

Corporate Blogging: Building community through persistent digital talk

Abstract

Blogging has grown exponentially on the Internet; however, the role of blogs within the enterprise remains elusive. Why and how do individuals use internal corporate blogs? What results do both individuals and the corporation realize from internal blogs? Our exploratory study of a large global IT corporation's internal blogging system analyzed usage statistics, interviews, and the results of an anonymous, web-based survey. We found that benefits were social as well as informational, and that connecting with community was an important value sought by all user segments. Heavy users of the system realized the greatest benefits, but also provided the core of a community that greatly benefited moderate users, as well.

1. Introduction

Weblogs or blogs have emerged as an important new digital medium in the last few years. Internet-based blogs have been growing exponentially [5]. Blogs have received considerable attention in popular media (e.g., being mentioned in over 1,000 articles in May 2006¹) and, to a lesser extent, scholarly literature.

Scholarly literature exploring the Blogosphere, as it is often called, tends to take the view that blogs are more than mere journals, arguing that blogs are a forum for self expression [6], or that blogging is a social activity [10].

Corporate blogs have appeared more recently and are much less well understood. The term refers to at least two very different kinds of blogs: externally accessible blogs, where corporate bloggers can be read by people outside the corporation; and internally accessible blogs, where corporate bloggers can only be read by people within the firm. Some studies of

corporate blogging have focused on publicly available blogs, in which the corporate blogger is seen by the external world as a representative of the firm, or used experiments with student subjects to attempt to emulate such a situation [7]. Liz Lawley [8] commented two years ago on her own blog that one of the areas of research that is much needed is “study of the use of weblogs as tools in specific organizational contexts.” One of the few such studies is Grudin’s description of the use of project management blogs as knowledge management tools within Microsoft, a specific use of blogs that is still rare but potentially useful to individuals and organizations [4]. Beyond this, little research has taken up Lawley’s challenge. This paper—a preliminary exploration of why and how individuals use internal corporate blogs within one large global IT company (Mega, a pseudonym) and with what implications for both individuals and the corporation—is an attempt to do so.

2. Methods

This exploratory analysis of Mega’s use of a large internal blogging system is based on analysis of usage statistics for the more than 20,000 users who had ever registered on the system since its inception in 2003, strategic interviews with a few of the highest users and non-users, and an anonymous, web-based survey of a small stratified sample of low, medium, and high users.

A comparison of overall usage statistics with usage statistics of the top 80 bloggers led us to do a series of one hour interviews. We interviewed the four highest users of the system individually. We then conducted two group interviews, first with a group of six non-users of the system who appeared to fit the demographic (technical, early adopters) of active users, and second with a group of two non-users of the system who fit a different demographic profile (both remote workers, one in marketing and the other in technology).

We analyzed these interviews qualitatively, identifying common themes about value and usage of

¹Factiva search of “blog/s, blogging, weblog/s” on June 4, 2006 yielded 1089 results from newspapers, newswires, and magazines for the period May 4 - June 4 2006.

blogs. We then used these themes to develop a web-based survey, which we administered to a sample of 300 users of the system, stratified into three equal-sized but distinct groups based on usage: *heavy users* (50 or more posts and 8 or more comments); *medium users* (5 to 20 posts); and *low users* (less than 2 posts).

Overall, we had a healthy 53% response rate with relatively limited variance across the three groups. One hundred people in each group were sent the web-based survey link, and 59 heavy users, 54 medium users, and 48 low users responded.

The survey also included a number of open-ended questions, and we analyzed these by developing a coding scheme based on close reading. For some purposes, we consolidated multiple coding categories into more general categories, as described in the results.

3. Results

Mega's internal blogging engine, BlogSite, was originally built as a "self-publishing" platform. Rolled out in November 2003, the system was intended to enable employees to publish their personal data in a portal, getting information out of email, and onto the corporate intranet. Social benefits, such as new collaborations and easier expertise location were expected, but seen to flow from the journal of information that would be contained in the blogs, rather than directly from blogging itself.

3.1 Demographics and usage

Usage statistics give us an overview of demographics and use. Overall, registered users of the BlogSite system represent a small portion of the total corporation (around 6%). However, usage has increased dramatically over time (see figure 1).

The heavy users of the system provide a core. Although there are more than 20,000 registered users, only 17% have weblogs and only 3% of those are actively writing blogs (defined as 10 or more weblog posts). The top 80 users (or less than 1% of registered users) account for 42% of all weblog entries and 59% of all comments.

