

Behind the Scenes in the Blogosphere:  
Advice From Established Bloggers



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# **Behind the Scenes in the Blogosphere: Advice From Established Bloggers**

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## **Behind the Scenes in the Blogosphere: Advice From Established Bloggers**

Blogs will make or break your business. They have the power to disseminate information and host global conversations on any topic. Every publication from Business Week, Forbes, and the Wall Street Journal to online white papers from Marqui ([www.marqui.com/blog](http://www.marqui.com/blog)) warns businesses that blogging is not an optional endeavor. Those that don't will not survive. With over 40 million conversations going on 24 hours a day, the question becomes, how does a business enter and thrive in the blogosphere?

The answer to this question is that smart businesses will seek guidance from the experts. The talented and generous bloggers in this study candidly offer thoughts and ideas on how to succeed in the blogosphere, how to promote your blog and even what characteristics they feel will make you a great blogger. These innovators share their view on how to get noticed in the online world.

The 74 bloggers included in this paper are some of the biggest and best in the business (or the most successful independent blogs). The blogs in this study have been operating an average of 2-3 years. Seventy-three percent of these bloggers have been running their weblogs for over a year, including 20% who have blogged for more than 3 years. Fifty (68%) of the bloggers in this study have direct or indirect ties with a corporation or business. The independent blogs are some of the most established in the blog community. These are amazing statistics given that blogging began in 1998 and corporate blogging is only a few years old.

Each of our 74 respondents listed key words that describe their blog. We searched using their keywords on Google to see which blogs appeared in the results. Twenty-six of the blogs in this study (36%) come up in the Google top ten using their key words search and sixteen ranked 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup>.

This report is based on the most experienced, business savvy and respected bloggers who are at the forefront of innovation in the blogosphere. In this report, they talk about everyday challenges of running a blog and how they deal with them. **Behind the Scenes in the Blogosphere** ([www.umassd.edu/cmr](http://www.umassd.edu/cmr)) looks at the time it takes to run a blog, feelings about a public policy for comments and how blogs tie into existing business websites, products and promotions. Take their advice on the best way to promote a blog and hear about the next set of changes these blog leaders plan to make to stay competitive in the blogosphere.

This report, like the blogosphere itself, is based on conversation. Through extensive written comments, phone interviews and numerous online exchanges, rich data was collected that provide statistics as well as a plethora of anecdotal information. Those researchers who are veterans of blogger studies know what I have now learned; bloggers are generous, helpful, unselfish and friendly. Discover what these experts have to say, and move your business into the blogosphere.

Two hundred and ninety-eight bloggers were contacted for this study using published lists to locate business or corporate blogs. Through the assistance of many of the early participants who posted or linked to the survey, seventy-four bloggers provided information for this report. Many offered to be interviewed, and were. Most provided links to other articles or studies they felt would enhance this project.

In many ways the data in this study was blogger driven. Respondents offered comments on the wording of questions, suggestions for new questions and help in disseminating the survey to be filled out. The final version of the survey presented here is more personal and revealing thanks to the bloggers who wanted the findings to be meaningful, useful and unique in perspective.

This report contains chapters that incorporate the statistical findings, as well as quotes from the bloggers surveyed. They provide a very real look at the human factor that is so important in any blog. Each chapter conveys the knowledge and experience of successful bloggers with words of wisdom and caution.

## Chapter 1 Blogosphere Truths

### 1. Blogs Take Time and Commitment

**Initially many of the bloggers in this study did not anticipate the time their blog would take.** A good blog is one where posts are fresh and new posts are frequent. Researching interesting new things to share with your audience takes time. One blogger noted, *“The worst blogs are those that are updated infrequently.”* He cautions others with, *“Be prepared to spend more time than you think.”*

**If your posts have to be vetted by legal or discussed with others in your organization, there will be additional time demands on the blogger, and delays on posting.** A business blogger in the study advised, *“The corporate communications team needs to commit to rapid turnaround of items submitted for pre-posting.”*

In this study, 49% of bloggers reported the time a blog takes as the major drawback to running one. Two-thirds of the bloggers report spending less than one hour a day on their blog, while 31% spend 1-3 hours a day. One blogger writes, *“Look on it as a learning experience (you will get back as much as you give). Once you start, don’t stop.”* Another warns, *“Make sure you have time and resources dedicated to supporting it.”*

**Some of the time commitment is due to bloggers spending more time posting.** Thirty-eight percent have increased the number of posts to their blog since they began. Overall, bloggers feel that the time investment is worth it with 95% reporting their blogs are successful. Some measure success in links, some in income, some in self-satisfaction, and some in the quality of human connections they have made.

### 2. Blogs Must Be Part of A Plan

It is unlikely a successful business or a new venture would be lacking a business plan. As part of that plan, or in addition to it, most businesses and organizations developed mission statements long ago. Many have added customer service mission statements to guide their customer service component. These plans and mission statements are created to focus peoples’ efforts and capture the purpose of the organization and its relationship to its customers.

One blog author was adamant about the need for a business plan for creating and running a business blog. *“Like anything else in business, a blog requires a plan. Without a plan, the blog is going to fail within three months. Period.”*

Another adds, *“Create a business plan. Since this is intended to make money, a full business plan was created for it and we are still tweaking it a bit (you might say it is in Beta right now).”*

**Bloggers decide on a focus for their site.** Surveyed bloggers say,

*“Have a purpose in mind and method for measuring success. Don’t do it just because everyone else is.”*

*“Define your audience and that will help in defining the voice and direction of your blog”.*

As a new communications tool, blogs are essential for communicating with your target audience. Blogging can help to mitigate problems as well. One business blogger offered: *“In a company environment blogs can be used as a tactic to solve a number of communications issues so don’t blog just for the sake of having a blog.”*

Blogs can be internal, external or both. They can be used in conjunction with websites, or in some cases instead of them. Blogs can be used to gather data, disseminate information or both. They can be official business blogs or can be affiliated or sponsored by a business. The purpose of the blog will determine who should post, how often, and how the blog should be directed.

**To maximize the potential of a blog, it must be viewed as part of the overall package and voice of the organization.** If it is not part of an integrated strategy, it will lack focus and a following. The plan should also address policies on reader comments, directing traffic to the blog from company websites, products and advertising.

In this study, 18% of blogs reported having a public policy regulating conversation on their blog. These policies range from the formal disclaimer and creative commons license to the very informal directive on comment forms. Policies are found on front pages, FAQ section or in comment fields on blogs.

Fifty-eight percent of bloggers reported their company website directs visitors to their blogs. In all cases the link was on the company site home page. Additionally, 39% reported their company packaging, labeling or promotion directs people to the blog.

### **3. A Blog is a Conversation**

Author Robert Scoble (<http://scobleizer.wordpress.com>) calls it “naked conversations.” Early blogger Dave Winer (<http://www.scripting.com>) calls it “come-as-you-are conversations”. Some marketers call blogs “2-way marketing”. The point is the same in all cases--- participation is essential in the blogosphere. One respondent says, *“Don’t start a blog unless you have people in your organization ready to post to it daily in an open, friendly, and excited tone. A blog is a conversation. Don’t open the line unless you’re ready to really talk”.*

**A blog is an invitation to debate, discuss and exchange.** It is what makes blogging different than websites. The responsive nature and human connection pull people in. Consumers want to talk about products and services. If they can’t talk to the vendor or the manufacturer, they will talk to others online.

The plethora of articles being published on Web 2.0, speak to this new paradigm. In the first generation of online experiences, the web provided a vehicle for mostly one-way communications. Websites were static. Many are not updated. Email allows us to speak to a certain designated person or group. We now have the ability to go beyond this and disseminate information in a more personal and timely way.

A survey respondent cautioned against blogging with a traditional mind-set: *“Don’t think of a blog in terms of publishing metaphors—it’s not a newsletter replacement. Blogs are a great communication tool. But when you set one up to serve as a “corporate voice” it’s as effective as spam. Find human beings to blog—don’t set up a blog and try to find someone to manage it. It will fail if you do.”*

**It is important not to be afraid of giving up the mono-directed control that usually characterizes an organization.** One respondent offers, *“Blogs are conversation rather than one-way speech. Allowing that conversation actually strengthens your base.”*

**Blogs, facilitated by increased access to the Internet, high-speed connections, RSS feeds, a selection of easy to use blog software, and new blog search capabilities, now allow businesses to speak to current and potential customers in real time.** Equally important, consumers can talk back in real time. Bloggers say, *“It’s a great way to get closer to your users, customers and other critical stakeholders.”* *“There is no downside to getting to know your customers on a more personal basis.”*

*“The opportunities for businesses to test new ideas, discuss product lines, introduce brands, or conduct online research are infinite. The prerequisite for success however, is that the business blog accepts the premise that the blog is a conversation, not a monologue or an infomercial.”* This is what our seasoned business bloggers had to say about the essence of a blog conversation: *“The ‘popularity’ of your blog is directly related to frequent posting, open and honest dialogues.”*

#### **4. Transparency, Authenticity, and Focus are good. Bland is Bad.**

**Consumers know when they are being talked at, played, or deceived.** Respondents say, *“Be authentic. If you can’t, don’t blog.”* *“Don’t focus on execs, the public wants to hear from people they can relate to—the average worker. Pick a “short fuse” topic to get started, with a definite start and end date, before you start an indefinite blog.”*

Consumers want corporate/business blogs to talk honestly and candidly about their products, services, ideas, and plans. Consumers want more than to be on the receiving end of commercials. Bloggers warn, *“Write it yourself, no PR guys on it. Comment broadly on your industry. Don’t just summarize your press announcements.”*

**People are looking to talk to someone in authority about their experiences, ideas, and suggestions.** If they have something negative to say, they expect (on a blog) that their comments will be heard. A recurrent theme with the bloggers studied was honesty and openness. They advised, *“Be transparent and authentic.”* *“Make it genuine, make it interesting, have guest authors talking about all aspects of your business.”* *“Make it real. Have the right people talking about product innovation, not the PR people.”*



**Keep in mind that conversations will happen outside your blog that relate to your products or industry.** You need to be aware, current, and honest in dealing with those conversations too. One business blogger wrote, *“Monitor the blogosphere closely, both for discussions about your brand, and for comments about your blog. Respond with comments to those outside blog posts. The blogosphere respects participation, so respond.”*

**Consumers who feel like a business blog is authentic, honest and interesting will contribute to it and support its products.** These contributions, and the resultant conversations, provide a rich new data source for companies as well as great new relationships. One experienced blogger summed it all up for a company thinking about starting a blog: *“Be honest and don’t pander. Readers can tell.”*

## Chapter 2

### Blog Growth and Development

A blog is constantly evolving, growing and developing. Bloggers are looking for new and better software, exciting and innovative information to post and for new links to increase their presence on search engines. The bloggers in this study are doing all this and more. Fifty-four percent of those surveyed are planning to make changes to how their blogs function.

**Corporations encourage blogging.** Some corporations are encouraging employees to start blogs. Of those some are choosing to focus on products or product applications. These product-oriented blogs are particularly successful in targeting niche markets that may not warrant major corporate expenditure. Other employees blog about R&D as well as up coming product releases. Employees using a blog to discuss general happenings in the industry are also contributing to the corporate presence. The blogs give the corporation a human face and allow multiple ways to communicate with the company.

As additional bloggers are added, the blog may need to adapt. One blogger plans to do that and says, *“As we add bloggers, we will need to change the layout to accommodate so it doesn’t become cluttered.”*

**Blogs serve as barrier breakers.** Some companies are running (or considering) blogs in other languages to reach markets where traditional marketing may be costly and difficult. These are particularly good to “introduce” products without the expense or risk of a full campaign.

