

The Zen of a Dermatologist Blogger

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A PDF of this handout is at:

<http://dermatologycentral.typepad.com/resource/blogs-and-blogging/>

Blogs are great learning and teaching opportunities for personal and professional growth. Infinite possibilities. Try one. It's addictive.

Blog Facts (May 2008)

- * Over 12 million American adults currently maintain a blog.**
- * The Global Online audience is > 1 billion individuals (2009)**
- * > 147 million Americans & 28 million Canadians use the Internet.**
- * Over 57 million Americans read blogs.**
- * 1.7 million American adults list making money as one of the reasons they blog.**
- * 89% of companies surveyed say they think blogs will be more important in the next five years.**
- * 9% of internet users say they have created blogs**
- * 6% of the entire US adult population has created a blog**
- * Technorati is currently tracking over 70 million blogs**
- * over 120,000 blogs are created every day**
- * There are over 1.4 million new blog posts every day**
- * 22 of the 100 most popular websites in the world are blogs**
- * 120,000 new blogs are created every day**
- * 37% of blog readers began reading blogs in 2005 or 2006**

Types of Medical Blogs

Student and Trainee Blogs

Katie Ratzan: <http://katieinlamba.blogspot.com>

Caitlin Stiglmeier: <http://web.me.com/caitlinstiglmeier/Site/Blog>

Tucker Slingerland: <http://vfmv.blogspot.com/>

Physician Blogs

Virtual Grand Rounds in Dermatology www.vgrd.blogspot.com

Skin Cancer Blog: www.skincancerclinic.blogspot.com (need to apply)

KevinMD: www.kevinmd.com/blog Look at this: well designed and implemented

Patient Blogs

Breast Cancer: <http://jillscancerjourney.blogspot.com>

Patient Information (Dermatology) www.dermatologycentral.typepad.com

Practice Information (Dermatology - Promotional) www.dermblog.com

Well: NYTimes Prostate: <http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/11/11/the-good-cancer/>
(this was initiated on November 11, 2008)

Medical Humanities Blogs

Cell 2 Soul: www.cell2soul.typepad.com

MedFlix (Movies and Medicine) www.medflix.blogspot.com

Palliative Medicine Arts/Humanities: <http://arts.pallimed.org/>

Illness Narrative: <http://www.pathography.blogspot.com>

Getting Started:

Blogger: <http://www.blogger.com>

Blogger is the “mother of personal blogging.” Free and easy to set up. Vox may be “trying harder.”

Typepad: <http://www.typepad.com>

Has a monthly fee of \$4.95 and up. More versatile than Blogger or Vox, but may be more appropriate after you learn a bit about Blogs. and why you want to do this.

Vox: <http://www.vox.com>

This is free and worth looking at. I just discovered Vox while preparing this talk.

Wordpress: <http://wordpress.com/> A free, versatile blog service. For an example see:
<http://briantmaurer.wordpress.com/> A blog by a pediatric Physician’s Assistant.

If You Want to Know More

Excellent Resource: The Huffington Post Complete Guide to Blogging (December 2008) It’s available at <http://www.amazon.ca> for \$12.74 This is an extraordinarily helpful book for beginners and experienced bloggers as well.

Also see: “Psychiatrists Find Home in the Blogosphere” Psychiatric Times, October 3, 2008 <http://pn.psychiatryonline.org/cgi/content/full/43/19/6>

For background questions on medical blogging see an interview with Kevin Pho www.kevinmd.com Dr. Pho blogs at KevinMD.com. His site was named Best Medical Blog in the 2008 Medical Weblog Awards, with over 21,000+ RSS subscribers and 3,100+ Twitter followers. If you are serious about starting a medical blog, this is interesting article:

<http://blog.talstone.com/10-questions-with-kevinmd-aka-dr-kevin-pho/> (March 20, 2009)

The future may be in linked data. T Berners-Lee the father of the WWW gave a talk recently at TED: “The next Web of open, linked data” can access at: http://www.ted.com/index.php/talks/tim_berners_lee_on_the_next_web.html Just think if 1000 dermatologists linked data from patients seen. The EMR or something like that may make this possible. What an incredible resource we would have!

If you want to start a medical blog, I put together a PowerPoint which can be accessed at SlideShare: <http://www.slideshare.net/djelpern/blogger-guide>

Please contact me with questions.
I will help you start a blog if you are interested.

