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MUSICIAN BLOGGERS: THE IMPACT OF NICHE BLOGGERS ON BUSINESS

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MUSICIAN BLOGGERS: THE IMPACT OF NICHE BLOGGERS ON BUSINESS

By

Charles Craine

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MUSICIAN BLOGGERS

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Blogs have become a staple for many online users as the world becomes more and more connected. Blogs are websites often maintained by individuals who comment on anything that interests them. They are diaries of sorts from which individuals can broadcast their thoughts and opinions to the world.

Musician blogs are websites where musicians discuss their lives and craft. These blog present the writer's opinions about their specific instruments, genre, group and many things.

This study analyzes in-depth interviews with 20 musician bloggers to understand their motivations and satisfaction they receive from blogging. This study will analyze seven motivations for blogging: self-documentation, improving writing, self-expression, medium appeal, information, passing time, and socialization.

The goal was to answer what motivates musicians to blog and what satisfactions do musicians receive from blogging. This is important because it shows that not all bloggers have the same motivations or satisfactions.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Blogs (or Web logs) have become a staple for many online users as the world becomes more and more connected. Blogs are websites often maintained by individuals who comment on anything that interests them. They are diaries of sorts where individuals can broadcast their thoughts and opinions to the world.

Musician blogs are websites where musicians discuss their lives and craft. These blog present the writer's opinions about their specific instruments, genre, group and many things. Musicians who blog range from well-known musicians, such as Nikki Sixx from Motley Crue, to individuals who aren't household names but make their living as professional musicians. Professional musician bloggers could include bass players, singers, superstars, piano players, studio musicians, drummers, etc. These bloggers may also focus on many different genres such as rock, classical, blues and jazz. The diversity of such blogs and the vastness of the Internet have spawned endless micro-communities, not to mention social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter or niche websites.

These musician blogs are important to journalism because they offer a view into a world that used to be limited to entertainment journalists alone to report to the world. Now with their own blogs, musicians can present an in-depth look into their everyday lives along with their work as a musician. Also, it not clear that all motivations apply equally to all groups. This research can be a step toward understanding the variations in the bloggers' motivations.

This study will use Dan Li's seven motivations for blogging (2005) as a tool for analyzing the motivations of musician bloggers. Li found seven motivations for blogging:

self-documentation, improving writing, self-expression, medium appeal, information, passing time, and socialization. The seven motivations offer a starting point for evaluating the musicians' motivations and desired results achieved from blogging. Li's schema offers a basis for constructing questions for musician bloggers and determining which of these motivations is most important for musician bloggers and whether there are additional motivations not found in Li's study.

Li created these seven motivation categories based upon studies from Nardi (2004), T.F. Stafford and M.R. Stafford (2001), Papacharissi (2004) and Trammel (2004). This study will check the responses against Li's scale as well as discover if the motivations match those of Trammell (2004), Nardi (2004), and James (1995).

Li found that "bloggers can consciously satisfy their unique motivations by taking advantage of characteristics of blogs as an open, free, and social venue for intrapersonal, interpersonal, and mass communication. The use of blogs is systematically associated with an individual's motivations for blogging. For instance, blogs mostly satisfy instrumental gratifications rather than ritual ones, quite different from its precedent media" (Li, 2005 p.144). Ritualized gratifications are characterized as habitual, time-consuming and passive forms of communication consumption. Instrumental gratifications are characterized by a selective audience that is involved in the communication activity.

Internet Use

Internet usage has steadily increased since its early days and has, according to eMarketer, 239 million internet users in the U.S. in 2012. That is 75% of the entire U.S. population going online. (Blogspot 2012).

In 2011, the Center for Digital Future at the University of Southern California, Annenberg School of Communication, found home use of the Internet passed 12 hours per week ("Digital Future Project", p. 34) while the number of hours that internet users report they are online at work was 12.9 hours per week. ("Digital Future Project", p. 44)

Online activities varied amongst respondents:

> Looking at responses to questions about a range of online activities, the largest percentages of users reported going on the Internet at least weekly (several times a day, daily, or weekly) to browse the Web (79 percent), use online banking (47 percent), get product information (46 percent), visit social networking and video-sharing sites (46 percent), play games (39 percent), download or watch videos (39 percent), download or listen to music (38 percent), listen to online radio (22 percent), and pay bills (22 percent). ("Digital Future Project", p. 39).

Blog Statistics

In 2012, the Huffington Post, which started as a blog site, was sold for over $300 million to AOL. The business of blogging has grown and has begun to blur the lines between traditional and new media or digital journalism.

In 2012, Wordpress.com had 42 million users blogging on their website with 500,000 new posts per day. Blogger.com has 46 million unique monthly visitors to their blogs. Statistics from blogging.com state that 60% of businesses have a company blog

and that 35% of businesses update their blog at least once a month. (http://blogging.org/blog/blogging-stats-2012-infographic/).

Blogs are growing in influence, too. According to BlogHer.com "61% of U.S. online consumers have made a purchase based on recommendations from a blog" and "81% of U.S. online consumers trust information and advice from blogs." (http://www.blogher.com/women-and-social-media-2012)

Nielsen tracked 173 million blogs in 2011. The Nielsen "State of the Media: U.S. Digital Consumer Report Q3-Q4 2011" stated that Social networks/Blogs became the top online destination ahead of email in 2011. This is the first time anything had topped email, as the number one reason people get online. They found that social networks and blogs had 169.6 million visitors in 2011. (Nielsen, 2011)

Blogger.com ranked second in the U.S. top 10 of social networks and blogs by unique audience according to Nielsen in October 2011. Blogger, with 46.3 million unique visitors, was behind Facebook but had more unique visitors than the third place Twitter. Wordpress.com came in forth with 20.4 million unique visitors. Tumbr.com, a blogging newcomer, had 13.8 million and was in sixth place overall.

Their study also found that 54% of blog readers were female and nearly evenly distributed between the ages of 18-64. The majority of those visiting social networks and blogs were white. (Nielsen, 2011)

Statement of Problem

Previous studies (Papacharissi, 2000; Papacharissi, 2007; Huffaker, 2006; Kaye & Johnson, 2002; LaRose & Eastin, 2002; Nardi, 2004; Herring, 2004; Scheidt, 2005; Li, 2005) have mostly focused on teens, students, gender, politics and the general autobiographical nature of blogs. Blog studies have not focused on musician blogs as a specific genre.

This study analyzes in-depth interviews with 20 musician bloggers to understand their motivations and satisfaction they receive from blogging. Li found seven motivations based on surveys and created a baseline for future research and the motivation of individual bloggers. Li created these seven motivations based upon studies from Nardi (2004), T.F. Stafford and M.R. Stafford (2001), Papacharissi (2004) and Trammel (2004).

