

# **Blogs for Librarians**

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# Outline

- Definitions & background
- Reasons & perspectives
- Advantages & disadvantages
- Librarian blogs [hands-on portion]
- Keeping current: Blogrolls & RSS
- Library blog paths

# Blog definitions & history

- Web page containing frequent, brief postings in chronological order
- Short for weblog, an online newsletter or public diary
- Online regularly updated journal, easily accessible, easy to maintain
- Widespread use began in 1999 with emergence of Blogger

# Blog Functions

- Social software used to share thoughts, links, photos, audio/podcasts, videoclips
- Report and comment on topics of interest to the author
- Format to self-publish essays, poetry, music
- Marketing tool
- Educational forum

# Benefit to Librarians

- Offer a dynamic structure to deliver information
- Method to provide outreach with information on library services
- Connect with patrons involved with new technology
- Expand your focus & increase area of expertise

# Possible Focus

- Library specialty (art, maps, music, consumer health, African history...)
- Library focus (collection dev't, reference services, youth, serials...)
- Library outreach (services, classes, community programs...)

# Advantages

- Helps organize an avalanche of information
- No special skills required
- Provides a dynamic structure to move quality content
- Tool to promote communication



# Disadvantages

- Contributes to avalanche of information
- Cannot expect each blogger is able to come up with insightful commentary on a daily basis

# Free Blog Platforms

- The easiest way to start blogging is to use a free external web-based blog development system & external weblog hosting service such as:
  - [www.blogspot.com](http://www.blogspot.com)
  - [www.wordpress.com](http://www.wordpress.com)

# Keeping Current

- Add a blogroll to your sidebar (scan 10-15 daily or use RSS reader)
- Copy interesting items from emails
- Share summaries from listservs
- Notes from workshops
- Points raised at committee mtgs
- Interest'g journal article conclusions

# RSS

- RSS feeds provide a way of keeping track of new information in your field or area of interest
- Choose which blogs & news sources you want to add to your RSS reader
- Automatically updates each time you access the reader
- Try Bloglines: <http://www.bloglines.com/>

# Library blog paths

- Many libraries have technical issues (firewalls, spam blockers) and procedural issues (branding, administrative content control) that prevent external web-based blogs
- Work with your IT dept. to look into downloading blog dvmt software & host on local server