



Are blogs the ultimate branding tool?



The Xpragmatic View #73
 May 15, 2006
 by [Marc Buyens](#), Xpragma
marc.buyens@xpragma.com
[url: http://www.xpragma.com/view73.php](http://www.xpragma.com/view73.php)

Regardless your type of business, much is often said about how blogs can help with your branding and make your company more "humanly" in the eyes of your prospects. Do we agree?

RSS feeds and blogs

As some of you will have noticed, I recently added an RSS feed for *The Xpragmatic View*.

For those who are unfamiliar with RSS, when you subscribe to an RSS feed of a website or a publication, you will be alerted whenever new content becomes available. In addition, you do not have to revisit the website. Instead, you can access all RSS feeds you subscribed to in one single place via a dedicated website (e.g. [NewsGator](#)) or a desktop program (e.g. [Feedreader](#)).

Using RSS, there is no longer the need to revisit websites checking for updates or to share e-mail addresses or other personal information in order to subscribe to a newsletter. That's good news for the reader.

Also for the publisher there are several advantages. First, spam filters and the like no longer hamper the delivery of content, which are a growing concern for the traditional e-zines. In addition, it avoids the need for managing subscriber lists, which is a frustrating and time-consuming task since e-mail addresses tend to be rather volatile.

As a result, RSS feeds provide a win-win situation for both parties and are becoming increasingly popular.

RSS also is the basis for the whole blog phenomenon. As you know, blogs are personal websites where the owner keeps some kind of on-line diary. Today, there are several hosted solutions available that allow you to build your own blog without the need for any technical knowledge, which has made blogging possible for anyone.

In general, blogs are a very personal thing and that is one of the main reasons for their popularity. Blogs are also a very social thing with a lot of interaction, discussion and cross-linking of content.

As a result, the reach and influence of blogs can be enormous, as some companies already experienced.

Adding an RSS feed for The Xpragmatic View makes it a bit blog-alike. However, I do not have any intention to make it a real blog, let alone one with daily updates. I simply do not have the time or the inspiration.

Still, many argue that blogs can help with your personal branding and make your company more "humanly" in the eyes of your prospects.

This might be true. However, while assessing the value of a blog for "branding" purposes, you

must carefully define whom you are branding for. What is your target audience and why?

Blogging for the empty room

The following will not apply to all types of businesses, but it does to mine.

My business is management consulting and my experience is that the people who hire my services do not visit or read consulting or business websites or blogs.

I have a website, since a website is a must have these days in case prospects want to check something. However, it is very unlikely that this website will ever generate some business. It will only kill potential opportunities when done poorly. Quite different marketing channels, not the least "word of mouth", guide my prospects' hiring decisions.

In addition, most of these decision makers are not exactly Internet power users and the ones that are will look for other content on the Internet such as holiday trips, wine, golf or other personal interests.

Therefore, while playing the blog card, you might be better off talking about quite different topics than your own business. Doing so, you might get "linked" in a very personal way with some of your potential customers outside the formal business context. I have always experienced that this is a very strong selling point when they have to decide about giving you some "real" business.

Of course, it is rather difficult to target correctly...


Have fun!

About the author



Marc Buyens is analyst, management consultant and owner of Xpragma. Marc started Xpragma in 1999 after a 20+ years career in the IT sector. Today, he provides advice, training and mentoring services focusing on the intersection of technological evolution, organisational change and business strategy: a messy world of unfulfilled promises.

 LinkedIn profile: <http://www.linkedin.com/in/marcbuyens>

 Follow on Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/mbuyens>

© 1999-2009, Xpragma bvba. All Rights Reserved.

Xpragma bvba - Mechelsesteenweg 254 - 2820 Bonheiden - Belgium
Tel. +32-(0)15-340 845 - info@xpragma.com - www.xpragma.com

 RSS feed: <http://www.xpragma.com/english/rss/xpven.xml>