3.2 User segments

The survey results highlighted some interesting differences between the three stratified user groups. On average, heavy users have been blogging slightly longer internally than externally. By contrast, medium users and low users have been blogging externally longer than internally (see figure 2).

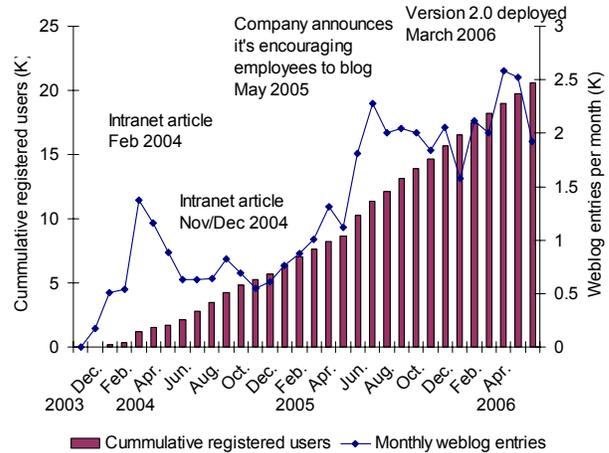


Figure 1: Posts per month on the system.

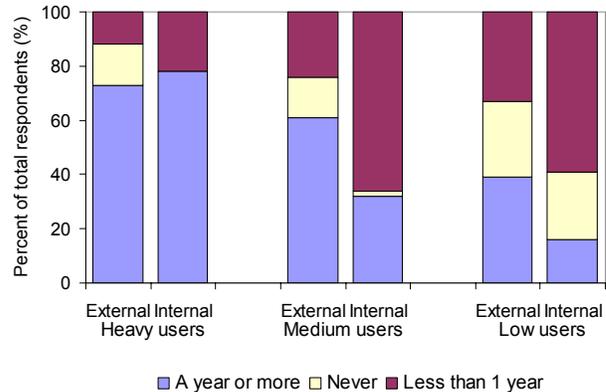


Figure 2: Internal and external blogging

When they visit BlogSite, heavy users comment on other people's blogs almost as often as they post to their own blogs, with 79% of the heavy users commenting on someone else's blog at least once a month, and 92% updating their own blog at least once a month (see figure 3).

This high level of commenting activity on the part of heavy users matches an analysis we did of usage statistics for the entire system. The top 5 bloggers on the system have significantly more entries than anyone else on the system and post comments more than twice as often as they post entries in their own weblog (see figure 4, based on site usage statistics, not on the survey.) These two sets of results together, although not enough to ascribe causality, indicate there could be a relationship between amount of active involvement with others on the system and frequency of use of the system.

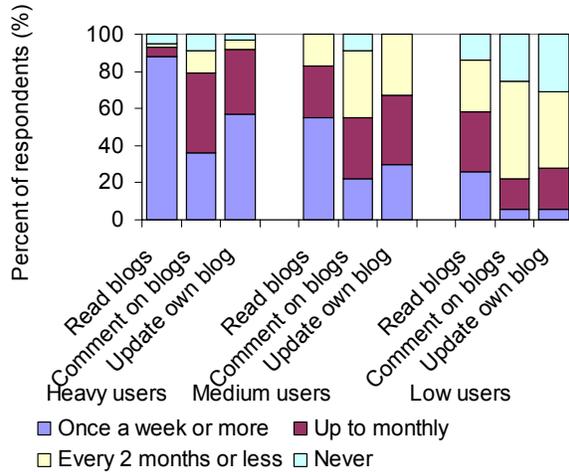


Figure 3: Frequency of blogging activities

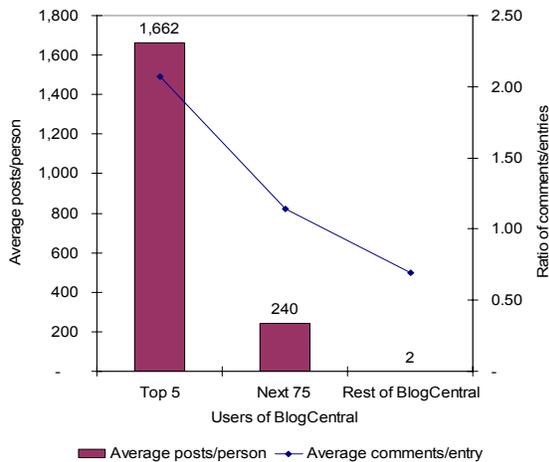


Figure 4: Posting and commenting by bloggers

Another interesting result of the survey is that all usage groups appear to read others' blogs more often than they update their own blogs (see figure 3), which could indicate some type of lurking in all user segments. Because active lurkers (people who actively read but don't post) can increase the influence of the online community on the offline community of a company [11], this could indicate benefits from the system that go beyond the immediate users. This pattern is most obvious in the low users of the system, where 58% report they read other people's blogs at least once a month and only 28% say they update their own blog that often.

