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# Blogging on the Web – Building Customer Relationships with New Technology

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By Terry L. Brock

Do you blog? This hot tool has been around since 1999 but is now more popular than ever. It is a tool that is being used to communicate faster and even more effectively than many traditional websites. If you haven't heard of, or used a Blog, now is the time to get up to speed. There are some serious business applications for it that you need to know about.

However, let me step back for a moment and introduce you to the concept of a Blog. That is a web log where you can enter your ideas,, thoughts and text into a website that requires no programming (really!) and can be seen by the world.

If you haven't entered into the world of Blogging, now is the time. This tool provides the ability to get your message out to the world. You can have private blogs where only key people know about what you want to say. You can have other places that are available to the world at large (for say, marketing). You don't have to know HTML programming or anything about computers more than how to access the Net, use a browser and type.

My buddy Craig Rispin, in Sydney, Australia ([www.futuretrends.tv](http://www.futuretrends.tv)), was showing me what can be done with these tools the other day when I was visiting his offices in Sydney. You can make notes and post them quickly so that only close associates know about it. Craig is using this tool for classes he offers. As questions come up during the class, he posts answers and related websites to his blog so that students can get a lot of information after the class as a follow-up. It can be reserved for only those that are in the class, or Craig can make them available to everyone with Internet access.

You can get a free blog by visiting [www.blogger.com](http://www.blogger.com) and signing up. Other places on the Net provide more service and support. I tried it and found that I was able to sign up and start producing a blog with little effort. You can see the results of my efforts (and on-going notes) at <http://terrybrock.blogspot.com> More advanced plans are available with Blog Spot Plus and Blogger Pro. For \$35.00 you get more graphics and a richer interface. The best part, you still don't have to know programming to publish good content to the Web.

At this writing, I was unable to sign up for Blogger PRO. A message on the screen said to check back next week. By the time you read this it should be ready, with a potential price increase.

One new feature that can help a lot of keyboard-challenged businesspeople is the new audioBLOGGER from LISTENLAB, LLC. Using this tool, you can place a call with any telephone, record a message up to 2 minutes in length and have it posted to your

Blog. Visitors to your Blog will be able to listen to it with their Internet Explorer browser and Windows MediaPlayer.

Using this tool, a manager could record a quick announcement about new products or sales strategies. Mobile professionals can access the message and listen to the announcement. It is easy for the announcement creator to put it on the website and it is easy for the listener to hear it.

Tools like this provide a lot of opportunity for increased sales and productivity. The free offer to get started with a chance to upgrade for better service at a fee later is a good model. If you're not Blogging, it is time to get on board. Visit [www.blogger.com](http://www.blogger.com) and get your free account today. Then start using it to make sales.

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