**Blogs evolve.** Bloggers surveyed also plan to add more video, introduce new media/mobile technology, add podcasting and expand the number of visitors to their sites. Here are some of the responses that address these kinds of changes:

*“I am thinking of doing a podcast that I would append to the blog, probably covering and expanding the same topics, but maybe doing some interviews.”*

*“Getting us listed on more blog engines, having our associates post comments to other blogs and linking those posts to ours, incorporate images in our posts.”*

*“I may add more advertising and affiliate stuff-I am interested in how it works and this is a good place to explore these areas. I may replicate more of my posts to the corporate site. I may look for more discussion and responses.”*

Most of the bloggers in this study spoke of redesigning their blog and changing their software. One offered, *“I’d like a better index-TypePad says they are planning to introduce this soon.”* Another said, *“I will be moving the blog from Blogger to its own domain name in WordPress soon. The charge will allow significantly increased functionality over the free blogspot.com set up currently used.”*

For the bloggers in this study redesign includes the appearance as well as content changes. Bloggers indicated they were planning to, “*offer a dynamic style sheet for users to pick their favorite style layout*” or “*become more topical with events in our industry as other process manufacturers, trade press, automation suppliers, join in the blog conversation.*”

**Adding additional authors.** Many of the bloggers spoke about adding authors, more information on authors, more channels and more frequent posts. In this study, 38% have increased posts on their blogs since they began them.

**Blogging begets blogging.** When asked how to grow readership and promote a blog, our respondents were very clear. One blogger wrote, “*The best way to promote a blog is by commenting on other people’s blogs in the same niche and industry.*” Another offered, “*Grow your blog by being cited by other more popular blogs.*” The theme continued with, “*Get linked to by talking about issues of importance to bloggers with high PageRank.*”

**Publicize yourself.** Many of the bloggers in this study suggested using a link in your email to direct others to your blog. They suggest talking about your blog in your emails and encouraging people to visit. Beyond that, send email blog posts to people who might find them interesting. One business blog author said they “*constantly reinforce the blog within the membership, mentioning it every chance we get, in every email we send out and at every meeting we have.*”

**You need to connect.** Ultimately the growth of a blog will depend on the quality and quantity of posts on it and on what one blogger calls “blogger relations”. One blog author attributes growth to, “*Consistent quality postings coupled with relevant comments adding to the conversation on other blogs over the long haul.*” Another says, “*Provide useful information, post regularly, be honest, and be user-oriented.*” In classic blogger form, we get advice that is both humorous and probably true: “*Be brilliant, pick a fight.*”

## Chapter 3

### Nuts and Bolts of Business Blogging

**There are all types of blogs.** They include political, business, religious, financial, health oriented blogs and many more. Each has hundreds of specific subdivisions. In this study there are, corporate blogs for internal and external use (38%), independent blogs (27%) corporate sponsored blogs (15%), business affiliated/endorsed blogs (7%), business and business development blogs (5%), internal corporate blogs (3%) and a “network” blog. Three blogs in this study did not fit any of the above classifications. There are strategies to learn from every blog. One important strategy is defining your niche, or type. That allows you to formulate a tag or classification so that readers can find you quickly and easily.

**High visibility key words help potential readers find you.** All 74 of our respondents provided their blog type and key words that would help visitors locate them through popular search engines. Twenty-six of those blogs came up in the top ten in a Google Search using the key words provided. Further, 16 come up as 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> in their key word search. Some even came up first using appropriate industry-related key words beyond those that they had provided.

**Do competitive searches.** Once you have decided on key words for your blog, a good idea might be to do your own search to see who comes up. It is a great way to define your competition within a category, or industry. In the end, your goal is to have descriptive key words, many links and sufficient traffic to push your blog to the top of a search engine list.

**As indicated in Chapter 1, blogs take time.** Most (89%) of the bloggers in this study receive 10 or fewer comments on an average day, and most reply in a timely fashion. Those replies, updates to the blog, creating posts etc., take about an hour a day according to two-thirds of our respondents. Plan to set aside more than an hour a day initially to get things started. This time is more than worth the investment.

**Choose responders carefully.** Attention must be paid to who actually responds to readers when they comment. Bloggers in this study report the company CEO or the blog owner/author reply most (54%) of the time. Nineteen percent of replies come from top management or marketing directors. Other options reported were a hired blog master (11%), a rotating list of people (10%), or a company employee (3%). The decision on a responder will depend on the purpose of the blog, resources, legal considerations and the nature of the posts on the blog.

**To review or not to review?** Businesses need to consider the need for review of posts by company officers, the public relations people, or legal department. If there is a review necessary, turnaround time becomes a factor. Seven percent of bloggers surveyed have a review process prior to posts. They reported posts going through a marketing vice president, a product manager, or a corporate communications team. Some said the topic would determine if a review was needed and by who.

**Think ahead about possible repercussions.** Another consideration for bloggers is the possible consequences of what is said on their site. While a full 43% said there was no downside to running a blog, 49% noted the time a blog takes as a possible drawback, 4% cited competitive disadvantages, and 3% said their blog had been involved in legal problems. If possible, businesses should strive to run an informative and interesting blog without jeopardizing their strategic position in the market.

**Consider a public policy.** Some blog authors have instituted public policies regulating conversation on their blogs. In this study, 18% of blogs have such a policy posted. In most cases, these policies are readily available on the site and address industry regulation, disclaimers, or the right to correct factual errors.

**All bloggers need a system for dealing with negative comments or criticism.** Eighty-seven percent of respondents in this study adhered to fairly simple rules. Here is a sample of what they said:

*“Comments with obscenities and such are summarily deleted.”*

*“If I don’t think it adds value or it isn’t relevant, I don’t post it. I’m not a bulletin board.”*

*Posts appear exactly as sent unless spam, racism, hate or overboard swearing.”*

*“We’ve not yet faced negative comments, but I’d like to use Microsoft’s Robert Scoble as a model to publish it, and discuss it rapidly, openly and transparently.”*

Most bloggers agree that there should be as little screening as possible. Readers will quickly see through sites that have been “cleaned” and authors that only post views agreeing with their own.

## Chapter 4 The Human Factor...

**People are important.** The ultimate success of any blog depends on the person that manages and posts. Blogs are a human endeavor, a personal conversation, a sharing of thoughts and ideas. Readers form relationships with bloggers that are very real. Communities are formed and friendships are made. One of the blog authors tells us, *“I bump into strangers who know my dog’s name.”* There is a real person that entertains, provokes and responds. In many ways, blogs are a place to go for all that is missing in today’s off line world.

**Blogs have not stolen the hearts and minds of consumers. Consumers have gone willingly in search of a more meaningful relationship.** Most business communication is impersonal and one way. Customers do not feel they are valued by organizations that have built multiple walls between them and those they supposedly serve. They cannot get a human voice on the phone, an option that fits their problem, or a call back. Now, with the Internet, customers can know more about any business than the business itself is willing to tell. Employees, x-employees, past customers and industry experts are no more than a click away, and your customers are indeed clicking.

Businesses are no longer the soul source of product information or new product development underway. People are getting the information they need to make purchase decisions from other people. Remember, there are over 40 million blogs with a new one springing up every second. If only one tenth of one percent of those can impact your market, you have 40,000 new voices talking to your customers as we speak.

**It is the humanity of the blogosphere that makes it an enormous threat to business as usual.** The only way for businesses to survive this new consumer movement is to understand what makes blogs successful. We asked our prestigious group of bloggers to tell us what characteristics make a good blogger. Many offered lists of personal traits including:

*“Dedicated, opinionated, inquisitive”*

*“Disciplined”*

*“Intelligent, diligent, and patient”*

*“Personality, commitment, networking ability”*

*“Responsible, honest”*

*“Being true and real at all times”*

*“Passion, engagement, sincerity, authenticity, to be coherent, to answer comments (even the negative ones), to post regularly (even if only once per week)”*

Others offered more extensive comments on what makes a blogger or blog successful:

*“Above average conversational or writing skills, creativity, persistence, complete honesty and integrity (if you aren’t honest you’ll be found out quickly); the ability to separate yourself from your blog. The worst bloggers are those that identify so thoroughly with their blog that conversation and debate can’t occur-they are just seen as personal attacks.”*

*“Short and concise postings, blogging is not about really long articles, powerful useful tips of information, a good search feature, a tad bit of humor but also knowledgeable on the subject matter. Sharing of cutting edge info rather than old news.”*

One well know business blogger wrote, *“The blogosphere has changed forever how people share information and what their takes are on just about any topic under the sun. The net result being the world which was getting flat is now even flatter and you are a couple of clicks away from smart people with first hand knowledge and insight into all kinds of ideas that you care about.”*

In typical blogger form, some sent links to other blogs that have compiled lists of highly effective bloggers, others sent things they have written or have seen on the subject. This is typical blog behavior... people helping people.

## **Concluding Thoughts**

The data presented in this study came from the most established and well-known bloggers in their respective fields. They have run their blogs for several years, some more than six years. In the world of the blogosphere that makes these contributors the wise elders. They responded to a simple inquiry that promised to pass on their advice to businesses contemplating entering their world. Seventy-four bloggers responded with candid comments and quantitative data that are rich and clear.

Blogging takes time, commitment, and honesty. In return connections are made that are personal and strong. Blogs are not a fad. They are no longer even an option. Those businesses that choose to remain outside this online conversation, will be sidelined. Eventually they will become extinct.

Consumers will move about the wired world in search of products and services that meet their needs. Every serious business needs to have a presence in this electronic global marketplace. But there is more. Businesses need to listen to other conversations that are happening around them. This includes responding to other blog posts and comments.

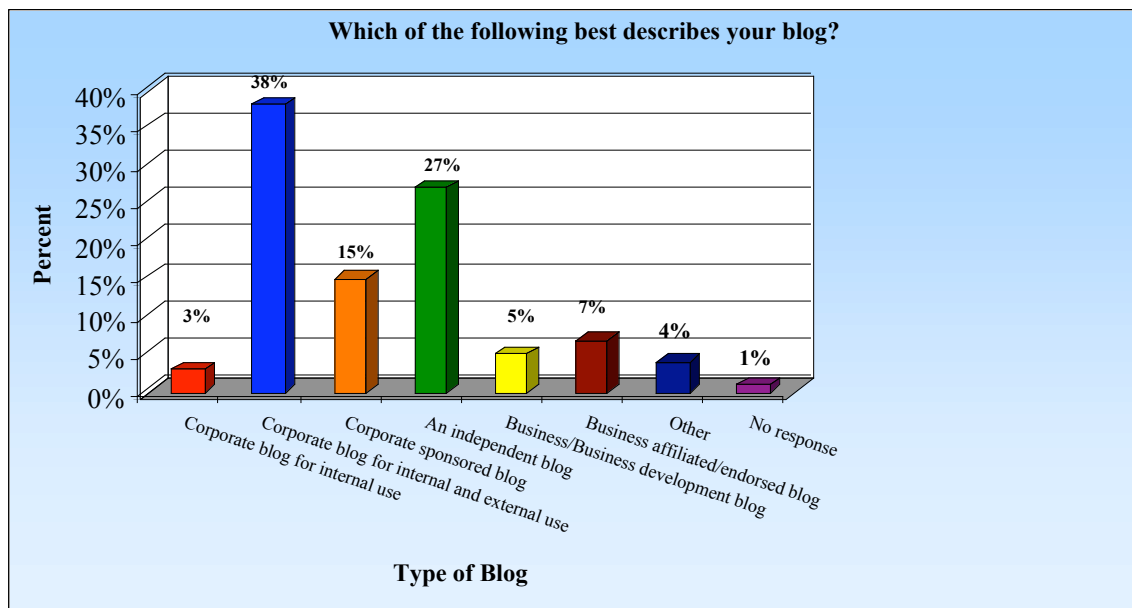
The blogosphere itself is a provider of more and better research than off line businesses are getting now. A true competitive analysis takes place when one searches blogs to see who your competitors are in the minds of your target market. Blogs act as huge, ongoing focus groups providing feedback and ideas. Some of the most brilliant people in the world are blogging. Talk to them. Let them help you become more successful. Move your business forward in a way that is new, exciting, a bit scary, and ultimately necessary.