As we looked at the demographics of the users surveyed, the medium users stood out as slightly different from the heavy or low users. This user group was significantly newer to the company (39% of them

have been with the company 5 years or less, compared with 20% of heavy users and 26% of low users), and comprised predominantly IT services engineers (48% of respondents), while the heavy and low users are much more evenly distributed across job roles (34% and 28% IT services engineers). As we'll see later in this paper, many of this group came on to the system to find information, which makes sense given they are newer to the company.

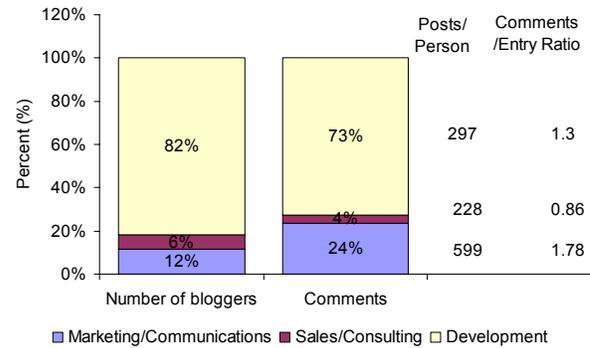


Figure 5: Commenting behavior by bloggers

Having diverse people using the blogging system could be important. When we analyzed the top 80 bloggers by basic job roles (marketing/communications, sales/consulting, and development/engineering), we found that although they are primarily in engineering (82% of the top 80 bloggers are in development roles), those in marketing commented twice as much as they wrote entries in their own weblogs. They contributed almost 25% of all the comments by the top bloggers and posted more than twice as often as any other group (see figure 5). These differences, which hint that the technical experts provide content and the marketing/communications experts provide commentary and linkages, may suggest that different types of roles are important to create a virtual community. Another value of diversity is suggested by Contant, Sproull and Kiesler, who found that the diversity of ties in a large organizational computer network contributed positively to people being able to solve technical problems [2].

3.3 Which users benefit from blogging?

To understand how and why individuals use internal corporate blogs and to understand whether/what tangible results there are for the individual and the company, the survey asked three open-ended questions about the benefits of corporate blogging: "When you first visited BlogSite, what did you think some of the benefits of blogging would be?"; "Please describe any actual benefits you have received

from BlogSite”; and “Are there any ways that BlogSite has helped you in your job? If so, please explain.” In the following charts, the results of these questions are labeled “expected,” “actual,” and “work-related.”

Not surprisingly, heavy users of the system derived the most benefit. Heavy users came to the system with the strongest sense of what they would get out of blogging and then received the most benefit. Only 4% of heavy users answering the actual benefit question say they receive “no benefit” or “didn’t know.” Low users, on the other hand, see significantly less benefit than either the heavy or the medium users (see figure 6). When asked the same question about actual benefit received, 30% of low users say they receive “no benefit.” More strikingly, 65% of low users say they either get no benefit, or little/long-term benefit that is directly work-related.

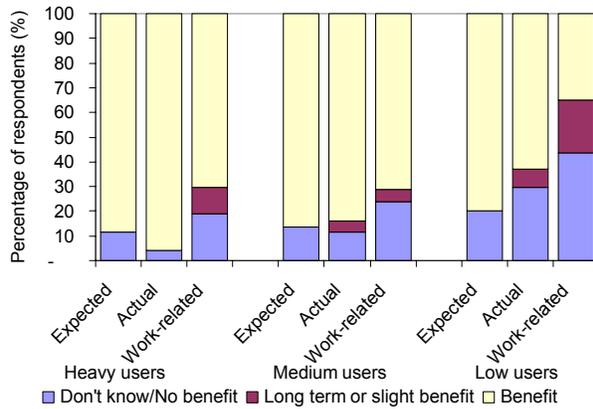


Figure 6: Benefits from blogging by user group

Medium users appear to derive almost the same amount of work-related benefits (71%) from the system as heavy users, even though their usage is significantly lower (see figures 2 and 3). Heavy users do see more long-term and overall benefits from the system. If medium users can derive work-related benefits without a large investment of time on the system, then it may be that internal blogging communities with a small core of heavy users and a larger group of medium users can provide comparable value to the corporation as a community of all heavy users, and at significantly less cost of time spent blogging by individual employees.

