

KnowHow: Web vs. Blog

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Which is the right platform for your business?

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At this point in time, there are not many companies out there that do not have a web presence. For the most part, society has come to realize that the Internet is becoming the window to any business.

While web sites come in many shapes and sizes, the web platform has long been the standard for an Internet presence.

In recent years, blogs (or web logs) have become a popular vehicle for not only politics and people with a point of view, but for businesses as well. And while most businesses use a blog format to add value to their current marketing and public relations strategy, some are using it as their main Internet vehicle. It's a relatively new concept, but gaining popularity. So which one is right for your business? Unfortunately, there's no clear-cut answer.

In theory, a blog is set up to work chronologically, with newer content always at the top of the page. And while you could easily set up your web site to work this way, most web sites have a fair amount of static information on the homepage, making visitors click around for fresher content. If you are looking to your web site to carry your brand consistently, having a blog as your main Internet presence may not be the best approach.

Easy Does It

For the small business person, a blog may be the way to go initially because they are relatively low-cost and easy to update without any knowledge of web design or coding. If budget is of main concern, a blog could get you on the web in short time and with little resources.

The blog is also incredibly flexible. However, creating that flexibility has the potential to drive costs up substantially. In most cases the discerning business owner, concerned with budgets may find that it will be more costly upfront to produce a blog with all the features of a web site. Blogs are great for posting timely information and starting a discussion, but a company with more than one product or service that needs multiple features, may find the blog platform limiting.

Some great uses for a blog include a consultant that regularly writes advice, a photographer that may want to post a photo of the day and small business owners that may be on the road for long periods of time. A real estate agent could also use a blog and feature a "Home of the Day."

Blogs are also very search-engine friendly. Users can also save your posts to blog sites such as Digg and Technorati, which will help with visibility. You can set up a feed system such as RSS so people can be notified when you post new content; all in all, very effective technology for little money.

All that being said, a web platform is still by far the standard and most flexible. Web sites allow for



consistent branding, increased options for content, many more features through coding and much more control over your entire Internet presence.

The best formula for maximizing your Internet presence is to have a traditional web site and complement it with a company blog. You'll get the best of both worlds with flexibility, and increased search engine ranking.

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