Question 1: Which of the following best describes your blog?

Which of the following best describes your blog?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Internal corporate blog	2	2.7	2.7	2.7
	Internal/external corporate blog	28	37.8	37.8	40.5
	Corporate sponsored blog	11	14.9	14.9	55.4
	An independent blog	20	27.0	27.0	82.4
	Other	3	4.1	4.1	86.5
	No response	1	1.4	1.4	87.8
	Business/Business Development Blog	4	5.4	5.4	93.2
	Business affiliated/endorsed	5	6.8	6.8	100.0
	Total	74	100.0	100.0	



Three percent of respondents describe their blog as a corporate blog for internal use only, 38% describe it as a corporate blog for internal and external use, 15% describe it as a corporate sponsored blog, 27% describe it as an independent blog (not affiliated with a corporation), 5% describe it as a business or business development blog, 7% describe it as a business affiliated/endorsed blog, 4% describe it as something other than those already mentioned\* and 1% had no response.

\* Please refer to the next page for a listing of “other” responses.

Question 1: Which of the following best describes your Blog?  
(Other)

- “My blog is a personal, independent blog, but I happen to be a business owner so of course content directly and indirectly related to my business makes its way onto the blog.”
  
- “Network Blog”
  
- “Personal blog detailing my experience as CEO of a startup-so it's related to a corporation, but not really fits in the categories above.”

Question 2: What is the name of your blog?

1. Adrants
2. Ageless Marketing
3. Alacrablog
4. Alan Weinkantz
5. Aldo Coffee Co.
6. AListReview
7. Being Reasonable
8. Blog Business Summit
9. Blogads weblog
10. Blogsurvey
11. Brains on Fire Blog
12. Buyout Blog
13. Buzznovation
14. Capulet's Blog
15. Cheskin Perspectives
16. Colin's Corner
17. CREEations
18. Cudgeland
19. Customer Experience Crossroads
20. DimDump (for Digital Image Management Dump)
21. Don Loper
22. DoRealTime
23. eBeautyDaily
24. EDS' Next Big Thing
25. EmersonProcessXperts
26. Ephemera
27. eWomenGreaterSeattle
28. Feld Thoughts
29. Firms of Endearment
30. FTP Planet

31. Gilbane Group Analyst Blog
32. Guided by History
33. Indexed Forever
34. Ipswitch Blog
35. iUpload InSights
36. JeffMatthewsIsNotMakingThisUp
37. Joe Wikert's Book Publisher and eContent Blog
38. Journal of a Cyberlawyer
39. KDPaine's measurement blog
40. Kinaxis on Response Management (Internal Blog)
41. Kinaxis on Response Management (External Blog)
42. Library Technology in Texas
43. Logos Bible Software Blog
44. Ma Pa and the Corporate Clueless
45. Mark Logic CEO Blog
46. MarketingMonger
47. Marqui's World
48. Mercer on Value
49. Mohammed Admin Finance and Treasury Blog
50. Online News Squared
51. Online Resource Center for Email Marketers
52. Otter Group
53. Ovationblog
54. PatrickWeb
55. Peter de Haas' Weblog
56. Presidents Update
57. Prospect Research Blog
58. Raycox
59. RewardLicious
60. Rexblog
61. Roger's Blog
62. Scatterbox by Steven Silvers

63. The Flack
64. The Ruckus Room
65. The Tinbasher
66. Tom Markiewicz
67. Tom Peters
68. Trends in the Living Networks
69. Va Journal
70. Versant Blog Center
71. Video360
72. VitalectBlogspot.com
73. VoIP & Gadgets Blog
74. YakimaWineBlog

Question 3: What category would your blog come under (key words)?

<b>Key Word</b>	<b>Frequency of Response</b>
Marketing	(11)
Technology	(11)
Business	(9)
Advertising	(5)
Media	(5)
Business blogging	(3)
Collaboration	(3)
Corporate blogging	(3)
Corporate philanthropy	(3)
File transfer	(3)
Public Relations	(3)
Small to medium business	(3)
Blog consulting	(2)
Blogger events	(2)
Business blogging nexus	(2)
Content management	(2)
e-learning	(2)
Email marketing	(2)
Entrepreneurial blogging	(2)
Entrepreneurship	(2)
Innovation	(2)
Publishing	(2)
Rants	(2)
Software	(2)
Supply chain	(2)
Web 2.0	(2)
1906 Earthquake	(1)
Agency life	(1)

<b>Key Word</b>	<b>Frequency of Response</b>
Aggregating innovative ideas	(1)
A-list	(1)
Applications	(1)
Appraisal	(1)
Beauty	(1)
Bible software	(1)
Blog	(1)
Blogger relations	(1)
Blogging	(1)
Boomer markets	(1)
Branding	(1)
Business information	(1)
Business insights	(1)
CEO	(1)
CEO blog	(1)
Coffee espresso	(1)
Company highlights/news	(1)
Consultants	(1)
Consulting	(1)
Consumer electronics	(1)
Corporate communications	(1)
Corporate social responsibility	(1)
Cosmetics	(1)
Customer experience	(1)
Customer Relationship Management	(1)
Cyberlaw	(1)
DBMS	(1)
Design	(1)
Design strategy	(1)
Direct marketing	(1)
Disaster preparedness	(1)

<b>Key Word</b>	<b>Frequency of Response</b>
DSP	(1)
eContent	(1)
Enterprise search	(1)
eWomenNetworks	(1)
Famous blogs	(1)
Finance	(1)
Fear and loathing	(1)
Foodservice	(1)
Fund raising	(1)
Future	(1)
Futurist	(1)
Gadgets	(1)
Global business	(1)
High tech PR	(1)
Home networking/IPTV	(1)
Incentives	(1)
Industry pundit	(1)
iUpload	(1)
Knowledge visualization	(1)
Law	(1)
Leadership	(1)
Learning 2.0	(1)
Lebanon panini cannoli	(1)
Libraries	(1)
Magazines	(1)
Management	(1)
Management consulting	(1)
Market analyst	(1)
Market research	(1)
Marketing accountability	(1)
Mature markets	(1)



<b>Key Word</b>	<b>Frequency of Response</b>
Meaningful experience	(1)
Media news online interactive	(1)
Mergers and acquisitions	(1)
Microsoft	(1)
Multicultural	(1)
Naming and identity	(1)
Nashville	(1)
Networking	(1)
Non-profit	(1)
One-to-one marketing	(1)
Online marketing	(1)
Organizational management	(1)
Parties	(1)
Passion	(1)
Photography	(1)
Pittsburgh Mt.	(1)
Podcasting	(1)
Political	(1)
Popular bloggers	(1)
Popular blogs	(1)
PR Blog	(1)
PR Marketing	(1)
PR Measurement	(1)
Practical life philosophy	(1)
Process automation	(1)
Process control	(1)
Process manufacturing	(1)
Product development	(1)
Prospect research	(1)
Reputation management	(1)
Rewards	(1)

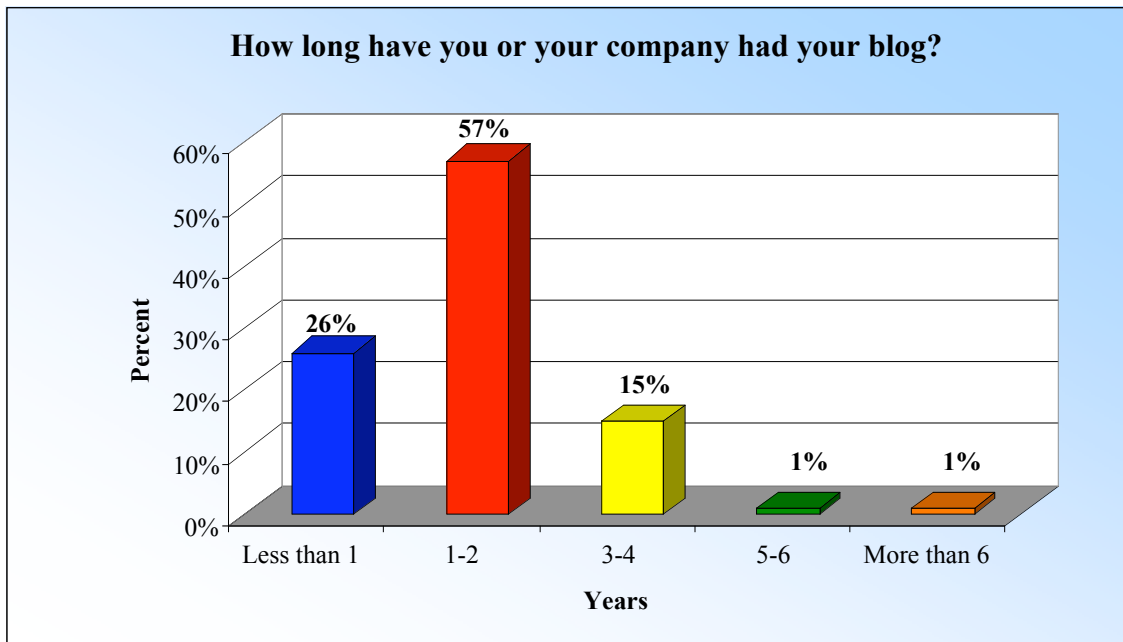
<b>Key Word</b>	<b>Frequency of Response</b>
San Francisco	(1)
Search Engine Optimization	(1)
Security	(1)
Semiconductor	(1)
Senior markets	(1)
Sheet metal manufacture	(1)
Small business	(1)
Small business server	(1)
Social networks	(1)
Stakeholder Relationship Management (SRM)	(1)
Stock photography	(1)
Stocks	(1)
Style	(1)
Sustainable corporations	(1)
Tax	(1)
Technical	(1)
Technology services	(1)
Texas	(1)
Treasury	(1)
Utah	(1)
Valuation	(1)
Value	(1)
Venture capital	(1)
Video	(1)
Virtual assistance	(1)
Virtual assistant	(1)
Visionary	(1)
VoIP	(1)
Washington	(1)
Web development and design	(1)
Weddings	(1)

<b>Key Word</b>	<b>Frequency of Response</b>
Wells Fargo	(1)
Wines	(1)
Word of mouth	(1)
XML	(1)
Yakima Valley	(1)
<b>Total</b>	<b>221</b>

Question 4: How long have you or your company had your blog?

How long have you or your company had your blog?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 1 year	19	25.7	25.7	25.7
	1-2 years	42	56.8	56.8	82.4
	3-4 years	11	14.9	14.9	97.3
	5-6 years	1	1.4	1.4	98.6
	More than 6 years	1	1.4	1.4	100.0
	Total	74	100.0	100.0	

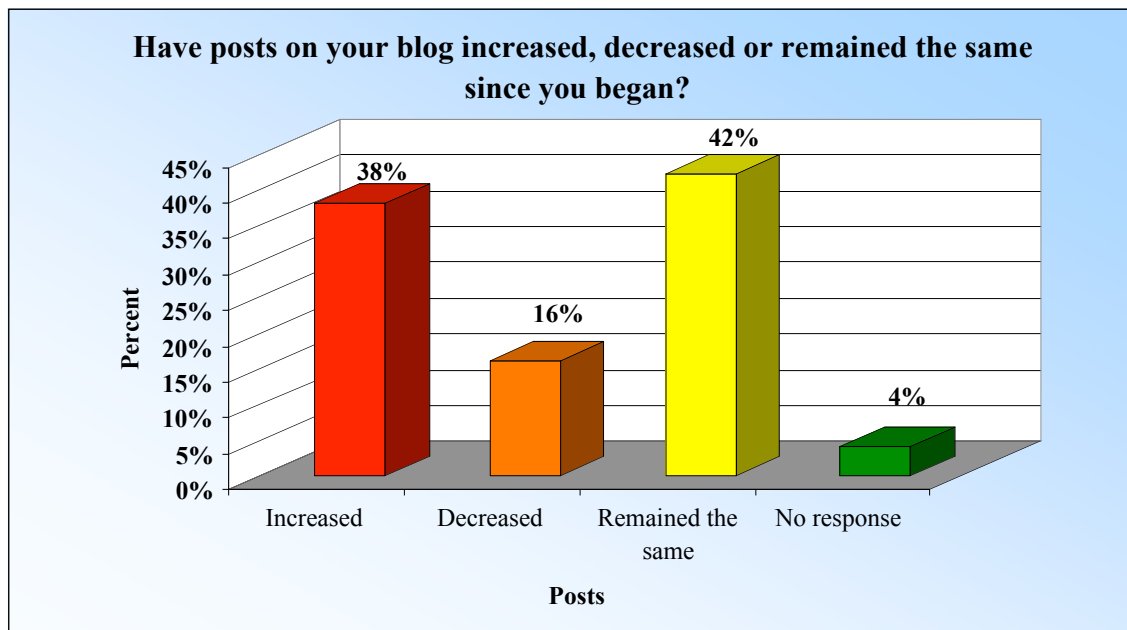


Twenty-six of the respondents have had their blog for less than 1 year, 57% for 1-2 years, 15% for 3-4 years, 1% for 5-6 years and 1% for more than 6 years.

