halloween (Saturday, October 30th) at 11:00am for a performance from The Flying Calamari Brothers. They will entertain ages 4 and up with their spooky Halloween magic!

Cyberpolitics

Looking for information about the upcoming election? Check out the web sites under [Elections](#) on the [Reference Links](#) page of the [Marin County Free Library](#) site. Need more details? Access to [newspaper and magazine articles and editorials](#) is available from the [library databases](#) page. Be an informed citizen!

More Sample Posts

Reference: Economics

[How Much is That Worth Today?](#) lets you compare the purchasing power of money in the United States (or colonies) in years from 1665 to 2003. More detailed and complex is [What Is Its Relative Value in U.S. Dollars?](#), which computes monetary value relative to indices such as the Consumer Price Index, Gross Domestic Product Deflator or GDP per Capita, etc. Developed by John J. McCusker, Professor of American History and Professor of Economics, Trinity University, San Antonio, Texas.

Library catalog enhancements

The Escondido Public Library has just added book covers, book reviews, table of contents and first chapter excerpts to thousands of items in our catalog. Check it out:

<http://ipac.ci.escondido.ca.us>

Where can I start a free blog?

- Blogger (<http://www.blogger.com>)
- Blog-City (<http://www.blog-city.com>)
- Pitas.com (<http://www.pitas.com>)

These free sites will host text only, not images

Where can I host images for free?

If you want to have images on your blog, use one of these free services:

- **PhotoBucket** (<http://www.photobucket.com>)
 - Max storage space of 100 MB
- **TinyPic** (<http://www.tinypic.com>)
 - No size limit
 - Photos deleted from their site after 10,000 hits or 30 days with no hits

...and if we don't mind paying?

If your Library can afford it, try:

- TypePad <http://www.typepad.com>
 - \$60 - \$180 a year
- LiveJournal <http://www.livejournal.com>
 - \$25 a year
- Or host your own blog
 - I recommend Movable Type software
 - \$70- \$100 one time fee

Questions.....

- **Staffing**
 - **One Librarian or a small team of 3-5 people**
 - **Break up posting responsibilities by day**
- **How often should I post?**
 - **Daily or multiple times a day is best**
 - **At least weekly (to keep readers coming back)**
- **Should I allow comments by readers?**
 - **No, no, no, no, and no**

More Questions...

- **What about citing?**
 - **Always cite & link to your sources**
- **What about touchy topics?**
 - **If it's iffy (like religion or politics), don't post it**
 - **If it's humor, be very careful**
- **Should I offer an RSS feed on my site?**
 - **Yes, definitely. Most blogging services will set up a free RSS feed for you.**

Umm...what's an "RSS feed" ???

- RSS stands for Rich Site Syndication or Really Simple Syndication (depending on who you ask)
- It allows users to get new content from your site to be...
 - Fed into a news aggregator like [Bloglines](#)
 - Syndicated on their own [website](#)
- RSS pushes your content to users

Publicity

- **How do I publicize my blog?**
 - **Link to it from a prominent spot on your website**
 - **Ask other community agencies to link to it**
 - **Tell people about it!**

Publicity Contd.

- **Notify sites like:**

- **LibDex**

<http://www.libdex.com/weblogs.html>

- **Dmoz**

http://dmoz.org/Reference/Libraries/Library_and_Information_Science/Weblogs/

- **BlogWithoutALibrary**

<http://www.blogwithoutalibrary.net/index.shtml?links.html>

- **Rich Site Services**

<http://www.public.iastate.edu/~CYBERSTACKS/RSS.htm>

- **LIS Feeds**

<http://www.lisfeeds.com/>

Questions?

**Any questions before we proceed to the
blog set-up stage of the presentation?**

Who wants to start a blog?

it's free!

it's fast!

it's easy!