3.4 Benefits of corporate blogging

We coded the results of the three benefits questions (expected, actual, and work-related) to allow for comparison across the answers. We clustered the many

responses into three general types of benefits: informational, social, and other (see table 1). To be conservative, we included “solved a problem” and “feedback on an idea” as informational benefits, even though these have distinctly social components. Both of these benefits require direct dialog with another person on the system, but the result of this social interaction is informational.

Table 1: Three general types of benefits

<u>Informational</u>	<u>Social</u>
Get information/learn	Community/Dialog
Share information	Communication
Journal	Building a network
Solved a problem	Team collaboration
Feedback on idea	Company pulse
	Idea took off
<u>Other</u>	Built a reputation
Managing my manager	Viral
Better work efficiency	Positive Career Benefit
Self expression	
Replace existing technology	

Figure 7 shows that both heavy users and lower users came onto BlogSite expecting significant social benefits, while medium users expected both social and informational benefits. Heavy and medium users’ actual social and informational benefits exceeded their expectations. Interestingly, heavy users, with such strikingly high actual social benefits, also see the highest work-related informational benefits.

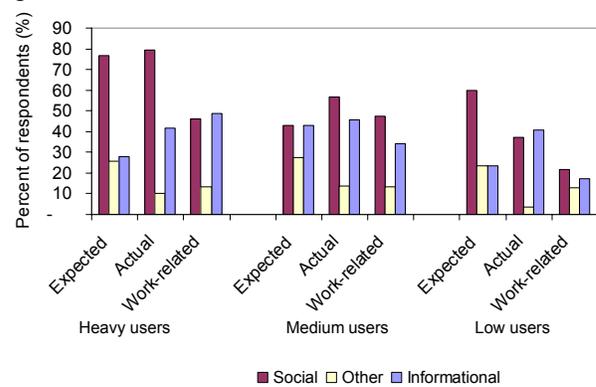


Figure 7: Heavy and low users are looking for primarily social benefit while medium users are more mixed.

Heavy users expected social benefits and the actual benefits they experienced were both social and informational. Low users, on the other hand, didn’t

experience many social benefits but received more actual informational benefits than they expected. While low users did receive some benefits, their work-related benefits are significantly lower than those of heavy users or medium users, indicating that work-related benefits are related to usage level.

Medium users appear to be coming to BlogSite looking for information as much as for social interactions. They not only get the benefits they expected, but the actual benefits they experience are higher than they expected.

The work-related benefits of corporate blogging for medium users are skewed towards social benefits. This is particularly striking since the medium users may not have come onto the system looking to expand their social network. Comments on the third benefits question (examples of job-related benefits) reflect these social benefits:

“It has given me connections to people around the company that I would have not otherwise ha[d]. In rare cases, it answers a technical question I’m struggling with that none of my immediate coworkers has an answer for.”

“It really helped me communicate with the field and give them a static page to go to refer to issues that other people experienced. At the time I only supported the Americas but people in the other geographies were discovering it and I helped many sales teams across the world solve customer problems.”

“Learning how these folks work and what they find valuable has given me different perspectives on old problems, which allows me to better serve my customers.”

“[I] gained executive visibility and someone pursued [my] idea.”

3.4 Community benefits

In the interviews, the concept of community, rather than simple information exchange, came up several times in a variety of forms. One of the reasons to run a survey was to see if others also found community an important benefit of the system.

In the open-ended question which we show here as “expected,” one of the most prevalent answers was “to communicate.” Many versions of this answer came up: communicate quickly, without bureaucracy, easily, widely, informally, in an unstructured manner, freely, and in context. This was a surprising answer because usually we think of communication as a vehicle to accomplish something else. Communication as an end benefit must be something other than merely a vehicle

for information. We believe that such communication is a social activity. It is as much about finding a way to connect to another person as it is about the actual information and ideas exchanged. Interestingly, we see that the majority of those seeking “to communicate” come from the low (and presumably less sophisticated) users of the system and that few of them indicated “communicate” as an actual or work-related benefit.

When we compared respondents whose expected benefit was “to communicate” (excluding the ones who were also looking for “dialog” and “community”) to respondents whose expected benefit was “community” and “dialog,” we found significant overlap in the types of job-related benefits they received from the system. Based on this, we combined “communicate” with “community” and “dialog” as primarily social activities.