Question 5: Have your posts on your blog increased, decreased, or remained the same since you began?

Have your posts on your blog increased, decreased, or remained the same since you began?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Increased	28	37.8	37.8	37.8
	Decreased	12	16.2	16.2	54.1
	Remained the same	31	41.9	41.9	95.9
	No response	3	4.1	4.1	100.0
Total		74	100.0	100.0	

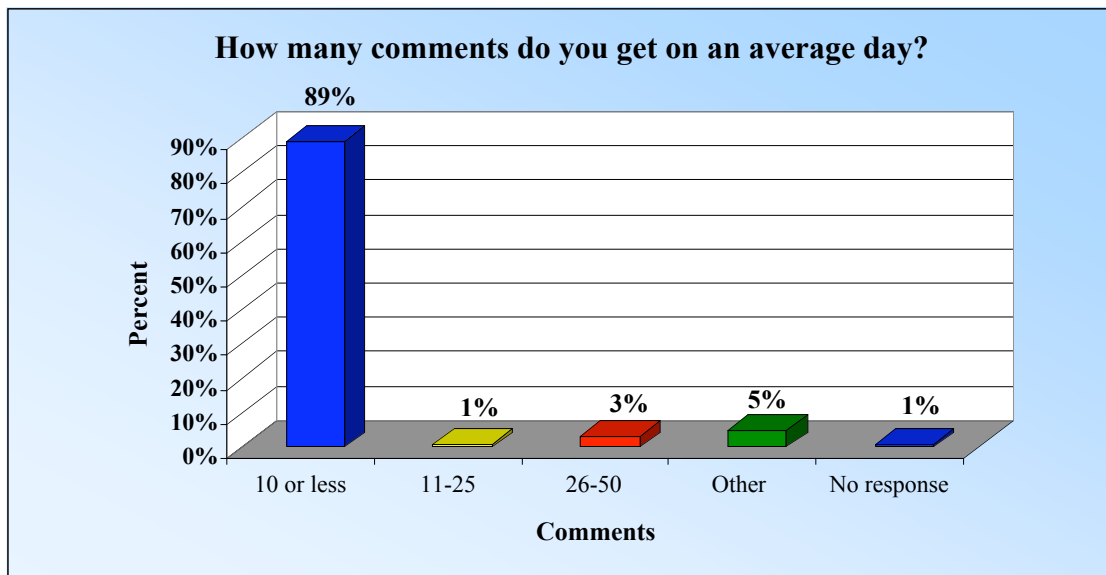


Thirty-eight percent of respondents' posts on their blog have increased since they began, 16% have decreased, 42% have remained the same and 4% had no response.

Question 6: How many comments do you get on an average day?

How many comments do you get on an average day?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	10 or less	66	89.2	89.2	89.2
	11-25	1	1.4	1.4	90.5
	26-50	2	2.7	2.7	93.2
	Other	4	5.4	5.4	98.6
	No response	1	1.4	1.4	100.0
	Total	74	100.0	100.0	



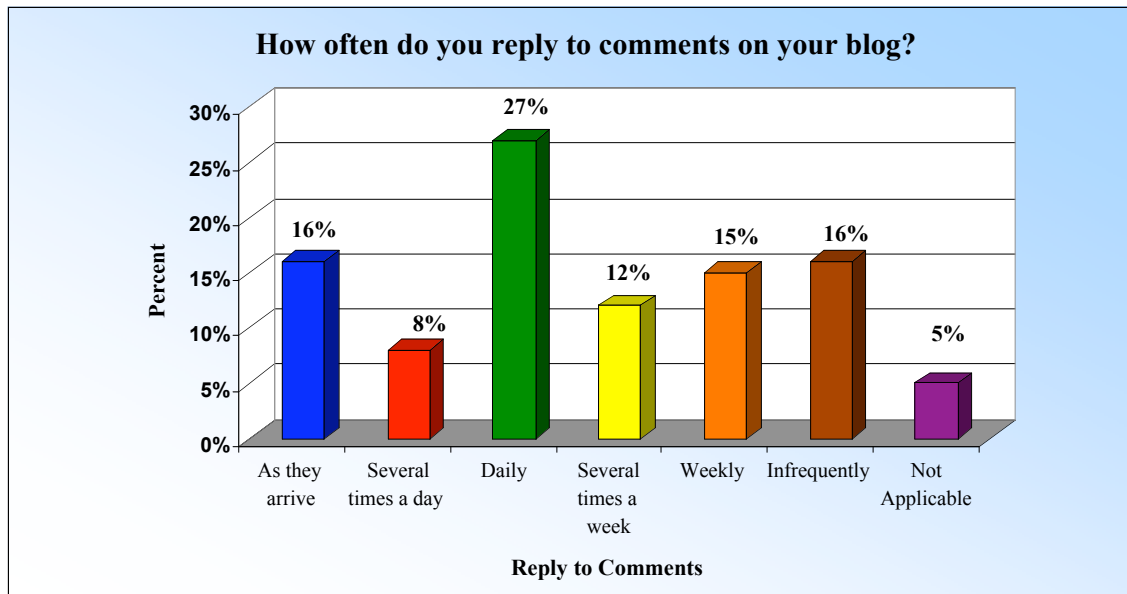
Eighty-nine percent of respondents receive 10 or less comments on an average day, 1% receive 11-25 comments, 3% receive 26-50 comments, 5% said something other than those already mentioned\* and 1% had no response.

\* Respondents who said "other" did not specify how many comments they get on an average day.

Question 7: How often do you reply to comments on your blog?

How often do you reply to comments on your blog?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Several times a day	6	8.1	8.1	8.1
	Daily	20	27.0	27.0	35.1
	Several times a week	9	12.2	12.2	47.3
	Weekly	11	14.9	14.9	62.2
	N/A	4	5.4	5.4	67.6
	As they arrive	12	16.2	16.2	83.8
	Infrequently	12	16.2	16.2	100.0
	Total	74	100.0	100.0	

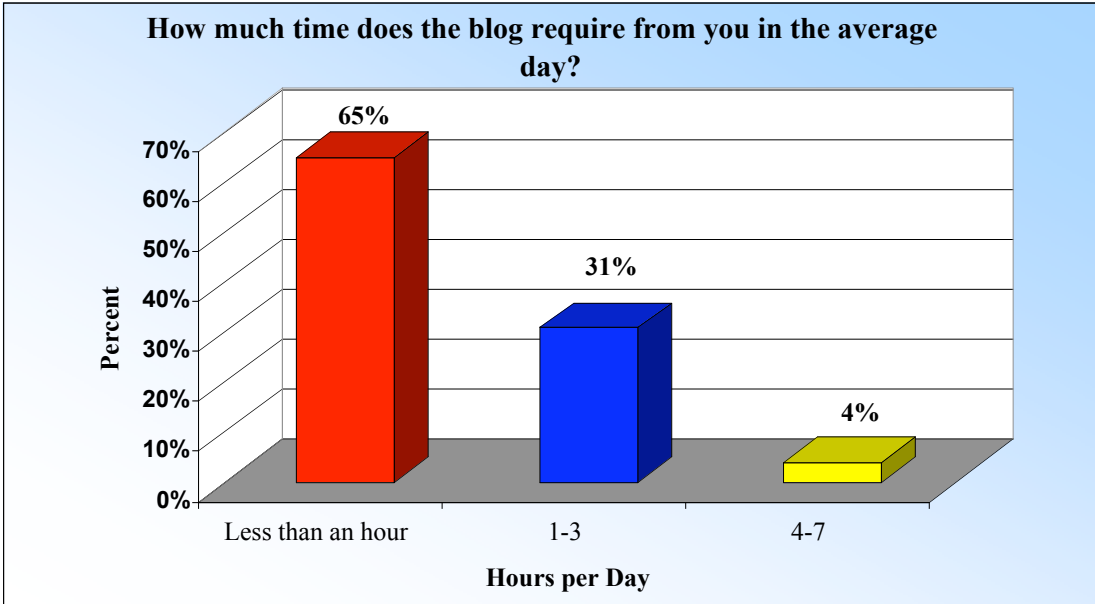


Sixteen percent of the respondents said they reply to comments as they arrive, 8% respond several times a day, 27% respond daily, 12% respond several times a week, 15% respond weekly, 16% respond infrequently and 5% said it does not apply to them.

Question 8: How much time does the blog require from you in the average day?

**How much time does the blog require from you in the average day?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than an hour a day	48	64.9	64.9	64.9
	1-3 hours a day	23	31.1	31.1	95.9
	4-7 hours a day	3	4.1	4.1	100.0
	Total	74	100.0	100.0	



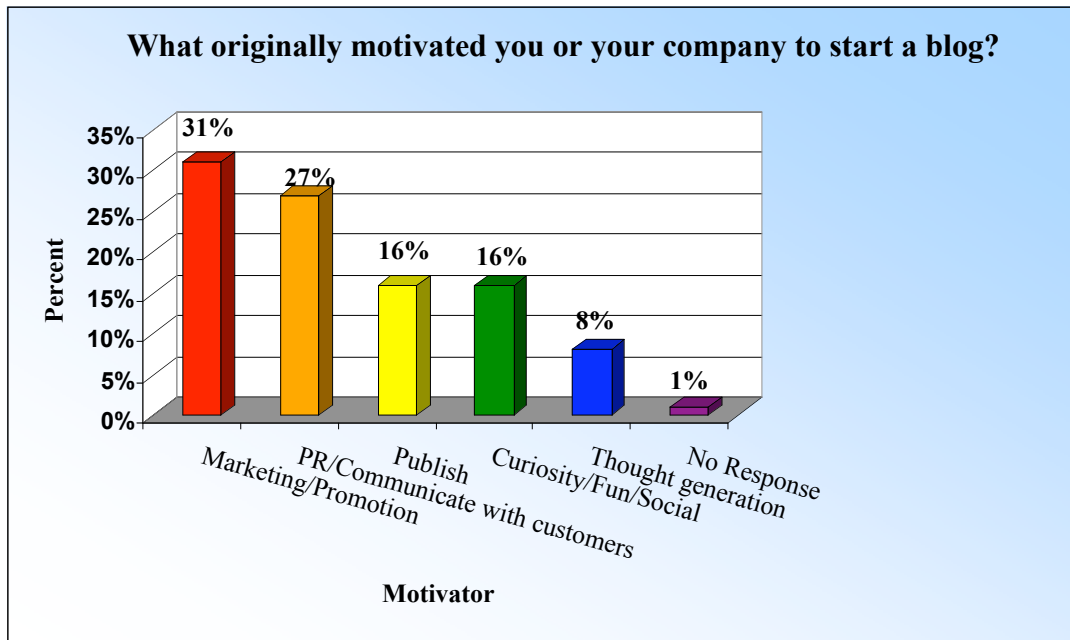
Sixty-five percent of respondents spend less than an hour a day maintaining their blog, 31% spend 1-3 hours per day and 4% spend 4-7 hours per day.