Li conducted a two-step pilot study to understand blogger motivations and satisfactions. Li (2005) said a "brief content analysis of blogs was employed to offer possible questions for the following survey. By searching 'Why I blog' and similar phrases in search engines, I briefly browsed more than 180 blogs to inspect bloggers' self-confessions on the reasons why they blog. This information was used to complement and adapt items used in previous gratifications research on blogs" (p. 60).

Li used the five motivations employed by Trammell's (2004) research on the motivations of Polish bloggers for the first five motivations. Nardi's suggestion of self-documentation (2004) and James (1995) study suggested medium appeal.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative case study, using interviews, is to understand the motivations and satisfactions of blogging by musicians. Some objectives of this study will be to understand:

1. Why do they blog?
2. What may have motivated an individual to blog initially?
3. What satisfactions motivate bloggers to continue to blog?
4. Whether Li's motivations categories for bloggers also pertain to musicians who blog.

At this stage in the research, the terms "blogging by musicians" and "musician bloggers" will be used interchangeably.

Significance Statement

Blogging by musicians is an important topic because of the effects it may have on more traditional forms of journalism. Musician bloggers use their blogs to reach the public rather than communicate through newspapers, magazines and television, which can diminish the audience for traditional media. This also creates problems for advertisers and marketers who are trying to reach the audience that is interested in these musicians. That audience may be shifting its time and attention to musicians' blogs. The focus of this study, however, is understanding the musicians' motivation for writing

about their own lives rather than following the traditional model of a journalist writing a story about their lives and/or occupation.

The topic of musician bloggers and what motivates and satisfies them about blogging is important because of the size of the industry. One example is the U.S. guitar market, including amps and accessories, is expected to be $969.8 million in 2012. The estimated audience of guitar players in the U.S. is 16 million to 20 million people. And within that audience digital guitar lessons are estimated to be a $10 million market at the moment. Another subset of the musical instrument market is the professional sound market, which is everything that consists of DJ, studio and other sound recording and performing equipment, which is $1.306 billion overall.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter will seek to explain the uses and gratification theory as the guiding principles for this thesis study.

Uses & Gratifications Theory

Blumler and Katz's uses and gratification theory suggests that individuals are active participants in the way in which they choose and use media. Individual users take are active participants in the communication process and are goal oriented in their media use. Blumler and Katz believed that the individual seeks the source of media that meets their needs and fulfills specific gratifications (Blumler & Katz, 1974).

Werner J. Severin and James W. Tankard (1992) stated that "the uses and gratification approach involves a shift of focus from the purposes of the communicator to the purposes of the receiver." (264) They found a basic aspect of the uses and gratifications approach offered different people the ability to use the same form of communication for different purposes.

Bloggers, as Severin and Tankard observe, puts "the user of mass communication is in control."(p.279) The uses-and-gratifications approach has come under criticism for being "nontheoretical, for being vague in defining key concepts (for example, "needs"), and for being basically nothing more than a data-collecting strategy." (p.274 However, Severin and Tankard observe that "the uses and gratifications approach should eventually have some things to say about the users of these new media. After all, it is the single area

of theory that has attempted most directly to deal with the active audience," (p.279) as studies of television and newspapers users follow a passive audience who are only in control of opting to either not read the newspaper or only change the channel if they didn't want to watch something specific. This was the extent of the active control of medium. Blogs not only put the user in control of the mass communication but can also measure their gratifications. For this study, however, the uses-and-gratifications approach will be employed to examine the motivations of the bloggers rather than of their audience members.

Uses and gratifications and the Internet

Uses-and-gratifications theory is suited to studying the Internet because it requires audience members to be active users (Kaye & Johnson, 2002). Web usage is also goal directed and users are aware of the needs they are attempting to satisfy (Lin & Jeffres, 1998). Williams, Strover and Grant (1994) suggest that computers create non-geographical communities and relationships among people and technologies. This can help us better understand how people use technologies to create identities, social positions, and fill emotional voids. (Papacharissi & Rubin, 2000). Papacharissi and Rubin also point out that a person's social and psychological characteristics affect how they use the Internet and that is important as I attempt to understand musician bloggers.

Morris and Ogan (1996) argued that the Internet can fulfill interpersonal needs and musician bloggers may be seeking a community larger than their offline community. It may also be a way for them to express themselves and find others who are more like

them as the community of the world is larger and far more diverse than any local community could ever be.

Li (2005) states:

> The emergence of new communication technology changes the prevalent one-way flow of information from media to audience. The two-way trait of the Internet makes the instant interaction between the media and audience possible. The Internet combines the mass communication and interpersonal communication in a single channel—Internet users can obtain information and send feedback without having to leave the same communication context. (p. 9)

While examining motivations for creating a personal home page, Papacharissi (2002) found that authors blogged primarily to inform and entertain, but also (in order of popularity) to express themselves, to communicate with friends and family, to advance themselves professionally and to pass the time. Papacharissi (2004) used uses-and-gratifications theory and found bloggers wrote with the intention of being read by friends or family, which suggests a need for social interaction. Li (2005) found that certain motivations were related with specific usage of blogs.

> Self-documentation is a predictor of feedback management, self-presentation, and readership expectation. Improving writing motivation works as a predictor for self-presentation and readership expectation. Self-expression predicts self-presentation, readership expectation, and design elements use. Medium appeal motivation predicts self-presentation. Information motivation predicts feedback management, use of hyperlinks, self-presentation, readership expectation, and design elements. Passing-time motivation predicts self-presentation, design elements, and readership expectation" (Li, 2005. p. 1).

Nardi, et al., (2004) did an ethnographic investigation of blogging as a form of personal communication and self-expression. They found that blogs were cathartic as a way to express their emotions. They are an outlet for thoughts and feelings. And that

blogs were used as a community forum to increase the level of interaction. The conclusion was that bloggers had “a range of motivations for blogging” (p.46). And that studying blogs at a micro level, such as their study of bloggers at Stanford, provide valuable insight into motivations.

Uses and gratifications and Blogs

Blogs

> A blog, also known as weblog, in its most basic form can be defined as “a frequently updated website consisting of dated entries arranged in reverse chronological order so the most recent post appears first” (J. Walker, 2003). The formal concept of blog was initially implemented in the website titled “Scripting News” created by Dave Winer in 1996 (Nardi, Schiano, Gumbrecht, and Swartz, 2004). Deemed as the “newest trend in Internet communication” (Goldsborough, 2003), blogs have attained prominent popularity since the end of 20th century.