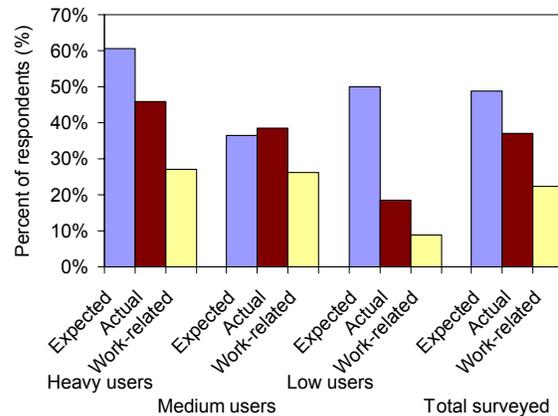


Figure 8: Bloggers had high community-related expectations

In addition, we combined these social activities with “building a network,” another seemingly social activity that includes getting to know someone, social networking, meeting people from other parts of the company/outside my circle, making a friend, and finding an expert. In figure 8, we compare these aggregated community-related activities across user segments. What is striking is how high these community-related expectations are across the groups. Of the heavy users, 60% expected community-related benefits. Of the low users, 50% expected community-related benefits on joining the system. The medium users are particularly interesting. As mentioned before, a large portion of this group are looking for information, rather than community, so for this group, the community benefits they actually received were higher than they expected, although still lower than the actual community benefits received by the heavy users.

While the work-related benefits of community are lower than expected benefits for all groups, the worked-related benefits of community for both heavy users (27%) and medium users (26%) are still significant. Thus it is not necessarily the users who expected the most community who are receiving the most benefit from the community.

“My network is SO MUCH BIGGER now. People know me from my blogging. I am more tied into people I would only know very surface level otherwise. Blogging inside [the company] has helped me build my personal brand sort of...and it’s also give me a peep into what other [people in the company] are thinking. I have collaborated on projects and articles, set up the podcasting pilot all due to blogging. It’s freakin awesome.”

“[I have gotten] a sense of community. Important for a work-at-home employee.”

“...as a remote worker (3-4days/wk at home office) [blogging] makes me feel more connected to [Mega].”

3.5 Management’s views of blogging

Executives, managers and employees have realized different things from blogging (see figure 9). The executive percentages are unreliable since we had small numbers in our sample. However, it appears that executives are getting mainly social benefits from the system. Managers, on the other hand, are deriving significantly less benefit from the system than the rest of users. Other employees receive both social and informational benefits from the system.

When asked about their management team’s attitude towards blogging, many respondents said that their managers were neutral towards their blogging (69% of heavy users, 46% of medium users, and 71% of low users). When asked what comments their managers had expressed about blogging, many respondents said their managers didn’t know they blogged or had never mentioned blogging to them.

While early adopters of blogs appear to have found blogs on their own and to have figured out the value for themselves, educating managers and executives on the potential of blogs is an important part of successful corporate blogs. The biggest concerns management had about blogs were associated with policing them and their use for non-work-related activity. Both issues can be addressed through education and careful policies.

One of our interviewees was a remote worker on a team, most of whose members were located on site with the manager. This interviewee mentioned that

having his manager subscribe to his blog was a great way to keep his manager posted on what he was doing.

In the survey, a small number of people also mentioned that their manager or management team subscribed to their blog. Blogs may be used in part as a tool replacing existing tools such as update calls and emails, but they also differ from these tools. Since blogs are clearly more than an information repository, the strong social element leads to a manager getting as much a sense of what their employee is “thinking” as of what they are doing. Moreover, at least one manager commented that they had “learned something about the outside interests of their employees” through blogs.

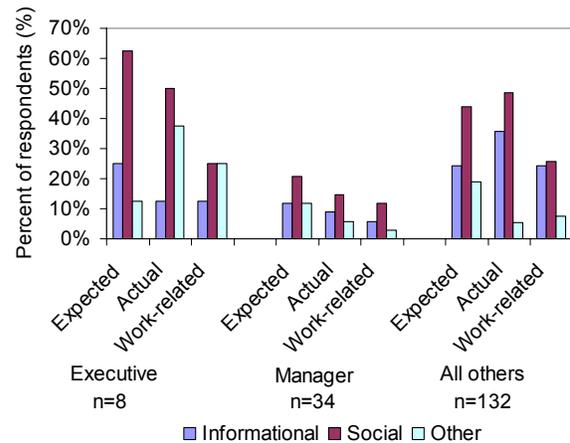


Figure 9: Executives find the social aspects of blogs valuable, while managers receive the least value from blogging

