

The best business blogs

Does your company have a blog? What makes a good corporate blog?

1 Do you blog? Do you follow any blogs? If so, which one(s)? Compare your answer with a partner.

2 Match the words (a-d) with the correct definitions (1-4).

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| (a) blogger | (1) a blog which comprises video-clips |
| (b) blogosphere | (2) a list of links to other blogs |
| (c) blogroll | (3) a person who blogs |
| (d) vlog | (4) the collective community of all blogs |

Blog: type of diary on a website that is updated regularly to give the latest news. Short for 'weblog'. Adapted from: Macmillan English Dictionary 2007

3 Scan the podcast transcript of an interview and underline all the words from exercise 2 you can find in one minute.

Q1. In this podcast, Mark Jones talks to us about corporate blogs.

Mark, why do you think a company should have a blog?

A1. Well, I think if a company doesn't have a blog, it could be missing out on a huge opportunity. First of all, a blog can create awareness of the company. Perhaps most importantly, it can build relationships with your customers and create brand loyalty. In short, a good blog could provide your company with invaluable word of mouth marketing.

Q2. I see. What does the corporate blogger actually blog about?

A2. Well, it's a good idea to blog about something which will be thought-provoking to others in the field - your own ideas, or your company's ideas. Entries could provide what's known as 'thought leadership'. Google's blog is popular as the company is cutting-edge, and bloggers share their knowledge. Of course, you may wish to break industry news, but that's not essential. Industry 'hot topics' work well. It's also good to keep an up-to-date blogroll on your home page.

Q3. OK. Great. And what shouldn't bloggers do?

A4. The big no-no is to look like you are just pushing the company and its products. I mean, you can read that elsewhere on the website. So, don't just blog on company news - it will be seen as 'too corporate.'

Q4. How often would you recommend blogging?

A4. I'd say at least a couple of times a week. It's a good idea to have a number of authors as this shares the load, and gives a range of different views. Walmart do that quite effectively.

Q5. Should bloggers allow people to make comments?

A5. Absolutely. It's a very good idea. Allowing a two way conversation means you engage with your customers. Don't ignore those negative comments that may be out in the blogosphere and that could damage your reputation.

Apologise if necessary. Blogging is about public relations.

Q6. So, what is your favourite company blog?

A6. Difficult question. I think Kodak. It's a good example of a blog which informs about an area - photography, so it's not just about the company. It has great photos, too!

Q7. Do you think CEOs should blog?

A7. Now that's a tough question. Some CEOs blog, and I think it works fine. Amazon's Jeff Bezos is a good example.

Q8. You haven't mentioned other bloggers. To keep up-to-date with business issues, you should read Robert Peston's BBC blog.

A8. Yes, indeed. In business, following a blog or vlog - that's a video blog - is essential to keep your finger on the pulse.

Mark Jones - thank you very much.

4 Read the whole transcript. What do you learn about writing a company blog? Which company blogs are mentioned?

5 Decide if the following words are nouns (N), verbs (V) or both (B).

blog	create	relationship	share	damage
engage	post	break	field	question
industry	range	mention	allow	entry

6 Work in small groups to write the next entry for your own company blog. It could provide 'thought leadership' or be on an industry 'hot topic'. Be ready to show your entry to other groups, who may post a comment.

Date:	Title:	Author(s):
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