


# The Blog: New Media Monster?

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# What's a blog?

- Blogs are “diary-style websites that generally offer observations and news listed chronologically on the site as well as commentary and recommended links” (Johnson & Kaye, 2004, p. 622)
  - 73.6% of blog readers believed blogs to be moderately to very credible
  - Only 46.5% believed newspapers to be moderately to very credible
  - Only 14.8% believed broadcast news to be moderately to very credible

# Organizational Blogs

- <http://insidethedodgers.mlblogs.com>
- <http://twinsballpark.mlblogs.com>

# Ted Leonsis – Washington Capitals

- Leonsis owns the Washington Capitals
- <http://ted.aol.com>
  - “Blogs are one of the next steps in the continuing social dynamic that makes up the online world, and they are perhaps the single best device yet invented to spark new conversations and launch new ideas.” – Leonsis blog, Jan. 4, 2006

# Fan-Generated Media

- Kathleen Hessert, president of Sports Media Challenge, coined the term, “***Fan-Generated Media***” to refer to the message boards, chat rooms, and other online channels visited by a sport organization’s most dedicated and passionate fans
  - “The Internet provides a rich source of emotional reaction to events, and an important outlet for dedicated fans – a program or team’s ‘base’ audience.” (Hessert, 2006)
  - “These word-of-mouth FGM opinions, and the organization’s responses, can build excitement around sports brands.” (Hessert, 2006)

# Bias

- Users say they rely on blogs because they provide more depth and more thoughtful analysis than mainstream media
- Fewer than four in 10 thought blogs were fair  
(Johnson & Kaye, 2004)
- Perhaps this is why blogs are so attractive

# Blog as Media?

- “I think the line between ‘blog’ and other forms of media is becoming pretty blurry at this point. In that sense, I see a lot less ‘battle’ between bloggers and mainstream media than a lot of people seem to want to play up.” – Aaron Gleeman (quoted on [associatedcontent.com](http://associatedcontent.com), Nov. 17, 2006).
  - [www.aarongleeman.com](http://www.aarongleeman.com) receives 2,500 unique visitors per day

# Policies

- NBA
  - “We do not have a formal policy on blogs, just that we keep our eyes open to everything.” – Brian McIntyre, senior vice president of communications (personal communication, Nov. 14, 2006)
- NCAA
  - “At this point it would be hard to define them (bloggers) as media. And personally, I don’t see how they can be.” – Mark Bedics, oversees media coordination for NCAA Championships (quoted in *Sports Business Journal*, June 19, 2006)



# Policies

- MLB
  - Credentials will be granted to online entities that are part of a national agency, reach a broad audience, have a record of producing original content, and employ at least four full-time journalists. (*Sports Business Journal*, June 19, 2006)

# Olympics

- Accept independent blogs with the following stipulations:
  - Blog must provide certified and audited statistics, including average number of unique visitors by month
  - Percentage of original content v. non-original content
  - Official auditing body, if one exists
  - Number of employed full-time journalists
  - Blog agrees to adhere to IOC Internet Guidelines

# Beijing 2008

- USOC issued roughly 20 credentials to web sites to cover the 2008 Olympics
- More than 10 sites made 30-plus requests
  - Sites had to show history of spots coverage
  - Proven traffic
  - Original content

# Developing a Policy

- Why do it?
  - Fan identification
  - Missing out on a form of communication and target market
- Considerations:
  - Original content
  - History of covering industry
  - Unique visitors
  - Press box
  - Rights issues