3.6 Getting the company “pulse”

Two other intriguing and unexpected corporate-specific benefits emerged, which are particularly valuable to a large, geographically dispersed corporation like Mega with several different product areas (see figure 10). The first was the concept of “perspective on the company.” Mega had announced some changes in its pension plan in mid-2005. In our interviews, several people mentioned blogs gave them a broader perspective on the implications of this change and this perspective made the change easier for them. From the survey, we also see strong examples of how BlogSite provides employees a broader sense of Mega:

“I have gained perspective on how people in other groups throughout Mega work, and, thereby, [felt] an enhanced sense of community.”

“[Blogging in Mega]...has given me a peep into what other[s] are thinking.”

“I’ve learned about...the company from posters who have been in the company for a long time. I’ve felt a part of the community....”

“Learned of events inside [Mega] that are not well marketed in my organization.”

Perspective on the company is where bloggers get a sense of what other groups in the company do, get to know people in other areas, and, through this, get a wider view/sense of the firm than they would have just through their close circle of colleagues.

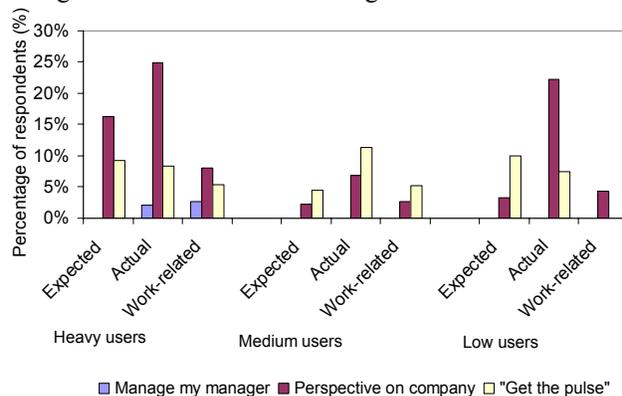


Figure 10: Benefits unique to corporate blogging.

The second corporate-specific benefit is that of “getting the pulse.” A variety of people reported using BlogSite to “get the pulse” of Mega.

“better “pulse” on things being discussed – I work with teams who can translate this “pulse” into action. Also get some good feedback as we go about how things are working, or not working.”

“I’ve been able to adapt topics from BlogSite into mass communications, bringing awareness and clarity to a broader audience.”

“I received feedback from my employees on common issues in my organization.”

“...helps me monitor what issues are on people’s minds.”

“It’s interesting to read about the experiences and expertise of other [people in the company]. I feel like I have a better feel for the pulse of the company.”

“...knowing what’s important to employees.”

This “getting the pulse” seems to be related to a flattening of the corporation. People lower down in the organization get heard by people higher up in the

organization. Unlike “watercooler” gossip, blogs persist. On the one hand, this may constrain some bloggers. On the other hand, it leaves a trail for those whose job it is to understand what employees are thinking and ensure that organizational changes are communicated effectively. In the case of Mega, the communications teams monitor BlogSite regularly so they can help deal with issues/misunderstandings of policy changes early.

This textual persistence is also useful to others on the system such as relatively new employees of IBM and executives trying to get a sense for their team and the climate in their team.

3.7 Barriers to blogging

Although there appear to be real benefits to internal corporate blogging, there are some barriers to wider adoption. We asked respondents who answered in the negative to several questions about use to explain why, and the answers are illuminating. The most prevalent answer was “no time.” When asked “Why don’t you comment on other employees’ blogs more frequently?” there were a number of interesting answers. “No need to pontificate” came up several times and another answer, that it takes more time to write a comment on another person’s than to post on one’s own weblog, indicates that people take commenting on other people’s blogs quite seriously. Several people answered not only that they wanted to answer thoughtfully, but also that this would entail committing to coming back and checking for responses from the blogger.

“constructive comments take a long time to write. Usually just don’t have time to craft the right message. Don’t just want to fire off any old comment, want it to be carefully thought out and succinct.”

“Again, takes too much time. Moreover, once I post a comment, then I have to remember to come back to see the follow-up to those comments – takes too much time.”

Some of these barriers to adoption can be addressed through technical solutions.² Technical issues such as “slow refreshes” and lack of certain types of features came up often. The complaint that it is “too hard to find information” may be solved by adding features such as micro-formats.

