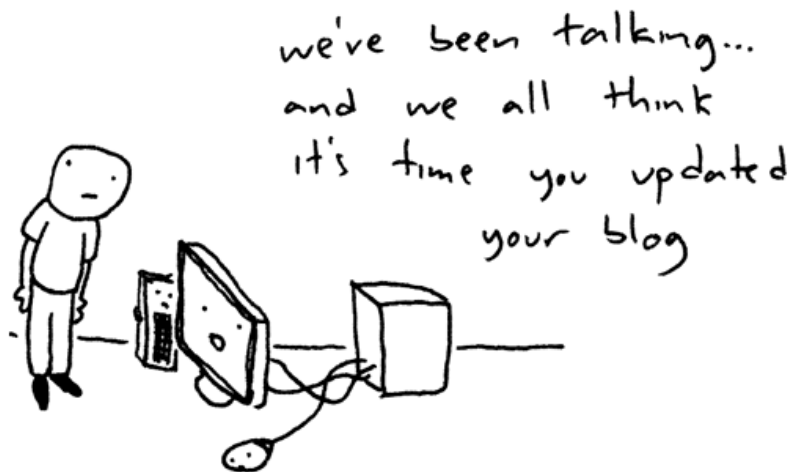


Using Multimedia

Audio and visual interest helps grab a reader's attention. Blogs give writers the opportunity to use design, images, audio, and video to supplement their writing. Take advantage of these innovative ways to enhance your presentation! Here are some guidelines to have in mind when you choose your blog's multimedia elements:

- **Use appropriate content, size, and quality.** Make sure your chosen images complement the layout of your text visually. Images should be easy to see without obstructing the text of a post. Choose the highest possible quality image while also making sure it is easy to load. You don't want your readers squinting at blurry pixels, but you won't want them to wait 10 seconds for something to load, either.
- **When linking to an online video, consider using a screen shot from that video as your hyperlink.** A screen shot can make a reader more likely to click on a link. It can provide a visual preview, as well as demonstrate the clip's relevance to your post.
- **Attribute your sources.** Like ideas, images and videos are someone else's intellectual property. Whenever possible, provide captions for the reader. Even a simple caption – (Image courtesy of msnbc.com) – will help readers identify the object's origins.



Toothpaste For Dinner.com

Using Hyperlinks

Hyperlinks are an important part of blogging and can really increase your credibility. They create a sense of conversation, act like citations in more informal circumstances, and demonstrate that you are engaged with other people's work.

[add a line space here?]

- **Examples of Effective Hyperlinks**
 - <http://blogs.nicholas.duke.edu/thegreengrok/art-makes-environmental-change-real/>

- Links to scientific sources
- <http://www.npr.org/blogs/health/2014/04/03/298358419/good-day-sunshine-could-morning-light-help-keep-us-lean>
 - Links to other news stories, scientific research, and biographical information for story’s interviewees

Tips To Maintain a Successful Blog

- Make post titles eye-catching but also reasonably accurate.
 - Example: “Trash Talk” is a post about waste management.
 - <http://blogs.nicholas.duke.edu/devilfish/the-trash-talk/>
- Consider using the tag function in each post. This will help guide readers through your content thematically instead of chronologically. Keep tags consistent, including punctuation. For example, “African-American” and “African American” would be regarded as two different tags because of the hyphen.
- If your hosting platform allows, link to similar blogs in order to increase your traffic.
- Unlike other writing contexts, you may find it difficult to identify your audience when you are composing blog posts. If your blog is public, you could have a large, diverse, and even global readership. Be aware that you are potentially addressing people with very different knowledge bases and cultural assumptions than yours.
- Handle comments with care. As the blog’s creator, the way you handle dissenting or inflammatory voices sets the tone for your readers. Consider adjusting your platform’s comment settings if you need to regulate the conversation. For instance, requiring minimum identification to post a comment can address the problem of inappropriate posts by increasing a writer’s accountability.

Examples of Blogs

Academic and Professional Blogs

- <http://blogs.nicholas.duke.edu/>
 - Student, faculty, and alumni blogs related to Duke’s Nicholas School of the Environment.
- <http://www.wired.com/category/elemental/>
 - The science blog of *Wired* magazine’s Deborah Blum.
- <http://www.scotusblog.com/>
 - Updates and news from the Supreme Court of the United States.
- <http://www.newyorker.com/online/blogs/culture/emily-nussbaum>
 - Notes on arts and culture from the *New Yorker*’s TV critic.

Personal, Project-Based, and Narrative Blogs

- <http://dooce.com/>
 - Although she was one of the first people fired for the content of her personal blog, Heather Armstrong has been updating it for over a decade.
- <http://fortydaysofdating.com/>
 - Two best friends decide to date for 40 days and record their interactions.
- <http://www.greenkitchenstories.com/>
 - Vegetarian recipes and lifestyle tips plus glossy food photography.
- <http://ww2today.com/>
 - Martin Cherritt's blog covers World War II one day at a time.
- <http://blog.inkyfool.com/>
 - Collected musings on words, phrases, grammar, and rhetoric.
- <http://maddieonthings.com/>
 - Theron Humphrey takes photographs of his coonhound, Maddie.



maddieonthings.com

Works Cited

Rettberg, Jil Walker. *Blogging*. 2nd ed. Cambridge, UK: Polity Books, 2014. Print.