

Blogs: A Business Woman's New Best Friend

By Toby Bloomberg, Bloomberg Marketing/Divamarketing Blog

www.bloombergmktg.com

www.divamarketingblog.com

Feminine strengths were considered a weakness in the 'good old boy' world of business. However, in an environment where developing partnerships are critical to success, the talent to build trusted relationships with people outside of your established network ranks high on the attribute list of what makes a good business leader - male or female.

In the new internet marketing order women now have the edge. The *Three Cs of Business Success: Collaboration, Communication and Cordiality* leverages how women instinctively view the world. *Connecting skills* are critical to creating and maintaining relationships in an online world where an investment of time is as important as technology.

When you are on opposite sides of an ocean, or even across town, meeting for lunch or an after work drink can be difficult if not impossible. How do you continue the on-going discussion flow? A funny little website, called a *Blog*, just might turn out to be a business woman's new best friend.

Blogs turn a static internet presence into an *exchange* of thoughts, information and experiences. Blogs create real-time conversations by allowing your readers the opportunity to comment, or talk to you, right on your site. Blog dialoging is a powerful strategy that supports *collaboration, communication and cordiality*.

With access to the internet it's easy to ensure your blog content is current. You can blog from a mobile phone, from an internet café or your personal computer. Now you don't have meet at a café to keep in touch.

Blogs Pull Away The Wizard of Oz Curtain

The heart of blogs is people talking, listening and interacting with each other. Since blogs are not carefully crafted traditional marketing communications but are written by one person, a unique voice and tonality occurs. The best bloggers have developed an engaging style that is authentic and candid providing a familiarity that does not exist in a corporate website.

Something interesting occurs when bloggers are encouraged to let their personalities emerge. The Wizard of Oz curtain is pulled away from your organization. With a more transparent view of your company customers, prospects and stakeholders begin to know the people who make up the organization. Sometimes the thought of unfiltered talk gives an organization some concern.

However, like the Wizard in Oz who hid because he didn't want the people to see that he was "*just a man*," once Dorothy and her pals met and got to know the real Wizard they were no longer frightened. In fact, they liked him very much. The Wizard found when he dropped his guard he began to really understand their problems and could offer innovative solutions.

When visitors read your blog they come to know the people who are your company. That leads to emotional engagement with your brand and your organization ... through the blogger's point of view. However, just like with the Wizard and Dorothy, the impact of business blogs helps both sides... company and customer know each other better. People want to do business with the people they know and like. Blogs help recreate old fashion 'grocery store' relationships where customers were also friends.

Without A Strategy Blogs Are A Me Too Play Toy

As in any marketing initiative, to be successful, your blog strategy must also begin with establishing goals, objectives and success factors. Without these important elements there is no accountability. Your blog becomes a "*me too play toy*" ... which is fine if all you want is something cool to talk about at your next Girls Night Out. But a waste of resources if you are running a business.

Blogs are unlike any marketing strategy I know. Blogs, in fact all social media (podcasts and videologs/vlogs) have their roots in a culture where established guidelines form the foundation of norms and ethical behavior. Yes, you can break some of those rules; but like playing jazz, you must first know the notes to deviate from traditional melodies and create new tunes.

In an online world where credibility is hard won, it is critical that the *Blog Mantra* - Honestly. Transparency. Authenticity - be incorporated into all of your blog strategies. Keep in mind that once you hit the "publish key" your post becomes public for the world to read and the search engines have long memories called "cached." Keep in mind that a link from a blog is easy to paste into another blog, a website or an email. Keep in mind that the goodwill of your brand/your company is at state if you deviate from these important cultural norms.

Throw in a little Passion too. Without the element of passion chances your blogger will get bored and not continue the initiative. Blogs are a long-term strategy, not a short-term fix.