Responses of “lack of readership” and “nothing interesting to read” are issues that may get resolved as more people join the community and contribute content and readers. As with other online communities,

² The initial pilot of the blog server was not built for the current scale of use and a version 2.0 came out in May, after the survey was conducted.

a critical mass of participants is necessary to encourage further growth [9].

“Not knowing how to get started” and “not relevant to my business goals” indicate that some further communication is required about how to blog and how to decide whether blogging will have concrete, job-related benefits for each individual.

In the interviews we did with the non-users of the system, there were a couple of reasons they didn’t blog which were particularly interesting:

“[I] saw the advertising in May [2004], but didn’t feel like I had the luxury of time and there would be better ways to document of my work.”

“Working in market [research], I guess I could put up the 4-5 most-requested information, but then I would lose control of who saw it and would lose the interaction that tells me what they do with it.”

“Internal blogs are just rants and full of complainers. Blogs are self-aggrandizing and I don’t want to grand stand.”

“What makes blogs interesting is being controversial or personal and if you can’t really do either[in a corporate setting], what’s the point?”

Since we have shown in this paper that blogging at Mega is not really about keeping a journal of information, at least one of the issues above could be resolved through education about what to expect from a corporate blog.

Two issues are unique to corporate blogging: being concerned that your superiors will view you as saying the wrong thing, and feeling that bloggers are stifled by this concern and thus posting items that are overly corporate or sterilized.

“..corporate blogging doesn’t feel natural, have to be very careful about what you say which creates some inertia.”

The content differences between corporate blogging and external blogging are beyond the scope of this research, but indicate a rich area for further study.

3.8 Conversations outside of blogs

In our interviews, a couple of people alluded to contacting people outside of BlogSite after meeting them on the system. In the survey, we asked whether respondents had contacted anyone outside of blogging and whether they themselves had ever been contacted. If blogging is a forum for creating social connections, then these results are extremely telling. About 60% of

heavy users (17 respondents) have contacted people outside of the system. By contrast, only about 30% of low users (6 respondents) have. Even more striking is the fact that some users have been contacted because of something they posted on BlogSite. About 70% (25 respondents) of heavy users have been contacted and only about 10% (2 respondents) of low users have (see figures 11 and 12).

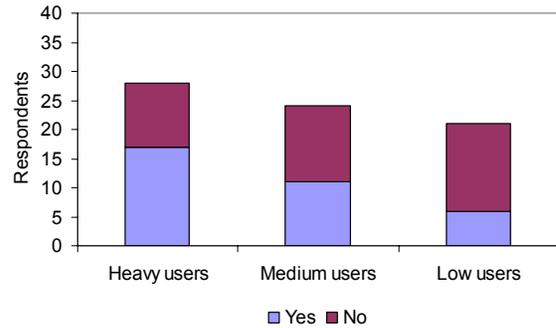


Figure 11: Has there ever been a situation where you contacted someone (outside of blogging) because of something on BlogSite?

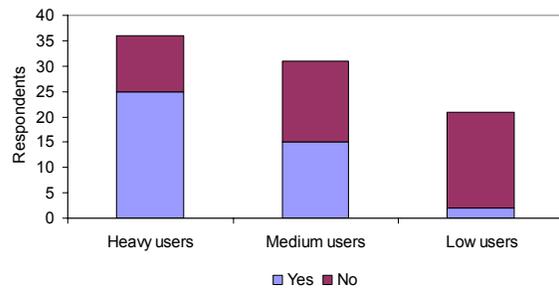


Figure 12: Have you ever been contacted because of something you posted on BlogSite?

Reasons for why respondents were contacting a blogger outside of BlogSite highlight the social aspects of blogging. Personal conversations, based on posts and on personal relationships that develop on BlogSite, tend to be taken off the blogs and into email and other forms of communication. These range from suggestions for where to get a haircut in New York, to sending sympathy to someone who is extremely ill.

Asking questions about a post, asking a poster for their expertise on specific problems, starting a collaboration, and trying to hire the blogger/or get the blogger to work on a project were also prevalent reasons (see Table 2).

An examination of who has been contacted due to something they posted on BlogSite reveals that heavy users are the most often contacted and for largest

variety of reasons. The most prevalent reasons include: wanted expert opinion/help, had a question about a post, wanted to collaborate, wanted to use code or content, and personal communication (see Table 2). These answers reinforce some of the benefits mentioned above: building a network and establishing expertise.