Question 9: What originally motivated you or your company to start a blog?

**What originally motivated you or your company to start a blog?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Marketing/Promotion	23	31.1	31.1	31.1
	PR/Communicate with customers	20	27.0	27.0	58.1
	Publish	12	16.2	16.2	74.3
	Curiosity/Fun/Social	12	16.2	16.2	90.5
	Thought generation	6	8.1	8.1	98.6
	No response	1	1.4	1.4	100.0
	Total	74	100.0	100.0	

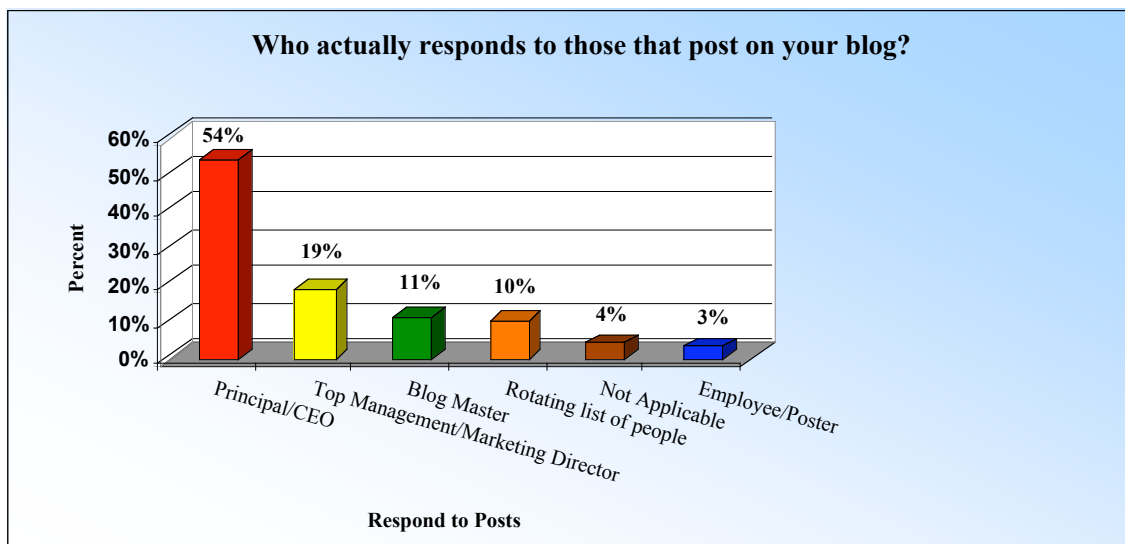


Thirty-one percent of respondents were motivated to start a blog for marketing/promotional use, 27% for public relations/communicate with customers, 16% for publish, 16% for curiosity/fun/social reasons, 8% for thought generation and 1% had no response.

Question 10: Who actually responds to those that post on your blog?

Who actually responds to those that post on your blog?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Top management/Marketing Director	14	18.9	18.9	18.9
	Rotating list of people	7	9.5	9.5	28.4
	Blog Master	8	10.8	10.8	39.2
	Principal/CEO	40	54.1	54.1	93.2
	N/A	3	4.1	4.1	97.3
	Employee/Poster	2	2.7	2.7	100.0
	Total	74	100.0	100.0	

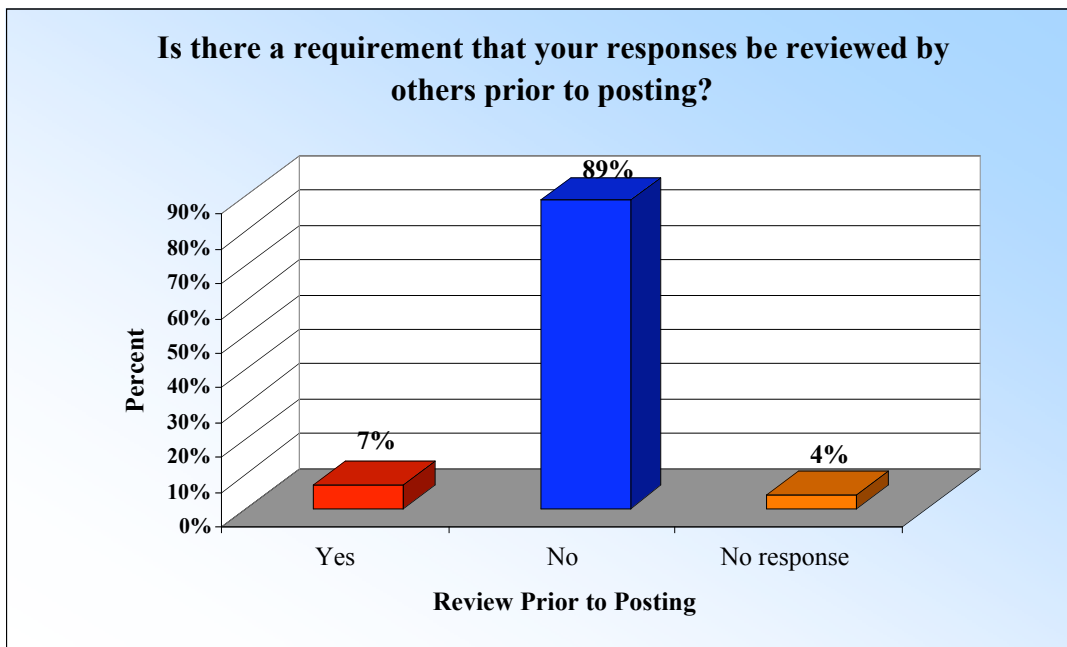


Fifty-four percent of respondents said the principal/CEO responds to posts on the blog, 19% said top management of the company, 11% said a Blog Master, 10% said a rotating list of people, 4% said it does not apply and 3% said an employee/poster.

Question 11: Is there a requirement that your responses be reviewed by others prior to posting?

Is there a requirement that your responses be reviewed by others prior to posting?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	5	6.8	6.8	6.8
	No	66	89.2	89.2	95.9
	No response	3	4.1	4.1	100.0
	Total	74	100.0	100.0	

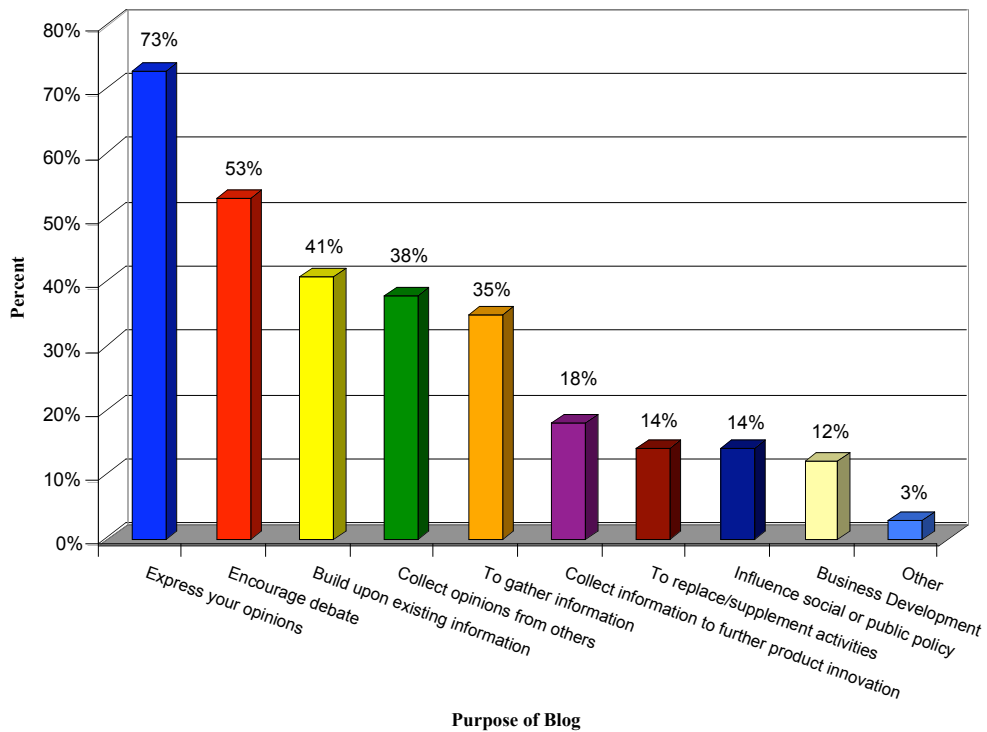


Seven percent of respondents said there is a requirement that their responses be reviewed by others prior to posting.

If yes, by what level, or department:

- Sales/Marketing VP
- Occasionally if it is product specific, the product manager has to review
- Each of my primary postings undergoes two levels of review the proposed posting. Secondly, the technically approved posting is reviewed by our tax practice's corporate communications team.

### What is the primary purpose of your blog?



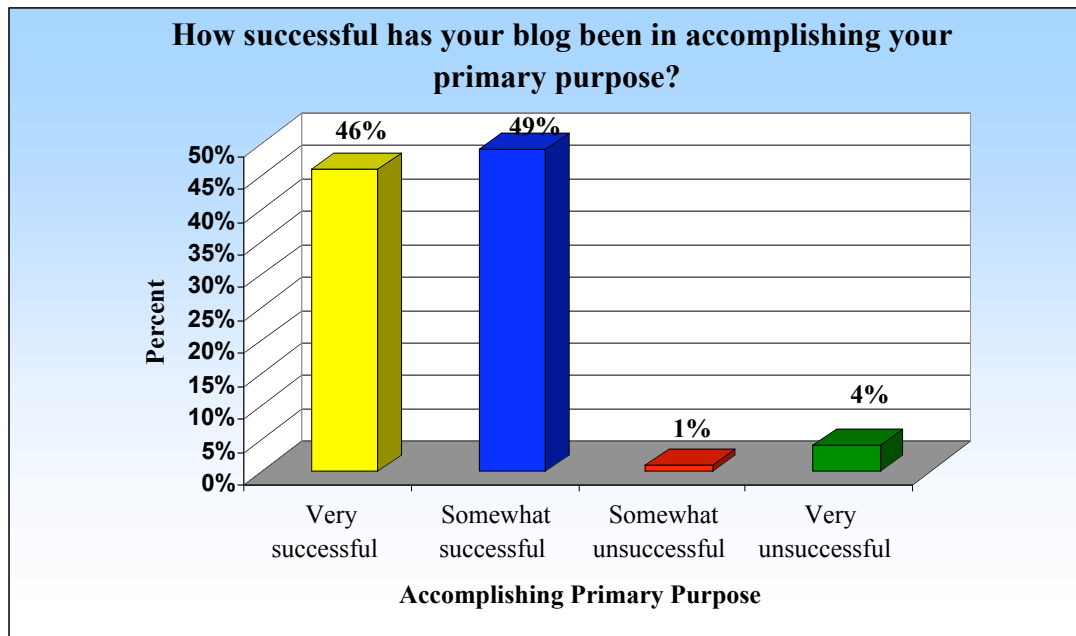
### Other Responses

- “The primary purpose of my blog is to serve as a platform and proxy for me so that I can do all of the above-or none of the above. Each post has a different purpose.”

Question 13: How successful has your blog been in accomplishing your primary purpose?