Blogs give access to the masses by the two-way nature of the medium. Bloggers have the ability to reach millions of people without the cost and infrastructure traditional print and broadcast media require. Blogs disrupt traditional media because of this and have allowed bloggers to bypass traditional outlets completely. “This inversion of elite control is the social outcome of a more interactive format. Blogs are popularly viewed as a form of social media, or media that is architected by design to readily support participation, peer-to-peer conversation, collaboration, and community (O'Relly 2004)." J. Rosen (2006) states, "Blogs have brought the press to the people” and have given the average person a voice to reach the masses that was impossible more than a decade ago.

For advertisers, that has created a fracture. No longer can advertisers simply go to the usual media outlets to reach their entire audience. Blogs have done one important thing for advertisers—they have allowed advertisers unprecedented access to niche

customers and no longer require an advertiser to spend millions of dollars to reach a large audience in hopes of catching the attention of the select few. For musician bloggers, advertisers might find an audience that enjoys a specific genre of music and a blogger who can champion their products or services in an unbiased way. This could offer credibility and strong loyalty to a product or service. The blog is also an outlet for the musician to promote and sell his or her products rather than going through their normal distribution channels, which further disrupts the marketing chain.

Uses and gratifications and Niche Bloggers

Musician bloggers are difficult to define. They write about their work, business, instruments, performing, their daily lives, but they also write about hobbies and offer their opinions on their interests. Baumeister, et al., (1995) found that people have a need to belong and that social groups are important. “The desire for interpersonal attachments—the need to belong—is a fundamental human motivation” (p. 520). With the advent of the Internet, social groups have ceased to be bound by geography.

Blogs as a Form of Communication

Communication is an important aspect of life for all humans. It is not surprising how quickly social network platforms like blogs, Facebook and Twitter have grown. Humans seek some sense of connection with their inner circle. “Social network theory called homophily theory or ‘birds of a feather flock together’ theory is a powerful

tendency that individuals have to network along homogeneous lines is driven by shared beliefs, interests and social status" (Lazersfield & Merton, 1954; McPhearson et al., 2001).

The main form of communication for blogs is often autobiographical in nature. Wei (2009) states that "the majority of bloggers, on the contrary, select to write something about their personal lives" rather than about politics. They are called personal journals and "blogging is conversational and participatory in nature." The two-way nature of conversation is part of the appeal of blogging.

Blogs as Tools for exhibitionists

Bloggers often enjoy the limelight. That is why individuals make their blogs public. Bloggers want an audience just like anyone who produces something made to be consumed by others. A study by Em Milic of the Italian website Giovani.it found that "interviewees were not shy of defining their publishing activity as 'exhibitionism,' as if it were a sort of show acting or an unnatural form of expression." Milic found that the two main elements that drove people to write blogs were to improve their own visibility and status and "the unusual interpretation of on-line expression as pure exhibitionism" (www.morbin.it/00materiali/mediorama/mediascape_paper.doc).

Giltrow (2009) states: "Bloggers also adapt the role of mediated exhibitionist, inviting others to peer voyeuristically as they display their constructed selves online" (p.89). Olcoń (2003) identified five social functions of writing a blog: fulfillment of emotional needs, fulfillment of the need for social ties, sociability, pleasure, and self-

expression. While Olcón's study was from a sociological perspective, these categorizations bear great resemblance to those in the media theory of uses and gratifications.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Introduction

There have been lots of studies about bloggers but blogging has grown so much that it has begun to diversify and fracture. What was once a place to write a diary or your own thoughts and views has become a cottage industry for cottage industries. Theoretically it is not impossible to imagine that any niche that exists probably has already been captured by someone blogging about it. Certainly even new industries, ideas and interests have taken shape specifically because blogs exist.

Musicians who blog are a small niche in a vast sea of bloggers, what makes them important is the business side to musicians. Musicians are artists who seek to express themselves, yet their art is also their business. So the motivations and satisfactions for musicians may also be similar for other types of niche bloggers or it may not.

Lessons learned from musician bloggers may hold value for anyone researching bloggers who do and don't write for revenue. Something can be gleaned from this information about motivations and satisfactions; however, many musicians are motivated to write in order to sell tickets, music, content or to grow their fan base. All of this is motivated by generating revenue and making a living. Any research into businesses, large or small, that blog would find this study relevant based on the fact that musicians are businesses. They may be an individual or a band, but they operate a business nonetheless.

Their motivation for starting and continuing to blog may not differ from other business blogs. However, their motivations for starting may differ significantly.

Subject Criteria

Personal blogs. This study will focus on musician bloggers who write about their lives, family lives and personal relationships. The musician (or band) must be the sole author of their blog; thus, there were no ghostwriters such as a publicist. The musician bloggers must also write a minimum of once per week and have updated within the week prior to the interview. The blog must also be public and not private.

Data were collected via email or interviews in May to August 2012.

Qualitative research is a method of inquiry employed in many different academic disciplines, traditionally in the social sciences, but also in market research and other contexts (Denzin 2005). Burns describes qualitative research as "experiencing the experiences of others" and that is the goal of this research study.

This qualitative study will attempt to discern the motivations of musician bloggers by using in-depth interviews with 20 musician bloggers to investigate their motivations and their satisfactions from blogging. The bloggers were solicited by via Google search for blogs by musicians. Participants in the study were selected based upon the following criteria:

- The musician(s) must be the sole author(s) of their blog. A publicist cannot write any portion of the blog. This can only be discerned by asking the musician at the time of requesting the interview.

- The blogger must also write a minimum of once per week and have updated within the week prior to the interview because bloggers who post infrequently lack motivation and are not as interesting as bloggers who are motivated enough to blog more frequently.
- The blog must also have comments turned on and allow for community interaction.
- The blog must also be public and not private. This is important because of the two-way nature of blogging as a communication tool. And according to Li this is one of the main factors for blogging and if the blog is not public and comments are not made available than this motivation would not apply.

The results of this study will allow for a glimpse into the motivations of musician bloggers today. It is not enough to just read blogs in an attempt to discern their motivations. Asking musicians is the best way get insight into why they blog.

Limitations

Limitations of this study are based on finding musician bloggers via Google search. This limits this study in a few ways:

1. Blogs not listed by Google could not be found or studied.
2. Bloggers who did not identify themselves as musicians so that Google would index them with keywords such as “guitarist, pianist” and other similar musician titles would also not be found in Google.

3. Some bloggers may not respond to emails or want to be part of a study based on just being found on Google.
4. Subjects may not longer be blogging
5. Subject may not have contact information on their blog.