Table 2: Reasons for contacting/being contacted outside of blogs

<u>Has there ever been a situation where you contacted someone (outside of blogging) because of something on BlogSite?</u>	<u>Have you ever been contacted because of something you posted on BlogSite?</u>
Personal communication	Wanted my expert opinion/help
Collaboration	Questions about a post
Questions about a post	Collaboration
To ask/say something and not be publicly quoted	Wanted to use my code/content
Give recommendations to improve their technology	Personal communication
Get an opinion/help from an expert on my problem	Looking for specific customer help
To hire the blogger or get their participation on my project	Positive comments on conference calls about my posts
To follow-up with someone who commented on my blog	Asked to do a press interview/write an article
Forward links to blog to other bloggers	Alumni of same school found my blog
Shut down offensive content	Sent an email adding to their comments to my post
Shut down political conversations	People like to flame you in private
	Was asked to remove confidential material
	Someone thought I'd violated the blog guidelines

4. Discussion

The heavy users of BlogSite appear to provide an active core for the community both in terms of posting content and in terms of actively commenting on other people's content. Although this tool was originally intended as an easy place for "personal publishing,"

the majority of users surveyed came onto the system looking for community-related benefits. In an organizational context, this tool provides a means for creating social ties and the benefits that extend from having these ties across geographies and organizational departments.

In Granovetter's paper on the strength of weak ties [3, p. 202], he suggests that "individuals with few weak ties will be deprived of information from distant parts of the social system" and that "new ideas will spread slowly, scientific endeavors will be handicapped." In connecting people from parts of the organization that normally would not have contact, blogs seem to create similarly diverse ties as those needed to create a strong social system within an organization. In particular, the examples of getting the company pulse and getting company perspective speak to exactly the types of information from distant parts of the social system that are so valuable in creating a strong social system.

We also see evidence of weak ties strengthening, as a large number of people build on contacts begun on BlogSite developing personal relationships and work-related collaborations in the offline world. Granovetter highlights the value of strong ties as well as weak ties:

"Weak ties provide people with access to information and resources beyond those available in their own social circle; but strong ties have greater motivation to be of assistance and are typically more available" [3, p. 209].

One of the comments made in our interviews was that business people on the system asked technical questions and technical people were exploring business-related questions. Although we cannot verify this association, it is consistent with the strong community aspect evident in our other findings. It also indicates that the community space is a trusted-enough and informal-enough space that employees are willing to risk asking questions outside their area of expertise. The real benefit of corporate blogging may be to create an informal mechanism that links disparate, far-flung parts of the organization into constructive contact.

We have seen in the above analysis that a core of heavy users provide benefits not just for themselves but also for the medium users of the system. If active lurkers also exist to extend this benefit beyond the blog community itself to non-blogging members of the firm, then the relatively modest cost to the company of having some employees spending significant time blogging internally could be particularly valuable.

Blanchard and Horan talk about two types of virtual communities—those that reinforce physically compact communities and those that connect completely

geographically dispersed communities of interest—and finds the former more effective at creating social capital than the latter [1]. Corporate blogs such as the one in Mega may represent a third type of virtual community whose members are geographically dispersed, but who share a common organizational culture and identity. In such cases, the online community may reinforce the sense of belonging to the organization and consequently build more social capital than the geographically dispersed virtual communities referred to by Blanchard and Horan. That is, such virtual communities may create climate benefits to the organization beyond what social and informational benefits they create for individual participants. For large organizations, this could be especially important.

This sense of belonging, may also reinforce the information gathering aspect of blogs. In Constant et al.'s research, information providers who help information seekers through a sense of "organizational motivation" tend to provide the more useful answers [2]. The community and organizational aspects of blogging could similarly enhance knowledge sharing within the organization, not just by creating ties, but by enhancing people's sense of organizational citizenship.

Blogging appears to create significant social as well as informational benefits for users of the system. The community benefit and the connections created begin as weak ties with values of perspective and information. Over time, stronger ties develop and social benefits are augmented. The persistence of information in blogs provides a valuable tool for executives and others to be able to "see" and learn about concerns and values of the organization. Finally, such internal corporate blogs may have organizational benefits even beyond the sum of these individual benefits.

5. Acknowledgements

A special thanks to Elias Torres for assistance in gathering the usage statistics and for developing the original blogging pilot. Thanks also to James Newswanger, Randal Ries and Peter Ceplenski for survey development assistance. This work was funded in part by the National Science Foundation under grant number IIS-0085725.

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