How successful has your blog been in accomplishing your primary purpose?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very successful	34	45.9	45.9	45.9
	Somewhat successful	36	48.6	48.6	94.6
	Somewhat unsuccessful	1	1.4	1.4	95.9
	Very unsuccessful	3	4.1	4.1	100.0
	Total	74	100.0	100.0	

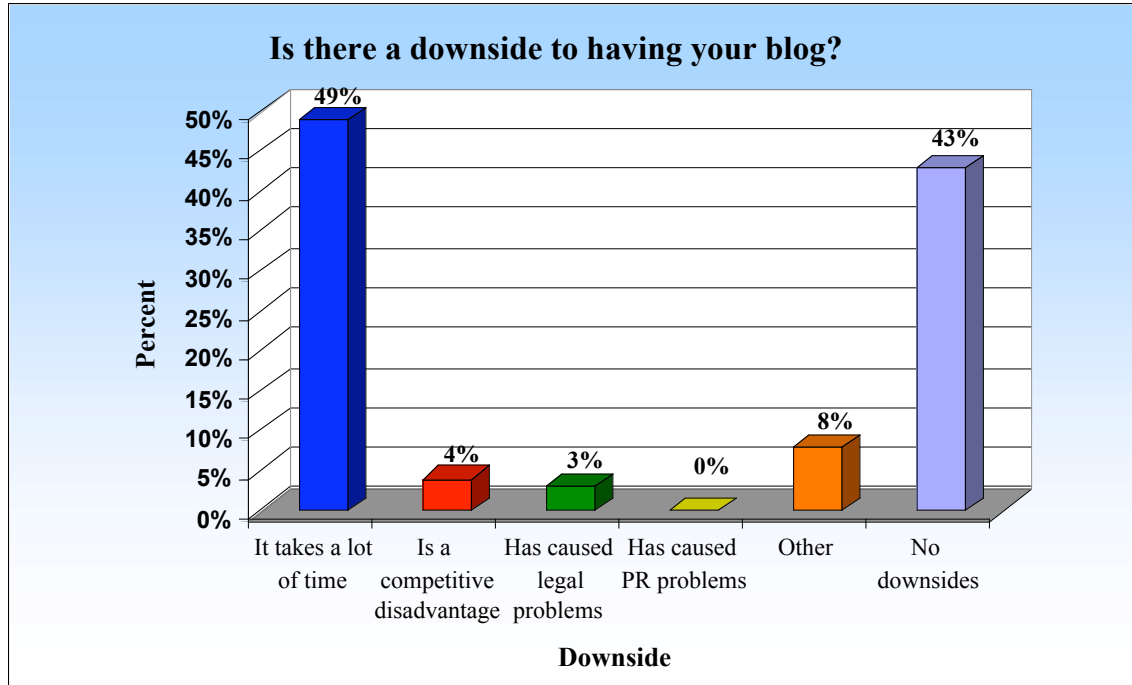


Ninety-five percent of respondents have been successful in accomplishing their primary purpose of their blog.

**If not successful, what went wrong?**

The topic at hand doesn't have a lot of blogs that relate to it that you can comment and link to - and we need to do more in this area.

Question 14: Is there a downside to having your blog?  
(Check all that apply)



Forty-nine percent of the respondents find the amount of time it takes to maintain their blog is a downside, 4% said it is a competitive disadvantage given its transparency, 3% said it has caused legal problems, no one said it has caused public relations problems, 8% said something other than those already mentioned\* and 43% said there is no downside to having a blog.

\* Please refer to the next page for a listing of "other response."

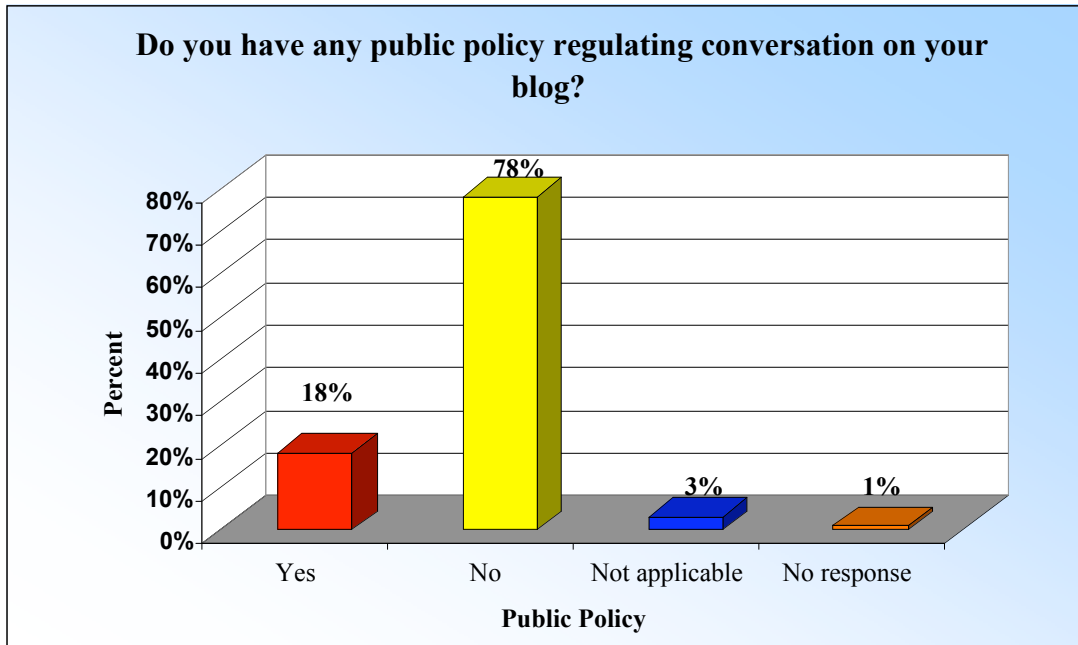
Question 14: Is there a downside to having your blog?  
(Other)

- “High expectations”
- “I bump into strangers who know my dog's name.”
- “In the newspaper business they have this expression for reporters who tell their bosses that they want their own column....that columns are like nymphomaniacs. Everybody says they want one, then when you get one you don't know what to do with it. Blogs are like that...the downside is keeping it up. But the upside is forcing yourself to keep it up, especially if you're trying to write a relevant perspective blog, versus just aggregate stuff from all over the web as so many people do..nobody has anything interesting enough to say in my business to post several times a day...that's just being a parrot, not a pundit.”
- “Our first blog is "safe" in that it's akin to a public service announcement. We're not yet blogging about our core business (Finance). Once we do, I expect challenges around legal, banking regulations/compliance, and perhaps PR. Shifting from a central voice from your company (PR) to employee bloggers is a very significant mind shift.”
- “Perception from some associates internally that it is not the best use of our time.”
- “Staying provocative and sticky”

**Question 15: Do you have any public policy regulating conversation on your blog?**

**Do you have any public policy regulating conversation on your blog?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	13	17.6	17.6	17.6
	No	58	78.4	78.4	95.9
	Not applicable	2	2.7	2.7	98.6
	No response	1	1.4	1.4	100.0
	Total	74	100.0	100.0	



Eighteen percent of respondents have public policy regulating conversation on their blog.



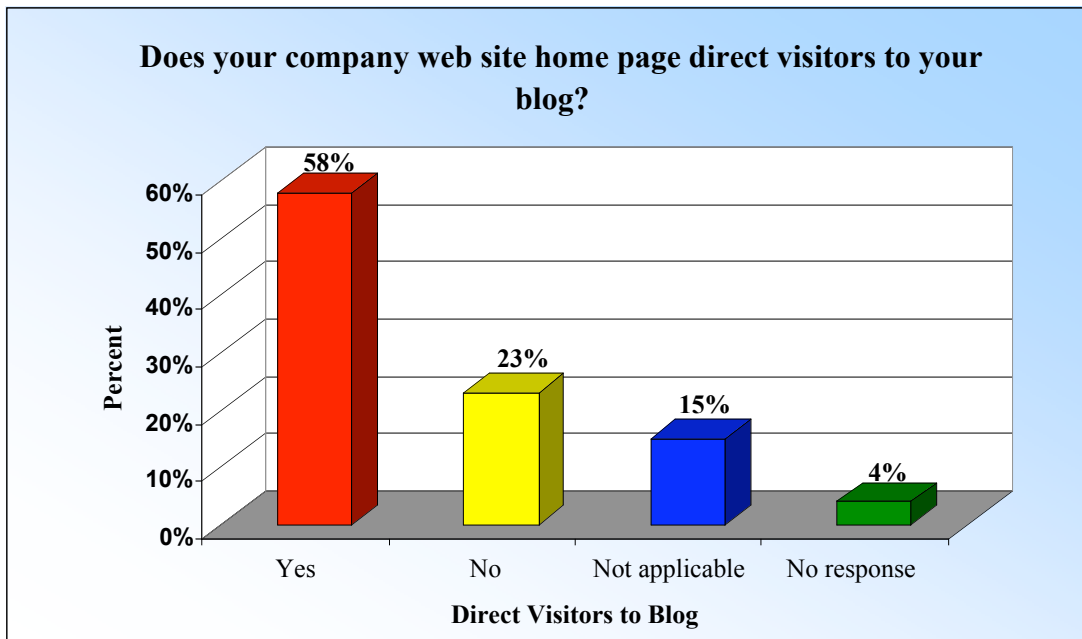
Question 15: Do you have any public policy regulating conversation on your blog?  
(If yes, where could we find that policy?)

- Above the comments field
- Front page
- <http://blog.wellsfargo.com/guidedbyhistory/about.html>
- <http://tompeters.com/faq.php#commentFAQ>
- In my FAQ. I reserve the right to zap comments and will correct factual errors
- Not sure what you mean....I have a disclaimer and a creative commons license on my site
- On every comment form at ephemera.org the policy is "don't be pooppy"

**Question 16: Does your company web site home page direct visitors to your blog?**

**Does your company web site home page direct visitors to your blog?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	43	58.1	58.1	58.1
	No	17	23.0	23.0	81.1
	Not applicable	11	14.9	14.9	95.9
	No response	3	4.1	4.1	100.0
Total		74	100.0	100.0	

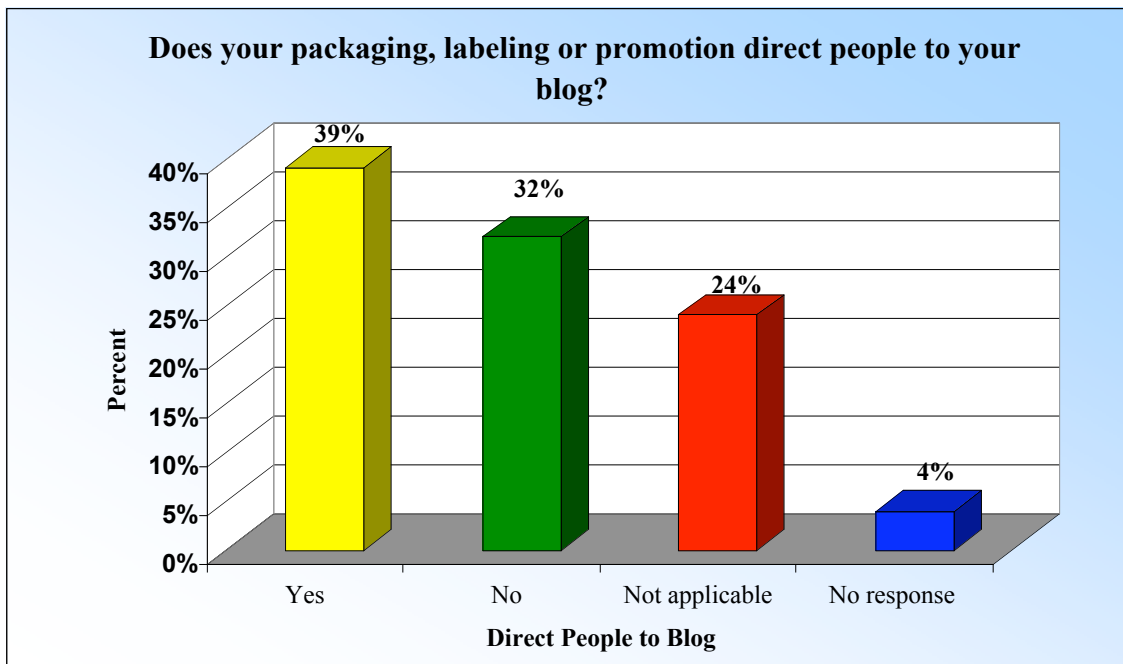


Fifty-eight percent of respondents company web site direct visitors to their blog.