Subject Selection

The participants in this study will consist of 20 musician bloggers. The research sample will be a convenience sample to collect data. The researcher will conduct 20 in-depth interviews with musician bloggers who regularly blog. The sample will attempt to identify the major types of musician blogs and the major types of musician bloggers and try to cover as many of the types as possible. Interviewees will be chosen on the basis that they represent different social types and blog types.

The convenience sample will be taken from those who answer the solicitation on via email to musicians who blog.

Theoretical Framework

This study will follow the uses and gratifications approach of media use to explore what motivates musicians to blog and the satisfaction that results from creating and maintaining blogs.

Consent

Approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) was obtained (approval number: 20120312431 EX). The study was standard with all participants were adults. Upon IRB approval (Appendix A) research interviews were conducted.

A consent form (Appendix B) was sent to participants letting him or her know their rights. A total of 20 interviews were conducted by either phone or email. All interviews could be used for the study based on 13 questions that were asked along with occasional exploratory questions depending upon participants' responses.

Procedure

Musicians who blogged were found via found via a Google search for some of the following search queries:

1. musician bloggers
2. guitarist bloggers
3. guitar blogs
4. guitarists who blog
5. pianist bloggers
6. piano blogs
7. flutists who blog
8. studio musician blogs
9. jazz musician blogs

10. jazz musicians who blog
11. violinist bloggers
12. singer bloggers
13. singers who blog
14. bands who blog
15. rock band blogs

Some variations were used based upon Google recommendations at the bottom of search results pages as well. 44 bloggers were emailed to participate in the study. Some responded and others didn't. The study was considered complete when the 20 bloggers were identified and interviewed.

Instrumentation

Interviews for this study were done either via email or phone. The researcher collected data for the research questions through the use of open-ended questions.

Participant Interview Questions

The following questions will be used during the interview with participants. The researcher's questions will attempt to understand musician bloggers' motivations for blogging based upon Li's blog motivation categories. These questions are based on some

of Li's survey questions that relate to this thesis' research question (Li, p.158). The questions are adapted for musician bloggers and the responses will be compared to those of Li's study as well as those from Trammel, Nardi and James.

1. Why do you blog?
2. How long have you been blogging?
3. How often do you blog? Why that often?
4. What do you generally blog about? Why did you choose to blog about that?
5. How personal do you get on your blog? If you do include personal information, why do you do so?
6. Whom do you mainly blog for? Is that the audience of your choice or is that just the audience that you currently have on the site?
7. Do you read comments? Do you respond to comments? If so, how often?
8. Do you have a set of friends, both online and offline, who comment, email you or link to your blog?
9. If relevant: Have you gained any business from blogging? Was that a motivation for blogging? Do you solicit business on your blog? Was the new client(s) something that happened?
10. Do you ever link to other blogs in your posts? Have those links been reciprocated? Have you created relationships from those links?
11. How do you recognize if you have been successful with your blog? Number of readers, comments, trackback or backlinks or something else? How do you track this?

12. How often are you online?

13. Do you use social networks? If so, which and how often?

Li surveyed 288 bloggers and used the survey to answer questions about many mechanical things on the site that the researcher can answer with a content review of those blogs. Examples would be whether or not the site has comments or personal photos.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this thesis study was to understand the motivations and satisfactions derived from musicians who blog. The uses and gratifications theory was the guide for this study. This study used Dan Li's seven motivations for blogging (Li, 2005) as a tool for analyzing the motivations of musician bloggers. Li found seven motivations for blogging: self-documentation, improving writing, self-expression, medium appeal, information, passing time, and socialization. The seven motivations offer a starting point for evaluating the musicians' motivations and desired results achieved from blogging. Li's schema offers a basis for constructing questions for musician bloggers and determining which of these motivations is most important for musician bloggers and whether there are additional motivations not found in Li's study.

This chapter will detail the findings of this thesis study. The research questions were chosen to understand the missing elements of Li's study that did not focus on the business of blogging. Motivations and satisfactions for individuals who blog may or may not be similar therefore it is important to understand any similarities or differences.

Research Question 1

The literature review raised many questions regarding blogs and bloggers. As discussed, musician bloggers are a specific audience that may or may not have many of the same motivations to blog and satisfactions from blogging. The research questions will attempt to understand if those needs are the same or different.

RQ1: What motivates musicians to blog?

The research question could not be asked in such a simple manner—such as asking musician bloggers specifically what motivated them. There were many questions that were necessary in order to get to the root of a musician's motivation for blogger. Why do they blog? How often? Who do they blog for? And finally, did they do it for money?

As expected, answers to all the questions varied, but a majority of respondents leaned towards the desire to promote themselves as musicians or their services as a motivation. Often they didn't recognize this as a motivation they had clearly thought about or recognized as a motivation. It was only after the discussion and asking other questions did it become clear of the answers.

Why do you blog?

Thirteen musicians responded that they wrote for themselves or personal motivation. Seven said they wrote for business. However, six of those who said they wrote for personal reasons also said they blogged to advance their business, too—whether it was song writing, promoting shows or selling music. Those who blogged for personal reasons did mention business. Although, this was a blurred line. Musicians don't always think of what they do as business even though they are in the act of creating a product, their music for example. But they do understand promoting their music or

product and that it ultimately is the way they make a living. So even when they would state that they blogged for personal reasons they were still blogging about their music or some aspect of promotion. Matty K. summed up the sentiment shared by most bloggers who said they blogged for personal reasons: “We blog to share our music.”

Even though Matty K. said that he does it to share his music for free and without attempts at writing marketing copy as a way to sell something, he also acknowledged that they made certain to notify readers of their business. Some of the artists who wrote for personal reasons didn’t state agendas but still promoted themselves nonetheless. They would post information about live shows, publish songs on their blog, etc. But when asked the question about why they blog they stated the primary purpose of the blog was personal and a way to express themselves either as a blogger or as a musician who discusses his or her music or the music of others.

Those who blogged for business knew exactly why they blogged and stated it very specifically. There were no blurred lines. They knew it was for business and that came through every aspect of how blogged. They wrote blogs that were marketing oriented and motivated. Joe G. said: “Blogging is a marketing tool. I do a lot of free training; that is what the website is, lots of free advice and tutorials. Then I sell more advanced training. So there are a lot of free videos on my site and blog. All of this year I have been more focused heavily on promoting my products with each tip I do. The blog is the primary source of how I find people who interact with me and how customers find me so it’s a very important part of my business.”

Here are some quotes of interest:

Jennifer V. said: “I started the blog to gain peoples’ interest in me instead of the music part of me. So it was to build a relationship with people that either did know me already and even more so for people who didn’t know about me.”

