

Steps to Getting Started in the Blogosphere

Part 1 - Setting up a blog



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March 1, 2006

Overview

- Creating your blog's focus
- Selecting your blog's name
- Selecting your blog's platform
- Creating your blog's design
- Syndicating your blog
- Promoting your blog

Creating a Focus

- If you have a specific interest in life you might consider blogging
- Try and decide on a niche you would like to blog about

- Sports
- Business
- Cooking
- Real estate
- Mountain Climbing



- For example:
 - [Somewhat Frank](#) focuses mostly on business and technology
 - [Ballpark Frank](#) focuses on baseball
- If it is just going to be a personal blog for your own satisfaction then do not worry as much about your focus
- Your focus should be used in a one-line description displaying on your blog

Blog Naming : It's All in a Name?

- Make a memorable name for your blog
 - Avoid long URLs and words that are often misspelled
 - Make sure that if you use contractions the URL makes sense
 - Keep it simple
- Check domain register sites like Moniker.com or GoDaddy.com for name availability
- Once you think you have found the perfect name, perform a few searches to verify that a similar blog name does not exist:
 - Technorati.com
 - IceRocket.com
 - Google Blog Search
- Purchase the domain name and make sure the domain register can set up a domain mapping or alias for you
 - You could determine this by calling the register
 - Or use Moniker.com, because they work with you to set up mapping.



Selecting a Blog Platform

- This is one of the most important steps in the setup process
- There are a number of options to choose from
 - Check out the following link to compare some of the options:
 - [Blog Platform Analysis](http://www.somewhatfrank.com/2005/07/blog_platform_a.html)
(http://www.somewhatfrank.com/2005/07/blog_platform_a.html)
- When selecting a blog platform you need to determine:
 - If you want to pay for your blog platform or not
 - How much flexibility over “look and feel” you want
 - Which offers the most features
 - Which is the easiest to use
 - Where and how you want it hosted
- I currently use TypePad.com and WordPress.com for my weblogs
- Do your research here since switching platforms can be a bit of an obstacle

Selecting a Blog Platform (cont.)

- Some of the most notable platforms are:

- Blogger.com



- Google owned free hosted platform

- Six Apart



- TypePad.com - hosted platform
- Moveable Type - host it yourself



- WordPress



- WordPress.com – free hosted platform
- WordPress.org – host it yourself

Creating a Design

- A design could be dictated to you based on the blog platform you select, as all platforms have different levels of customization options.
- If you have control over your templates and their “look and feel,” change your layout to set your blog apart from others using the same platform.
- Some of the things to think about are:
 - How many columns is my blog going to have?
 - What are the colors of the blog?
 - What fonts will the blog have?
 - Will the blog have a calendar?
 - Will the blog display an archive of posts?
 - Will the blog display recent posts? If so, how many?
- Be sure to think through your design since display will directly interact with the visitors to your blog.

Determining Evergreen Elements

- Evergreen elements are items that will stay on the blog without having to be changed
- Could include:
 - A blogroll or list of blogs that you currently like and want to present as links
 - Books that you currently are reading or would like to read
 - Music you like or is currently in your iPod
 - A TagCloud (via TagCloud or Eurekster Swicki)
 - Comments from the blogosphere (via coComments)
 - Recent posts
 - Related posts
 - Blog entry categories
- Elements most likely be presented in the blog's rails

Creating Your About Page

- An About page is important to help build a common ground with your visitors, allowing them to check the source of information
- Leave enough information to add creditability, keeping personal information **security in mind**
 - Leave out your birthday, social security number, home address, phone number
- Portraits help to put a name with a face
 - Avoid group pictures, family photos or photos that make it hard to determine which person is you

Syndicating Your Blog

- Most blog platforms have some form of syndication feed
- It is important that your feed is optimized for the best possible compatibility



- Manage your feed with [FeedBurner](#) 
- Take your blog feed and put it through FeedBurner
- Offer your FeedBurner feed to visitors
- Also make sure to make your feed available for web crawlers to snag via auto-discovery as explained here by [TechnologyEvangelist.com](http://technologyevangelist.com)
http://technologyevangelist.com/2006/02/tracking_rss_feed_su_1.html

Promoting Your Blog

- Set up a Technorati account and claim your blog
- Submit your blog's FeedBurner feed to as many directories as you can using Pingoat.com
- 8 Tips On Promoting Your Blog
http://somewhatfrank.com/2006/01/8_tips_on_promo.html



Links Referenced

<http://www.somewhatfrank.com>

<http://ballparkfrank.wordpress.com>

<http://www.moniker.com>

<http://godaddy.com>

<http://technorati.com>

<http://www.icerocket.com>

<http://blogsearch.google.com>

<http://www.blogger.com>

<http://www.sixapart.com>

<http://www.typepad.com>

<http://www.wordpress.com>

<http://www.wordpress.org>

<http://www.feedburner.com>

<http://www.pingoat.com>

http://technologyevangelist.com/2006/02/tracking_rss_feed_su_1.html

http://somewhatfrank.com/2006/01/8_tips_on_promo.html

Good Luck & Stay Tuned

- I hope you found this information helpful
- Good luck with your blogging setup!
- Stay tuned for additional slide deck from SomewhatFrank.com

