

Blogging is the new resume: Why less is not always more

By **RYAN HOOVER**, Thursday, 19 Dec '13 , 05:00pm



Ryan Hoover is the co-creator of **Product Hunt**, creator of **Startup Edition**, and instructor at **Tradecraft**. Follow him at **@rrhoover** or **visit his blog** to read more about startups and product design.





SaveToListen
Blogging is the new resume: Why less is not always...



[Cookie policy](#)

Can we all agree resumes are crummy? Can you really communicate your life's accomplishments and skill-set through an 8.5 x 11 sheet of paper? Does anyone even read your resume anyway?

These manufactured documents might help weed you out from the obvious “hell no” candidates, but do a poor job of communicating your capabilities. More often than not, hiring managers rely on **trusted recommendations** and evaluate applicants based on tangible things they have accomplished. And this is where **GitHub** shines.

GitHub can be a fantastic resume for software developers. The open platform showcases candidates' creations, free to inspect and critique. Well-kept GitHub profiles exemplify one's breadth and expertise in various programming languages and their contributions to open source and side projects, exemplify programmers' eagerness to create. GitHub shows hiring managers what they have accomplished. That's a lot better than *telling* in a resume.

But if you're non-technical, what is your GitHub equivalent? How can you stand out from the forest of resumes?

I think you know the punch line... **Blogging is the new resume.**

Blogging is an effective way to illustrate expertise, personality, and most importantly, thought process. The way product managers, UX designers, and other “non-technical” roles *think*, communicates their ability and culture fit. Resumes lack this entirely.

Blogging opens doors

A year ago I started actively **blogging**, writing one to three essays each week. I write for fun. I write to learn. I write about startups, product design, user experience, psychology, and other topics I'm passionate about. The research and introspective thinking that goes into blogging, hones my expertise in these topics, and the more I write, the better I write.

Early on, a few **of my pieces** hit the front page of Hacker News. My Twitter following increased and I began to get more attention in tech and blogging communities. My writing has been featured on **PandoDaily**, **FastCo**, **Forbes**, and other prominent publications in addition to well-respected blogs like **Andrew Chen's** and **Nir Eyal**.

When I announced I was **leaving PlayHaven** to work on something new, I was nervous. I wanted a new challenge, but was I going to end up unemployed and depressed? Fortunately, writing paid off.

When I announced my departure without a plan, the network I grew from blogging, reached out with support. Several followers offered me a job and introductions to other founders. I ended up having more than enough opportunity. I was going to be fine.

Of course, my professional experience and accomplishments were instrumental in creating these opportunities, blogging amplified peoples' interest in me and helped market my expertise.

We can all benefit from blogging

Not everyone can or wants to maintain my level of dedication to the craft. And that's fine. Regardless of exposure, blogging is an excellent vehicle to

share ideas, expertise, and interests. It's an evergreen resume.

Take [Lenny Hu's blog](#) as an example. I was first introduced to Lenny through a blog post he wrote titled [LetsLunch Landing Page](#), where he designed a new homepage and described his thought-process for the changes. His post remains memorable even a year later as I reflect on my admiration for his pro-activeness and ability.

Since then he's continued to write product deconstructions and shares his thoughts on product design. Despite Lenny's relatively small following and infrequent blogging routine, he has built himself a strong, long-lasting resume. And it paid off.

Lenny recently sent me this direct message on Twitter:

hey ryan, I got hired on as a short-term consultant for a stealth startup... so random. They saw my blog. Hah!

Blog to build

Blogging may result in a role at your dream startup or the successful launch of your own.

[Nathan Bashaw](#) and I recently launched [Product Hunt](#), a site to share, discover, and geek out about products. We seeded the community largely with relationships formed through my writing, inviting several dozen well-respected startup founders, investors, and product people to participate.

Shortly after its private release, we [announced Product Hunt in the press](#) and shared with our audience, acquiring another 1,000 users over the next

week. None of this would have been feasible 12 months ago before I had established a network of supporters through my writing.

Blogging isn't for everyone

I highly encourage people to blog (**for many reasons**) but before you jump in gung-ho, here are a few things to keep in mind:

- **You Need to Enjoy It** - Blogging isn't for everyone. It's difficult to blog sustainably. If you're not intrinsically motivated to do so, you'll quit. Blogging does not mandate frequent writing, but the more you put in, the more you'll get out.
- **It's a Long-Term Investment** - It's highly unlikely your first, second, third, or 50th post will "go viral." First, you must accept that most people don't care what you think and that **quantity leads to quality**.
- **It's Not About You** - Readers also don't care how awesome you are. Too many bloggers continually write self-promotional pieces. The occasional #humblebrag is OK but if you're always writing about you or your startups' successes, readers will turn away.
- **Write About Your Passions** - Another common mistake is to choose topics based on other peoples' interests. You shouldn't write about growth hacking just because it's vogue. You should write about growth hacking if you're genuinely passionate about it. And if you're passionate about topics without mass appeal, that's fine. I guarantee there are several others also interested.
- **You Don't Know Everything** - You must have conviction in what you write but it's important to have humility and recognize your context.

When criticizing people or startups, remember that you **lack full context**. People may have specific reasons or data, **not privy to outsiders**, to support their decisions.

- **Don't Let it Become a Distraction** - Once you've built an audience and habit of writing, it can be hard to stop. While valuable, don't let blogging substitute the important things in your startup or life, that may not be as enjoyable. **Do "shitty" work.**

R.I.P. Resume

When startups ask about my background and expertise, I respond with a **brief bio** and link them a few select articles I've written, relevant to their situation. If you read my writing, you will know how I think. If you agree with my analysis and recommendations, you will trust my product decisions. If you disagree, then we shouldn't work together anyway. Resumes fail to communicate any of this.

I hope to never touch my resume again.

*Image credit: **Smit/Shutterstock***

 COMMENTS