Joe G.: said “Blogging is a marketing tool... I do a lot of free training, that is what the website is, lots of free advice and tutorials. Then I sell more advanced training. So there are a lot of free videos on my site and blog... All of this year I have been more focused heavily on promoting my products with each tip I do... the blog is the primary source of how I find people who interact with me and how customers find me so its a very important part of my business.”

Graham C. said: “I blog for a living, but it wasn’t always so.”

Ron Z. said: “I have two blogs. One is a personal blog where I just basically use as a sounding board for my personal rants... I blog for Guitar World because I do believe in educating and enjoy the guitar community this allows me to have a voice with. The other blog I find therapeutic.”

Mark B. said: “As a musician, I also think it’s a great way to personally connect with your fanbase as well as a great way to keep fans informed regarding new release new releases, live shows, etc. And even when you’re not promoting something, it’s just a good way of keeping yourself in front of the people who like what you do on a semi-regular basis.”

Travis W. said: “Blogging has been a great way for me to take what’s spinning around in my head and write it down. In the meantime, my hope is that other home studio owners and fellow drummers will be inspired and learn something along the way as well. My studio blog is also meant to hopefully bring more traffic to my website and in turn, turn those readers into leads and clients.”

David S. said: “We blog because we try to engage our fans... I’ve followed bands that would send an email out to their fanbase once or twice a year, and I honestly forget about them, so that by the time I get their email I have lost my interest. By blogging, we’re staying on people’s radar... Besides that, we truly are interested in our fans, and I think many of them are interested in us. Because of that, our blogs often turn out to be about something that’s not even band related, but it might be about us personally, because we’re trying to cultivate a community.”

Matty K. said: “We blog to share our music; it has in fact become one of our primary tools for releasing and distributing new songs.”

Cheri L. said: “For attention. To let people know, “hey there. We made these songs, and we hope you’ll listen to them and like them. And we’ll be putting up new songs on a regular basis. Come back again!”

Jonathan C. said: “I’m a musician and I blog to keep in touch with fans. This means letting them know what’s going on in my life and career. But I also use it sometimes to spout off about subjects I care about, like intellectual property issues.”

Francis W. said: “Initially, I started blogging about piano music and the study of the piano as a way of crystallizing thoughts I’d had while practicing. For me, it has always been helpful to set thoughts down in writing. By spending some time researching and writing about the music I was studying made my understanding and learning of it much more thorough.”

Erica S. said: “I started blogging because I thought it would be a really good way to flesh out all the ideas that I always have floating around in my head. Putting everything into words for public consumption has been an incredible adventure and has helped me become a better advocate for what I love and has made me feel better equipped to teach and coach others. I also like the interaction it provides with readers from all over the world.”

Judy C. said: “I travel 200 days a year and it’s a great way to share my experiences all over the world with my friends and fans.”

Doron O. said: “I blog so that I have a platform upon which I can build a business around, and eventually be able to generate an income stream which will allow me

to make a full-time living on my various online projects. Music, technology, and writing are my passions, and since being of service to other musicians and dealing with stuff that's really fun to talk about, I plan on achieving the goal of being able to do something I truly love for a living. "

Jeff A. said: "The original idea behind starting my blog was that it would be a way to spread the word about music and arts events that were out of the mainstream, and not getting any coverage in the local press. It since morphed through serving several other purposes. It has been a way to record my thoughts on issues affecting the arts community. It has been a creative outlet during times of limited musical output. It has been a way of interacting with people with similar interests from other parts of the world."

Hank S. said: "I blog to provide myself with an open forum to write about topics that might not fit my other, more "professional" writing outlets, whether because they're especially personal, not particularly timely or just plain esoteric."

Below is a breakdown of the bloggers that said they blogged for personal and/or professional reasons. Twelve of the bloggers, in their opinion, said they blogged either for personal or professional reasons.

Blogger	Personal	Business
Jennifer V.	x	
Joe G.		x
Graham C.	x	x
Ron Z.	x	x
Mark B.	x	x
Travis W.	x	x
David S.	x	x
Matty K.		x
Cheri L.		x
Jonathan C.	x	x
Frances W.	x	
Erica S.	x	
Ron D.	x	x
Roberta P.	x	x
Judy C.	x	
Steve N.		x
Doron O.		x
Jeff A.		x
Kyle G.	x	
Hank S.	x	

What do you generally blog about? Why did you choose to blog about that?

This was the question that had the most wide-ranging answers. The respondents talked about such varied topics as being a musician, personal discussions, offering opinions, and offering advice in hopes of advancing their online business. Each musician had his or her unique reason for blogging and that varied just as much as their styles of music.

Those who stated that they blogged for personal reasons had individual reasons regarding why they blogged. Doron O. said “I try to keep my posts in the vein of ‘how-

to' articles to help saxophonists improve their playing. I also have some interviews and product reviews, but the how-to articles get the best response and by far the most traffic."

Those who tended to blog for business didn't always state that blogged just to make money. For example, Travis W. said, "For my studio blog, I typically am blogging about things that I've personally learned. This may be things that I've learned over the years or have recently learned in my studio. Topics include things like home recording tips, gear reviews, drumming tips and musician resources. The main reason I blog about these topics is because I actually enjoy it."

And then there where those who had no qualms about why they blogged. Steve N. said "I blog to earn a living."

Here are some quotes of interest:

Jennifer V. said: "I picked a topic, so my topic is 365 blogs to finding Pinocchio a home. I started to blog once every couple weeks and now I blog every week or every couple of days depending on what interest is in my head at the moment, but I'm finding the quicker the blog the better."

Joe G. said: "I blog five times a week. Every weekday I post something. When I first started out I posted three times a week and I finally realized that I needed to put out consistent content. The reason I what I noticed when I was doing three times a week I was getting decent traffic but one month I did 31 days to better recordings for the month of October I would post a new tip and it was a lot of work but my traffic went up significantly during that month. I was posting 7 days a week and the next month the traffic stayed up even though i was only doing 3-5

times a week. So then I did another set of 31 days posts six months later and i have evolved in the last year or so to posting five days a week."

Mark B. said: "I usually blog on my personal site when the mood strikes or I have something happening musically – a release, a live show, etc. If I'm at the beginning of an album release cycle I might blog once a week to help generate a buzz for the project. Ideally, I'd love to post more regularly, obviously that helps build a larger audience, but I don't always have the time to do so."

Travis W. said: "I try to at least update my blog several times a week. Lately, I haven't been able to keep up with that goal but would ideally like to have something updated 2-4 times weekly. Eventually, I'd like to get in more of a rhythm of blogging daily."

