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Blogs & Blogging

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Blogs and blogging play an important role in the world wide web. “Over 32 million Americans currently read blogs every week, yet most people cannot explain what a blog actually is...” (Cooperative). An online diary or informational website created for users to post their dreams, future fantasies, desires, business related discussion and about anything. Blogs function in a “reverse chronological order” (Rioja), putting recent posts on the top of the page and the older entries can be seen by scrolling down. It has become a platform where an individual or a group of people express their ideas and thoughts on a certain topic or concurrent events. Over the years, the format of blogs has changed--most blogs still include common features and structures of a header, menu, content area and footers with important links. “There are over 152 million blogs on the internet today with a new blog being added every half second” (Gaille). This social media has become popular due to viewers being able to interact with the writers by commenting their own feedback, thoughts and opinion directly onto the blog post. Companies use these tools to update and personally connect with their customers to form positive relationship in continuing them in using their products or services. Blogs has grown into a place where people can get constant flow of information and writers who make money from their column are also known as bloggers.

Anyone with internet access can create a free or paid subscription blog site and instantly start post freely about anything. *WordPress*, *Tumblr*, *Blogger* are some of the sites that allows users to create an account using personal information in connecting to their service. *WordPress* first launched in 2003, by founder Matt Mullenweg and Mike Little and “the most popular open source Content Management System, used by approximately seventy-five million websites”. Mainly used for blogs, *WordPress* also includes online stores, forums, etc. as a domain for many different websites and companies. *Tumblr,* social networking website founded in 2007 by David Karp and due to their tremendous success, *Yahoo! Inc.* bought it for 1.1 billion dollars in 2013. Providing service for users to post multimedia content in a form of a blog and giving the option for bloggers to set their blogs to private. Fifty percent of *Tumblr*’s audience consist of users ranging from thirty-four years old and younger and only twenty five percent for ages between eighteen to twenty-four that would actively post and an estimated twenty-three million users in the United States. Blogger, a blog service website formed by Pyra Labs and bought by Google in 2003. As one of the earliest tools created for blogging, it was known for standardizing the format of a blog and including new features of interface for different countries, available in 60 languages as of 2016. Allowed more users to use their service without the limitations of language and freely sharing their post in their own dialect. The importance of mobile applications available for android and IOS for all three of these sites, allowed for users to portably post their blogs anywhere and anytime in the world with just the touch of a finger through their smart phone.

In the 1990’s, blogs were “born from online forum software” (Cooperative), software companies like *WebEx* would create forums with conversation threads that would eventually be developed into an online journal in 1994. One of the first blogs posted was, “Justin’s Links from the Underground” by Justin Hall and he would share his life on the internet for 11 years. In December 1997, Jorn Barger started the term weblog, a combination of “a web log” and was split into “we blog” in his personal blog by Peter Merholz in May 1999 as a joke. Five years later, the word “blog” was officially declared by Merriam-Webster and continue to use that term today. Blogs were uploaded manually, which was difficult to do without a platform and LiveJournal was one of the earliest platforms to provide this service. In 2000, “a total of 23 blogs were listed on the internet” (Rioja) and the amount increased in 1006 by fifty million—blogging was gaining popularity and number of users were increasing daily. Politics in the blogging world came into existence and the first to use these tools were Howard Dean and Wesley Clark. During the mid 2000’s the rise of platforms and blogs started to boom into the world-wide web, and everyone was involved. It didn’t stop there, in the late 2000’s blog reached the mainstream and became a source of valuable information and communication amongst the people. Today, people are still obsessed in using this medium to expose their daily lives, interests and opinion through blogs for the world to see.

Like any social media platform, when gaining traction and mass amount of views, bloggers can become famous and make money through sponsorships. Bloggers content can range from promoting and reviewing various number of products to sharing their personal lives, writing about visiting another country, expressing their opinion and beliefs on a topic. Aimee Song, a fashion blogger known for her unique and fashionable taste in style became famous for her posts. In 2008, an interior design major started her own blog, “Song of Style”, getting four million page views a month has blossomed into creating her own jewelry line, collaborating with famous designers, and having her own interior design company. The blogs gave her a platform to display her creativity and sense of style to the world and viewers responded positively to her content. Still continuing her blogs, many find inspirations and ideas for their wardrobe through her entries.

Blogs and blogging have become a noun and verb over time. A social platform that gives people access to posting freely and express everything. Blogs and blogging have become a powerful medium and tools for users worldwide and remain insanely popular.

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