Question 17: Does your packaging, labeling or promotion direct people to your blog?

**Does your packaging, labeling or promotion direct people to your blog?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	29	39.2	39.2	39.2
	No	24	32.4	32.4	71.6
	Not applicable	18	24.3	24.3	95.9
	No response	3	4.1	4.1	100.0
Total		74	100.0	100.0	

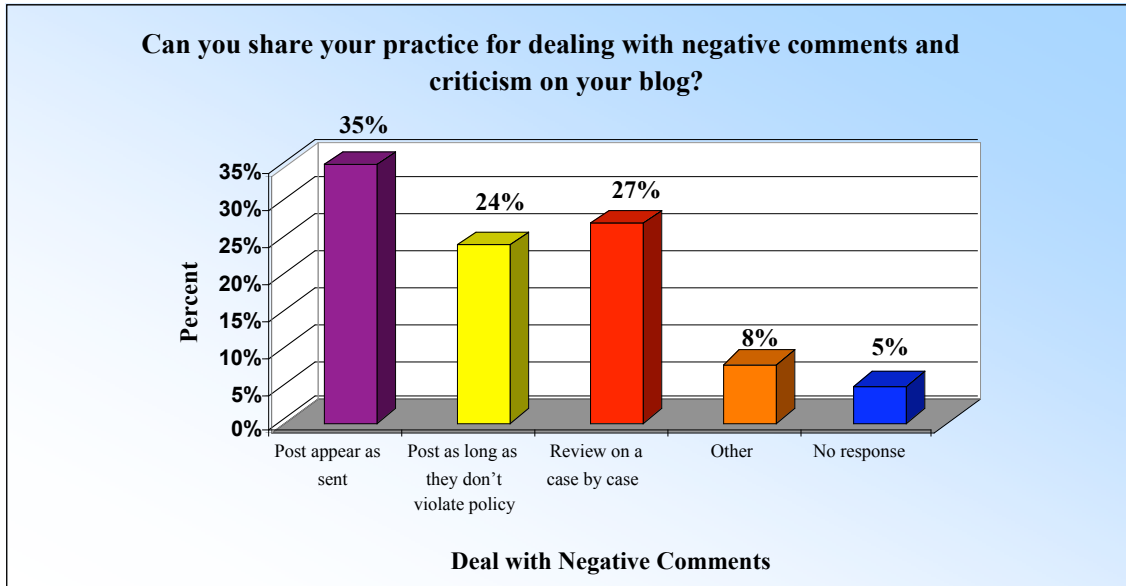


Thirty-nine percent of respondents packaging, labeling or promotion direct people to their blog.

Question 18: Can you share your practice for dealing with negative comments and criticism on your blog?

**Can you share your practice for dealing with negative comments and criticism on your blog?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Posts appear exactly as they are sent in	26	35.1	35.1	35.1
	We post as long as they don't violate our blog policy	18	24.3	24.3	59.5
	We review on a case by case basis	20	27.0	27.0	86.5
	Other	6	8.1	8.1	94.6
	No response	4	5.4	5.4	100.0
	Total	74	100.0	100.0	



Thirty-five percent of respondents post comments as they are sent, 24% post as long as they don't violate their blog policy, 27% review on a case by case basis, 8% said something other than those already mentioned\* and 5% had no response.

\* Please refer to the next page for a listing of "other" responses.

Question 18: Can you share your practice for dealing with negative comments and criticism on your blog?  
(Other)

- “Comments with obscenities and such are summarily deleted”
- ‘Don't respond”
- “I rarely post any comment that identifies a constituent. I do sometimes post their comments to me, but not with any identification.”
- “If I don't think it adds value or it isn't relevant, I don't post it. I'm not a bulletin board.”
- “Posts appear exactly as sent unless spam, racism, hate or overboard swearing.”
- “We've not yet faced negative comments, but I'd like to use Microsoft's Robert Scoble as a model to publish it, and discuss it rapidly, openly and transparently.”

Question 19: What is your best advice for someone/a company thinking about starting a blog?

- “Be authentic, if you can't don't blog. Don't focus on execs, the public wants to hear from people they can relate to- the average worker. Pick a "short fuse" topic to get started, with a definite start and end date, before you start an indefinite blog. Monitor the blogosphere closely, both for discussions about your brand, and for comments about your blog. Respond with comments to those outside blog posts. The blogosphere respects participation, so respond.”
- “Be honest and don't pander. Readers can tell.”
- “Be prepared to spend more time than you think. Look on it as a learning experience (you'll get as much back as you give). Once you start, don't stop.”
- “Be sure you have the time to do a good job; like to write; set your mission/goal before you start.”
- “Be transparent and authentic”
- “Be very specific about your focus and post at least three times a week.”
- “Choose something that is your favorite hobby. Blogging cannot be a chore or you will fail.”
- “Consider if you truly have enough time to dedicate to maintaining a blog, the worst blogs are those that are updated infrequently.”
- “Create a business plan. Since this is intended to make money, a full business plan was created for it and we are still tweaking it a bit (you might say it is in Beta right now).”
- “Dedicate a leader for the initiative to educate and inspire participation as well as keep the content fresh and relevant.”
- “Develop a point of view that's relevant. Ensure that you have a team that is motivated to share their insights and have an ongoing process to encourage

- participation. Make it authentic.”
- “Develop a voice and post regularly”
  - “Do it!”
  - “Do it! It's a great way to get closer to your users, customers and other critical stakeholders.”
  - “Do it, once everyone in the company knows the positives and negatives of the public forum, and knows how to safely and smartly engage in the blogosphere.”
  - “Do it--there is no downside to getting to know your customers on a more personal basis.”
  - “Don't forget direct marketing to drive traffic and remind people to come back to visit. Internal mailing list works for example.”
  - “Don't give in to the fear. It's a great step to giving you a voice and connecting with kindred spirits. Also, pick a topic and stick to it. Don't be schizophrenic. Post often and link to other blogs. Find your own blogging community.”
  - “Don't let the fear get the best of you. Get in there and start blogging. If you run into criticism about how you're doing it, acknowledge it, take it into account, make changes, learn, and grow.”
  - “Don't start a blog unless you have people in your organization ready to post to it daily in an open, friendly, and excited tone. A blog is a conversation. Don't open the line unless you're ready to really talk.”
  - “Don't start unless you can be transparent and passionate about your subject--and can afford the time to post and network with other bloggers regularly.”
  - “Don't think of a blog in terms of publishing metaphors--it's not a newsletter replacement. Blogs are more like email or telephone. Great personal communication tool. But when you set one up to serve as a "corporate voice" it's as effective as spam. Find human beings to blog--don't set up a blog and try to find someone to manage it. It will suck if you do.”

- “Don't underestimate the amount of work involved, only do it if you have something to say.”
- “Enjoy yourself”
- “Executive should plan on spending at least 2 or 3 hours per week to maintain. Build this into your schedule in advance. Have rotating "guest bloggers" to keep the content fresh and prevent the entire burden from falling on one's person's shoulders.”
- “Get a thick skin”
- “Have a purpose in mind and a method for measuring success. Don't do it just because everyone else is. In my case, my blog helps my company make more money, and I have a variety of ways for tracking what money comes from the blog.”
- “Have people contribute to ideas and find a "community" of blogs to relate to it to build links.”
- “Have something to say that people want to hear, or be satisfied that you're going through all this as some kind of self-imposed therapy. And don't write anything you wouldn't say to somebody personally, at least not if you use your name. And remember that the Internet makes insipidness and banality look 20 times as much as it really is. And check your facts. Know what you don't know if you want to be taken seriously. And consider taking up a real hobby, or maybe volunteer at a shelter instead where your time actually helps people. And don't waste your time creating another collection of other people's blogs or news clips or video clips from Comedy Central. Come on. There's 36 million people doing the same thing and you're just showing off your information collection. Go out and get some air.”
- <http://www.appraisers.org/news/PDF/Summer%2005%20web.pdf> See article beginning on page 29, "To blog or Not to Blog"
- <http://www.ciainsight.com/article2/0,3959,1395411,00.asp>
- “In a company environment blogs can be used as a tactic to solve a number of communication issues so don't blog just for the sake of having a blog. For example, my public-facing blog is just a small piece of our blogging strategy-



blogs are just how we author content (all staff, partners and even customers get to use our blogs) and we present that content in different ways. Sometimes it's displayed in my blog, sometime it's displayed in a group blog view, sometimes it's just displayed as content on our website, and sometimes it's displayed for certain customers only on our company's extranet.”

- “It is a lot easier than you may think. Keep it fun for your people to participate in. Track click-through. Don't be disappointed if comments are few and far between. Keep posts short. Constant search from more meaningful topics. Repurpose good posts into topics for new business e-mails. Continually try new and different approaches.”
- “It takes time to do well”
- “Just do it and figure it out as you go. Make sure you stick to your knitting and commit to doing it.”
- “Just start. Read other blogs. Express yourself. Join the conversation.”
- “Keep it real”
- “Keep posts under 3 minutes of reading time (500-600 words); use graphics from time to time to increase visual appeal; don't self-promote.”
- “Like anything else in business, a blog requires a plan. Blogs that are not tied to a corporate entity absolutely require a business plan, even if in miniature. Without a plan, the blog is going to fail within three months. Period.”
- “Like anything else in business, a blog requires a plan. Define your audience and that will help in defining the voice of your blog. Blogs should include personality, including a little personal information. Blogs are conversation rather than a one-way speech. Allowing that conversation actually strengthens your fan base.”
- “Make a plan. Even for a blog like this, with no advertising and servicing a finite group, a plan is necessary to keep all of the authors on track.”
- “Make it genuine, make it interesting, or don't make it just for the sake of saying you blog.”

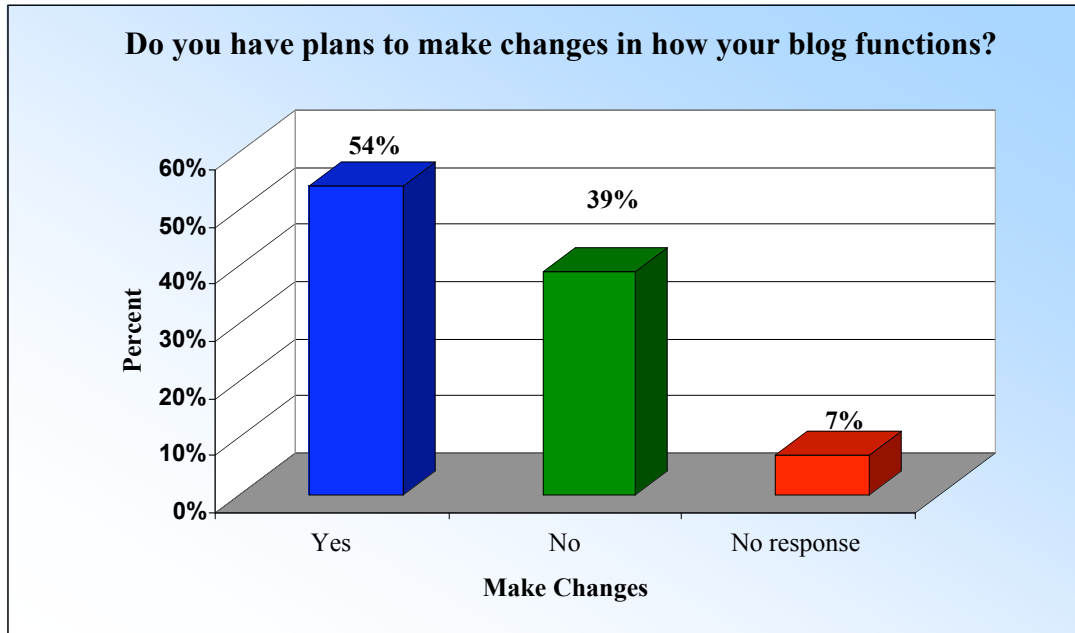
- “Make sure the author has impeccable spelling, grammar, and can write concisely. When we have guest authors, I usually have to spend a lot of time editing posts to their essence.”
- “Make sure you have time and resources dedicated to supporting it.”
- “Monitor the web and conduct outreach, develop a plan.”
- “Need to post often but you need to be able to say something meaningful every time you post. That's the challenge.”
- “Only do it if you are clear on what you're doing it.”
- “Provide information that adds value and compels visitors to return. Entertain as well as inform. People are people and like a variety of information-information that will help them do their job and information that will entertain them.”
- “Provide useful information, post regularly, be honest, be user-oriented.”
- “Read and research first. Listen to the online conversation.”
- “Remember it is public, but be your business self -don't use canned PR!”
- “Rotate authorship among a small group, publish on schedule, and develop a consistent voice for the blog, which should be informal and personal, but not casual, write short articles, not long ones. permit email subscription, choose people who like to write, and write frequently as part of their work.”
- “Stick with it, post frequently, regularly read other like-minded blogs.”
- “Stop thinking about it and do it. The only way to really learn is to get started and make the mistakes along the way.”
- “Think before you start. Many people start a blog and don't follow through. The "popularity" of your blog is directly related to frequent posting, open and honest dialogues.”