David S. said: "We try to blog a couple of times a month. We used to blog every week, but each time we blog, our website automatically emails our emailing list, so we've pulled back a bit so that people aren't annoyed by getting too much email.

Erica S. said: "It varies depending on how busy I am. There are some months where I write only a few but others where I'll write between 5 and 10."

Doron O. said: "I put out 1-2 articles per week. I try to put out at least one because any less and I would imagine that my site would start to fall off of people's radar. I could be wrong, but I also believe that my site has more articles/posts on it than any other saxophone site out there. When I sell my educational products and other possible offerings, I will have the advantage of a content rich site, which almost no other company/website owner will bother to create."

Jeff A. said: "Early on I would post 10-20 posts a month. About three years ago I started doctoral work, and that fell to 1-2 posts a month. The amount I write is directly related to the amount of time I have to dedicate to it."

Kyle G. said: "When I started out I decided that in order to make it worth it I should average every other day. I kept that up for seven years. I had a public profile as a critic, and I wanted to continue having an impact. In the last year it's dropped to two or three a month. I've somewhat run out of new things to say, and I'm putting my best material into books."

There are a few things that increase/decrease the amount of times they would blog. First, is just having the time or inclination to blog. The other is that some realized that the more they blogged they more it increased engagement and people coming back to their blog.

Have you gained any business from blogging? Was that a motivation for blogging? Do you solicit business on your blog? Was the new client(s) something that happened?

Sixteen of the twenty musicians said they believe they have gained business from blogging. Two of those said maybe. Four of the musicians who said they didn't believe so were not really sure. It would seem that this is a motivator regardless of the musician's intent for blogging. If most of these musicians say they blog for personal reasons they are still very aware that they have gained business from blogging.

Graham C. said: "yes, my blog has turned into a full-time business. In addition to the free content I post each week I have a handful of in-depth tutorial videos that I sell for a flat fee in my online store. Not everyone who reads my blog buys my products, but it is there available for those who want more of my training. I did not start the blog intending to make it a business, it just happened that way."

Judy C. said: "I don't know because it's so new." Frances W. said: "I have never blogged with the intention of making more or gaining business. Occasionally I have enquiries about piano lessons via the blog."

In between Graham and Judy and Frances is Erica S. who said, "I've always had my rates and information about the services I offer on my blog."

It is interesting to see how some answers for those who said that they blogged strictly for personal reasons answered these questions. Only two of six said no to all the questions. The other said yes that they gained business. It is a possibility the potential for profit has made them more interested in writing more often. This would have been something to investigate further.

Below are some interesting quotes:

Joe G. said: “Yes I do. This is a marketing tool for me for my business. I love recording and its my passion and I love helping people. But it is a business, this is how I make money and how I support my family and help pay my bills and pay my mortgage. For the first six months I didn’t sell anything and then around six months I realized I wanted to create a product and sell it. I did the selling mainly to my email list. When people came to my site i asked them to signup and they would get a free ebook and I would interact with them that way. And selling in an email newsletter is a much better way of selling than selling in a blog. Every article is fairly short, gives a quick tip and tells them to check out my products. But I do also get work from people who want me to sing, play guitar or master their album. I get those fairly regularly as well. I’m not as focused on that so its just the occasional business.”

Graham C. said: “Yes, my blog has turned into a full time business. In addition to the free content I post each week I have a handful of in depth tutorial videos that I sell for a flat fee in my online store. Not everyone who reads my blog buys my products, but it is there available for those who want more of my training. I did not start the blog intending to make it a business, it just happened that way. I do solicit business in that I promote my products occasionally on the blog and in my email newsletters. I make sure everyone is aware that they exist and leave it up to them to buy or not.”

Ron Z. said: “I do not have to solicit on my blog. I have enough work. However, yes, new business has come my way. When you blog for the largest online guitar community your visibility grows tremendously. It is appreciated and not taken lightly. I get request's for session's and lesson's. These are just a few thing's that have happened.”

Mark B. said: “I do believe blogging has lent a slight edge toward increasing my sales as an artist and has helped in gaining some of my production work although I couldn’t give you any hard core metrics supporting that.” and “I do think the business generating side of blogging was definitely a bit of a motivation but certainly not the only one. I see it more as a way to get the message out about my music and connect with folks who like what I do. I also see it as another creative outlet. As for soliciting business directly on the blog, I tend rarely to do so in the context of a post. I might list details to a live show or purchase details regarding a new album release but those posts are pretty few and far between. The posts are generally commerce free. I do, however, keep tasteful links to my musical wears on the sidebar of the blog if people care to click through but that’s about the extent of it.”

Travis W. said: “Yes, blogging has brought readers to my site for the content, then have learned about my services through the blog post and converted to clients and/or leads. I try not to be too ‘spammy’ on my blog with ads and solicitation, but try to make it crystal clear what I do and offer.”

David S. said: “Not really – unless we received an opportunity indirectly. We don’t really ‘solicit’ business more than just asking people to spread the word about our music, or something we’re involved in.”

Matty K. said: “Business for us is people buying music or coming to see shows.”

Cheri L. said: “Currently, our music is free to download from the blog. When we release CDs with those songs on them, we’ll steer fans to iTunes or another digital download service to buy our stuff.”

Jonathan C. said: “Absolutely. My business used to be all about the blog, it's how anyone heard of me or knew what I was doing. These days Twitter has taken over some of those functions, but the rest of my website has my store, press info, show calendars, etc. It's all centered on the blog though.”

Francis W. said: “I have never blogged with the intention of making more or gaining business. Occasionally I have enquiries about piano lessons via the blog.”

Erica S. said: “I’ve always had my rates and information about the services I offer on my blog but up until know I have rarely used it to toot my own horn or to solicit business. I am just now launching my own practice coaching business, however, and I’m hoping to use my blog as a way to get the word out.”

Steve N. said: “Blogging is a business for me. I definitely solicit and do lead generation.”

Doron O. said: “Definitely. I recently put out an info product for sax players, and thanks to the ads on my site; I have made a lot of sales. The blog has also allowed me to get a nice mailing list, and many of the people subscribed to my mailing list purchased my product. Without the blog, I’m not sure how I would ever get my name out there in cyberspace.”

Jeff A. said: “I have formed relationships that have led to gigs from the blog. That wasn’t a primary motivation for starting the blog, but it is a byproduct of which I am aware.”

Ultimately most bloggers expressed their desire to improve their business either directly or implicitly. Further in the conversations, among the many other questions, their interest in growing their reach as a musician, service or product came through.