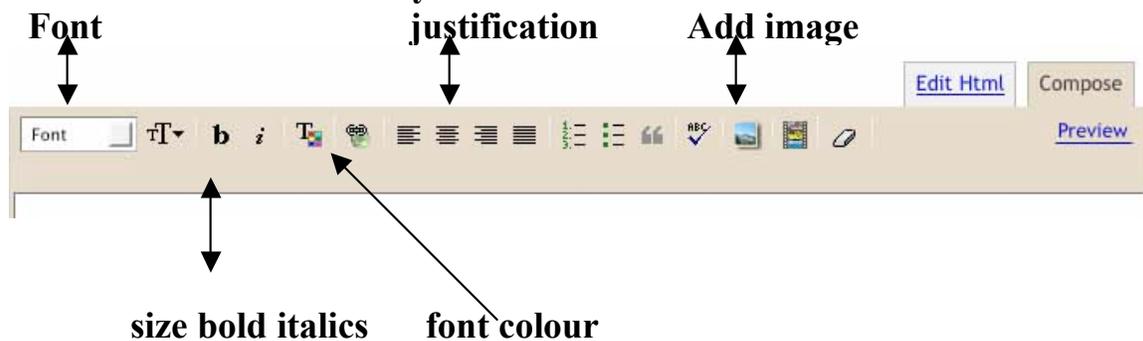
Dave Elpern
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Starting Your Blog

See: <http://www.slideshare.net/djelpern/blogger-guide>

1. Go to <http://www.blogger.com>
2. Create a Google account if you don't have one already. This means select a Google email address.
3. Now you are ready to start. Enter your Gmail Username and select a Password (I think you can use another email account, but am not sure)
4. Name your blog and select a blogger address. Be careful re: the name and address since you will have to live with it.
5. Choose a template. You can change it later
6. You are ready to roll...

This bar has the controls you'll need:



Background Article on Blogging

Excerpted and Aapted from: **Why I Blog**

By Andrew Sullivan

The Atlantic, November 2008, 106 – 113

www.theatlantic.com/doc/200811/andrew-sullivan-why-i-blog

For centuries, writers have experimented with forms that evoke the imperfection of thought, the inconstancy of human affairs, and the chastening passage of time. But as blogging evolves as a literary form, it is generating a new idiom that's enabling writers to express themselves in ways that have never been seen or understood before. The interaction it enables between writer and reader is unprecedented, visceral, and sometimes brutal. And make no mistake: it heralds a golden era for communication.

Blogging provides the simple experience of being able to directly broadcast one's own words to colleagues.

It does away with the endless delays, revisions, politics, editorial fights, and last-minute cuts for space that journal publishing entails. Blogging—even to an audience of a few hundred is intoxicatingly free in comparison. **Bypasses the bean counters!! Yes!!**

Every writer has paid some dues waiting for an editor's nod, or enduring a publisher's incompetence, or being ground to literary dust by a legion of fact-checkers and copy editors. If you added up the time a writer once had to spend finding an outlet, impressing editors, sucking up to proprietors, and proofreading edits, you'd find another lifetime buried in the interstices. But with one click of the Publish Now button, all these troubles evaporated.

The key to understanding a blog is to realize that it's a broadcast, not a publication. If it stops moving, it dies. If it stops paddling, it sinks.

But the superficiality masks considerable depth—greater depth, from one perspective, than the traditional media could offer. The reason: the hyperlink. Online, a hyperlink to the original source transforms the experience.

Blogging allows one to self-publish – anyone who can afford a computer and Internet access can blog.

Some e-mailers, unsurprisingly, know more about a subject than the blogger does. They will send links, stories, and facts, challenging the blogger's view of the world, sometimes outright refuting it, but more frequently adding context and nuance and complexity to an idea. The role of a blogger is not to defend against this but to embrace it. He is similar in this way to the host of a dinner party. He can provoke discussion or take a position, even passionately, but he also must create an atmosphere in which others want to participate.

Whatever authority a blogger has is derived not from the institution he works for but from the humanness and relevant postings she conveys.

The blogosphere has added a whole new idiom to the act of writing and has introduced an entirely new generation to nonfiction. It has enabled writers to write out loud in ways never seen or understood before. And yet it has exposed a hunger and need for traditional writing that, in the age of television's dominance, had seemed on the wane.