- “Think carefully as it requires a lot of time. Ideally you would have started over a year ago.”
- “Think very carefully and read/participate on other blogs to get a feel for them. Maybe write your blog privately prior to it going live.”
- “Understand the time commitment”
- “Understand who your reader is and what you hope to accomplish with the blog.”
- “Update regularly”
- “Write it yourself, no PR guys on it. Prepare to invest a lot of time. Comment broadly on your industry. Don't just summarize your press announcements.”
- “You need to have a clear objective and a sense of who your audience will be. You must be able to write quickly, but clearly. You need to be interesting and sometimes, controversial (bland is not good blog). You can't rely on feedback (either positive or negative) as you reward, or expect to make money or become famous. It is a personal pursuit that has its own rewards, from the sense of accomplishing your objectives and creating something interesting.”
- “You need to have a very committed writer and well defined subject matter boundary for the blog. The corporate communications team also need to commit to rapid turnaround of items submitted for pre-posting approval.”

Question 20: Do you have plans to make changes in how your blog functions?

Do you have plans to make changes in how your blog functions?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	40	54.1	54.1	54.1
	No	29	39.2	39.2	93.2
	No response	5	6.8	6.8	100.0
	Total	74	100.0	100.0	



Fifty-four percent of respondents have plans to make changes in how their blog functions.\*

\* Please refer to the next page for a listing of what changes respondents would like to make to their blog.

Question 20: What changes do you plan to make?

- “Add video, podcasting and integrate mobile.”
- “As and when new web 2.0 applications come along that I think readers can benefit from and when I feel it's time to change something such as the template. Gotta keep it fresh y'know.”
- “As we add bloggers, we will need to change the layout to accommodate so it doesn't become cluttered.”
- “Better organization of content. My newer blogs are more subject specific like my blog on MS CRM.”
- “Can't disclose at this time.”
- “Design”
- “Do a redesign to freshen up the look.”
- “Encourage more posting, and probably include more guest bloggers.”
- “From Blogger to WordPress”
- “Get more EDS' Fellows involved and posting.”
- “Getting us listed on more blog engines, having our associates post comments to other blogs and linking those posts to ours, incorporate images in our posts, incorporate tags.”
- “I am thinking of doing a podcast that I would append to the blog, probably covering and expanding the same topics, but maybe doing some interviews.”
- “I have lots of ideas, but nothing firmed up yet. I will probably create a tie-in web site to promote my speaking and workshop gigs, but I'm so business with my practice and girls at home that I have not time yet. I'm also working on a book based on the collection of blog posts to use in my speaking and workshop events.”
- “I plan to change the software I use so that I can incorporate categories more easily.”
- “I plan to have some additional community-relation features that are not being used. Those are going away. I also plan to return Google Ads to the advertising. Finally, I am thinking of adding additional authors.”

- “I plan to refine categories, add static material and categories, consider other ways of increasing value to readers.”
- “I want it to become more topical with events in our industry as other process manufacturers, trade press, automation suppliers, join in the blog conversation. The number of voices is small right now, so a lot of original content is required.”
- “I will be moving the blog from Blogger to its own domain name in WordPress soon. The charge will allow significantly increased functionality over the free blogspot.com set up currently used.”
- “I’d like a better index-Typepad says they are planning to introduce this soon.”
- “I’m not making changes to my blog, however, I am starting several other blogs as a result of my experiences with my first one.”
- “I’m thinking about prettying things up a bit. It has been a year or more since I did a redesign. I may add more advertising and affiliate stuff-I am interested in how it works and this is a good place to explore these areas. I may replicate more of my posts to the corporate site. I may look for more discussion and responses.”
- “Might offer dynamic stylesheet for users to pick their favorite style layout.”
- “More emphasis on reaching out to other blogs to comment and link.”
- “More information on our authors, additional authors, new channels, more frequent posts.”
- “Networking with other bloggers-leaving comments/trackbacks on their blogs, also utilizing local and topical blog aggregators.”
- “No major ones, although we are struggling with how to merge it and our email newsletters to streamline client communications.”
- “Perhaps add some collaboration functionality-event calendar, classified ads.”
- “Posting more frequently (1 per week on average). Would also like to have more.”
- “Promotion of blog (increase)”
- “RSS Feed! Put a link in your email signature.”

- “The platform, from Moveable Type to Typepad (for ease of use) Also, I'm changing the orientation, from business owners and their advisers, to a more direct focus on advisers.”
- “The UI”
- “The way in which people are able to subscribe via e-mail. Current provider is unreliable, and many customers don't understand RSS feeds yet.”
- “We are increasing promotion of it and driving more of our communication to it, to make it more of a dialogue with customers. We also need to do a better job of linking to other blogs.”
- “We may go to a better layout eventually.”
- “We plan to add additional blogs to the three we already produce.”
- “We'll eventually upgrade Movable Type to ensure less spam.”
- “Word of mouth”

Question 21: What is the best way to promote a blog?

- “Be brilliant, pick a fight, make comments on other blogs”
- “Being cited by other, more popular blogs”
- “By blogging, by commenting on other peoples blogs in the same niche and industry”
- “Comments on other blogs, introductions to the local wineries, perhaps some advertising”
- “Conduct blogger relations”
- “Consistent quality postings coupled with relevant comments adding to the conversation on other blogs over the long haul.”
- “Depends on what kind of blog it is. If a corporate blog, corporate related promotion is best, if a personal blog, then promoting yourself online is best.”
- “For this blog, constant reinforcement within the membership. Mentioning it every chance we get, in every email we send out and at every meeting we have.”
- “Get linked to by talking about issues of importance to bloggers with high PageRank.”
- “Having great content, engaging in current conversations with leading bloggers.”
- “Having our associates post comments to other blogs and linking those posts to ours.”
- “In addition to my mainstay of in-Context comments on other blogs, trackback posting and emailing blog posts to people who might find your post interesting, I also promote this blog through Virtual Assistant professional organizations.”
- “In context comments on other blogs, trackback posting and emailing blog posts to people who might find your post interesting.”
- “Linking to other bloggers and getting links back. The only way to do that is have high quality posts and then Search Engine Optimize them.”
- “Posting frequency, pictures, and links”
- “Provide useful information, post regularly, be honest, be user-oriented”



- “Talk to Griff Wigley, Wigley Associates.....he is a genius about blogs”
- “Talk about it, link in your email”
- “Technorati, search engines and posting comments on blogs and sites that are in the same interest as yours”
- “Writing many quality posts”

Question 22: What characteristic make a good blogger?

- “Above average conversational or writing skills, creativity, persistence, complete honesty and integrity (if you aren't honest you'll be found out quickly); the ability to separate yourself from your blog. The worst bloggers are those that identify so thoroughly with their blog that conversation and debate can't occur-they are just seen as personal attacks.”
- “Being true and real at all times”
- “Check out this post at ProBlogger.net for the definitive listing of highly effective blogger habits <http://www.problogger.net/archives/2006/05/27/habits-of-highly-effective-bloggers-final-submissions/>.”
- “Dedicated, opinionated, inquisitive”
- “Discipline. Good writing”
- “Good writer, succinct writer, intelligent writer, uses images, writes about something new not rehashing what's already out there, someone who post regularly.”
- “Having something to say. Being concise.”
- “Honest, passionate, interesting, and enigmatic”
- “Intelligence, diligence, and patience”
- “Like to write, cares about what they write about doesn't allow unprofessional writing or comments and can cite information used.”
- “Original thinking, writes well, keeps current
- “People who follow through”
- “Personality, commitment, networking ability”
- “Posting often and having something meaningful to say”
- “Remaining consistent with the blog's theme and being bale to post at least weekly if not more often.”
- “Responsible, dedicated, honest, committed, good time management. Mostly committed to putting in a lot of time before your blog "goes anywhere.”

- “Short and concise postings, blogging is not about really long articles, powerful useful tips of information, a good search feature, a tad bit of humor but also knowledgeable on the subject matter. Sharing of cutting edge info rather than old news.”
- “This blog is unique because I have seven members who are blogging. Half are extroverts, half are introverts. I'm actually guessing the introverts will stick with it longer, but it will be interesting to see which do. The threshold is the three month mark-that is when blogging becomes hard. It is the equivalent of the 7 year itch, in marriage, surmountable, but difficult while going through it.”

## **DR. NORA GANIM BARNES - Ph.D.**

Dr. Nora Ganim Barnes earned a Ph.D. in Consumer Behavior from the University of Connecticut and is a Chancellor Professor of Marketing and Director of the Center for Marketing Research at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth.

She has been selected by her peers at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth to be the recipient of the prestigious Leo Sullivan Excellence in Teaching Award (1993) and by her undergraduate college as the recipient of their Distinguished Alumni Award (1996). She was recognized by the faculty as Scholar of the Year at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth in 1999, becoming the first member of the faculty to receive both the Teacher of the Year and Scholar of the Year Awards in the history of the school. In the same year, and again in 2004 she received the Charlton College of Business Outstanding Teacher Award. In 2001, she was selected to receive the University of Massachusetts President's Community Service Award.

During the college's original application for AACSB accreditation she was voted Vice-Chair of the faculty for the College of Business. Dr. Barnes was inducted into the Gold Key Honor Society in 2002, and nominated both for Provost and for the Chancellor's Outstanding Woman Award in 2003.

Dr. Barnes has worked as an expert witness and consultant for national and international firms including the National Pharmaceutical Council, the National Court Reporters Association, and the Board of Inquiry of the British Parliament, Scotts Lawn Care Co, Distilled Spirits Council of the US, WJAR Channel 10, The Providence Journal and others. She also works closely with businesses in the Southern New England area providing marketing research assistance to small businesses and agricultural groups including the cranberry and cultured shellfish industries.

As Director of the Center for Marketing Research, she has provided services in brand and product development, research, promotion, and commercial television production to hundreds of clients. The Center serves as the primary link between the University and businesses in the region. Prominent members of the business community sit on the Center's Advisory Board and interact with students through the projects conducted under Dr. Barnes' supervision.

Dr. Barnes has published over 125 articles in academic and professional journals and proceedings, and has contributed chapters to books. In addition she has supervised the writing of approximately 200 business monographs. She is a frequent presenter, session chair and track chair at academic conferences and sits on the review boards of the Health Marketing Quarterly, the Journal of Professional Services Marketing, and the Journal of Marketing Management..

Dr. Barnes has been awarded over \$200,000 research grants from a range of sources including the International Council of Shopping Centers Educational foundation, Massachusetts Cranberry Research Committee, and the SouthEastern Massachusetts Aquaculture Center.