Blogger	Gained Business	Motivation for blogging	Solicit business	New client?
Jennifer V.	No	No	No	No
Joe G.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Graham C.	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Ron Z.	Yes	No	No	Yes
Mark B.	Yes	Yes	No	No
Travis W.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
David S.	No	No	No	No
Matty K.	Maybe	No	No	Maybe
Cheri L.	Maybe	No	No	Maybe
Jonathan C.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Francis W.	No	No	No	No
Erica S.	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Ron D.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Roberta P.	Maybe	No	No	No
Judy C.	No	Yes	No	No
Steve N.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Doron O.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Jeff A.	Yes	No	No	Yes
Kyle G.	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Hank S.	Yes	no	No	Yes

Research Question 2

RQ2: What satisfactions do musicians receive from blogging?

What may have motivated an individual to blog initially may have shifted over time and transformed into a new or different expected satisfaction. It will be important to understand the satisfactions derived as this motivates the bloggers to continue to blog. It will be important to understand how they describe their experiences.

How personal do you get on your blog? If you do include personal information, why do you do so?

Only four bloggers said they do not talk about themselves or discuss anything personal. Two of those individuals are in bands and not individual musicians, so that could contribute to the reasoning for those individuals not discussing their personal lives.

David S. said: "We don't get too deep into our personal lives, but we do share stories and situations that we go through. We provide our names, because as a band, we want people to know who says what, and because our privacy is pretty much non-existent with what we're trying to do. I see a band as basically the employee of many, many bosses (the fans) – because they pay us to create things that they will appreciate. As such, we'll let them know just about anything up to a certain level."

Matty K. said: "Well, the songs that we post are personal, but in ways that may or may not be obvious to the listener. Sometimes we write about the inspirations for the songs and sometimes we write about the process of writing/recording them, and personal tidbits will naturally flow out of that, but if the question is do we set out to talk about our

day-to-day lives and our innermost feelings, the short answer is: no. We keep it almost entirely about the art, rather than about the artist."

The comments of the following two respondents are representative of how most musician bloggers responded:

Ron Z. said: "I keep a personal distance. Example, I don't let people know exactly where I live or my family history. The internet has enough crazies. I like to keep a certain amount of privacy. However, I do get very personal on my experiences and feelings. I try to not bring family into the blogs. I also never tell where I am going when I do take trips. Another thing I am careful with is my very personal opinions on controversial subjects. It is rare where I mention religion or politics. People are violently passionate about certain topics."

Mark B. said: "I'd say I've gotten fairly personal on the blog, discussing my family, my life and the like. Some posts are serious, some are lighthearted. As for personal information, I try not to get that specific for obvious privacy reasons. I might mention a first name or occasionally include a personal photo but beyond that I try to be discreet."

Whom do you mainly blog for? Is that the audience of your choice or is that just the audience that you currently have on the site?

Sixteen of the twenty musicians said they had an audience in mind when they blogged.

Matty K. said: "We blog for anyone who wants to read and listen. Presumably, that's mostly people who already know us and/or like us and who already know where to

look." Kyle G.'s audience, he believes, was "mostly composers." Judy C. said she blogged mostly for "fans of my music." Francis W. said "My blog is aimed at musicians, music/piano students, pianists, piano teachers and anyone with an interest in classical music."

Many who wrote for business focused on a specific audience. Graham C. typified this when he said, "I primarily blog for musicians who have, or are starting, a home recording studio."

Other musician bloggers said they wrote for their fans while a small group answered either that they blogged for themselves or anyone who wants to read it such as Hank S. who said: "This is a good question, mainly because I'm not exactly sure who I blog for. I guess I write first and foremost for myself; when I speak in this forum, I'm really trying to record the thoughts for myself, as part of an ongoing diary of my listening habits and interactions with music."

Here are some interesting quotes:

Jennifer V. said: "This is a process, I'm still learning as I speak to you. It's an interesting thing blogging. It would be geared towards music supervisors or people that are fans or people that are spiritual because there is a link to all these different things. I want recognition in the TV and film world because I want to place my stuff in that world but also I want musicians to understand the process."

Graham C. said: "I primarily blog for musicians who have (or are starting) a home recording studio. This was by design as I saw a need among my own musician

friends for helpful, relevant training on how to properly record and mix music for the non-technical person."

Ron Z. said: "I blog for a community of guitarists and friends. It is a great opportunity that was handed to me. I am extremely lucky to blog to like minds."

Mark B. said: "I think my audience primarily consists of folks who are fans of what I do musically."

Travis W. said: "I mainly blog for myself. It has become an outlet that I enjoy and helps me organize my thoughts and interests in one place. Aside from that, my hope is that I can inspire other readers and fellow recording enthusiasts in some way. Of course as a drummer, I also blog a lot about drumming! The challenge with that is my main client base are not drummers. That being said, I've been trying to focus my content more on recording and musician resources in general to hopefully pull in some musicians that can convert into clients."

Doron O. said: "Aside from saxophone players in general, I never really had a target audience when I started my blog. It seems as though most of my readers are younger students and middle-aged and older hobbyists."

Jeff A. said: "I blog for whoever reads it. I just put it out there, I don't have much choice or control over who reads it and returns to read it again."

Kyle G. said: “I think mostly composers read my blog, because I talk about things that relate to their professional concerns.”

Hank S. said: “This is a good question, mainly because I'm not exactly sure who I blog for. I guess I write first and foremost for myself; when I speak in this forum, I'm really trying to record the thoughts for myself, as part of an ongoing diary of my listening habits and interactions with music.”

It is interesting to note that Jennifer V. stated she blogged to get recognition in TV and film, but she stated earlier that she blogged for personal reasons, not business reasons. Also, 14 of the bloggers have an audience in mind but that audience found them because of their own personal interest in the material they blog about. Those of like minds tend to find people who blog about topics that they are already interested in and are seeking those topics out on Google.

Blogger	Has audience in mind	Same audience onsite
Jennifer V.	Yes	Unsure
Joe G.	Yes	Yes
Graham C.	Yes	Yes
Ron Z.	Yes	Yes
Mark B.	Yes	Yes
Travis W.	No	No
David S.	Yes	Yes
Matty K.	Yes	Yes
Cheri L.	Yes	No
Jonathan C.	No	No
Frances W.	Yes	Yes
Erica S.	Yes	No
Ron D.	Yes	Unsure
Roberta P.	No	Unsure
Judy C.	Yes	Yes
Steve N.	Yes	Yes
Doron O.	Yes	No
Jeff A.	No	No
Kyle G.	Yes	Yes
Hank S.	No	No

Do you read comments? Do you respond to comments? If so, how often?

Only one writer said he didn't read comments and that was mostly because of a technical issue. However, that same person said that they read comments previously and would again once the issue was fixed. They instead had readers emailing. So, with that exception, 100 percent of the writers wrote for feedback. And all of the musicians said they responded to readers. It appears to be clear that those who wrote enjoyed the feedback they received and enjoyed responding to it.

Joe G. said: “I have varied on this. When I first started out you don’t have a lot of traffic so any one you get you want to respond to. If nothing else it shows you have more comments. If there are five on a blog post and you respond you get more. Then I went through a period where I was really busy and the traffic was higher and i only started responding to the comments that seemed to need an answer. I have come back around full circle and the one on one interactions can have a huge impact so over the last month or so I have responded to every comment, email and messages on Twitter. I want to be able to reach thousands of people and but I want to make sure that those who take the time to reach out to me I want to make sure I return the favor.”

Graham C. said: “I read every comment on my blog and respond to 99% of them.”

Ron Z. said: “I read every comment and respond to all. I think the commenter deserves the right to know he or she is being read also and appreciated. This is how a community grows. And I also respond to my personal emails and those from my website. It's time consuming but absolutely worth it in making new friends and fans. Funny point....most send emails directly to me instead of posting on the site.”

Jonathan C. said: “I read all comments and respond to ones where they want a response, or where I feel it's important to respond to correct an error or offer another point of view. It's hard to keep on top of it though because I'm so busy.”

Francis W.: “Yes I always read comments and I tried to respond to them individually. Commenting on a blog post is like a conversation and I think it is important, as the author, to offer feedback and to continue the conversation.”

Questions regarding other forms of communication would have been a good follow-up, especially regarding email. Many of the musicians got feedback and comments via email. It would be interesting to try to understand this behavior. Is it because they want a more personal relationship with the blogger? A whole study could be done on asking those who email bloggers rather than comment why they decided to do that.

Blogger	Read comments	Responds to comments
Jennifer V.	No	No
Joe G.	Yes	Yes
Graham C.	Yes	Yes
Ron Z.	Yes	Yes
Mark B.	Yes	Yes
Travis W.	Yes	Yes
David S.	Yes	Yes
Matty K.	Yes	Yes
Cheri L.	Yes	Yes
Jonathan C.	Yes	Yes
Frances W.	Yes	Yes
Erica S.	Yes	Yes
Ron D.	Yes	Yes
Roberta P.	Yes	Yes
Judy C.	Yes	Yes
Steve N.	Yes	Yes
Doron O.	Yes	Yes
Jeff A.	Yes	Yes
Kyle G.	Yes	Yes
Hank S.	Yes	Yes

Do you have a set of friends, both online and offline, who comment, email you or link to your blog?

This question was asked with the expectation that those who blog and begin to create friendships online might find satisfaction in these relationships. Only two musicians stated that they did not feel they gained friends online or offline because of their blogs. Surprisingly, these were bloggers who wrote for personal reasons rather than business. It would seem that those who write blogs for personal reasons would gain friends because they are being personal. A business-based blog doesn't seem as personal. It would seem that personal blogs would lend themselves to more openness and

friendliness therefore they would be more inviting for personal relationships. But upon further review those who write for business tend to create networks with those who have like interests, which helps them build their businesses just as networking offline does.

Here are some observations:

Joe G. said: “When I first started I didn’t know who was blogging for home studio enthusiast and started to find them. They found me and I found them and they would link to me and back to them. I have a core group of guys who I talk to and we bounce ideas off each other. They link to me and I link to them and a couple of them area affiliates for me and promote my products. And if the person buys, I split the purchase price with that affiliate. That helps them monetize their website and good for me too.”

Graham C. said: “I have a few fellow musician and studio bloggers who refer to my site a lot, and vice versa.”

Jennifer V. said: “What I have done in the past, since 2000, I’ve had a newsletter going out. So between the blog and newsletter I connect with people. So the newsletter keeps me in their lives.”

Ron Z.: said “There are many now. So yes I do, but there are always new one's. As a matter of fact, I'd say most are from stranger's now.”

Mark B. said: “I think it’s a case of spillover from the music fan base. I find that the most vocal fans of my music are also the ones who seem to participate the most within my online community.”

David S. said: “Yes – my ‘real life’ friends usually don’t comment on the blog itself, but might email me or talk to me about it. I consider our fans our friends, but there’s obviously a difference between someone I see regularly, and someone I might see at a show once a year. I generally don’t give my personal email to fans, but I give out my band email to everyone (which, honestly, I check as much as my personal email).”

Jonathan C. said: “Not really – people do link to me, but I'm not that active in the blogging community. I think of myself less as a blogger and more as a musician with a blog.”

Francis W. said: “Yes – and I have links to their blogs from my site. To me blogging is a community/social activity and it’s important to share information with others and to promote sites and links which interest me and may interest my readers.”

Erica S.: “Yes, definitely. I have also built a community on Facebook centered around my blog and the topics I write about there. Many people who read and comment on my blog also read and comment on that Facebook page.”

Most have found their blogs as a way to connect to others in the community. Regarding links, some said they had links to their site regardless of whether that musician felt they had a relationship with someone or not. And often links were shared between the two writers and were reciprocal. Part of the issue was that many of the musician bloggers were not exceedingly technical so they either were unaware of links or unaware on how to track links to their site.

If relevant: Have you gained any business from blogging? Was that a motivation for blogging? Do you solicit business on your blog? Was the new client(s) something that happened?

This appears in both the research question regarding motivation as well as here under satisfactions. Mostly because those who sought to earn revenue were motivated by that factor. However, those who either is continuing to earn revenue or have seen business come from their blog would be satisfying some need.

A satisfaction could come from the sixteen of the twenty musicians said they believe they have gained business from writing. Two of those said maybe. Four of the musicians who said they didn't believe so weren't really sure. Therefore, at least 16 out of the 20 bloggers believed the blog was helping them as a musician. This certainly offers motivation and a sense of satisfaction.

Do you ever link to other blogs in your posts? Have those links been reciprocated? Have you created relationships from those links?

Only three bloggers said they didn't link to other blogs. One of those said they linked to other websites, but not blogs. All but one musician said that by sharing links they got from other musicians by linking back to that musicians site. This allowed them to show their relationships with other musicians/bloggers:

> Jennifer V. said: "Yes. A lot of the blog has to do with sharing with others so I definitely do. Anything I talk about I will link to blogs and organizations."
>
> Joe G. said: "I link when it's relevant. I don't just link to someone hoping they will link to me. I think that is shallow. If I have good material people will link to me and if what they have I'll link to them. I don't really link to someone just because they link to me."
>
> Graham C. said: "Yes, I link to other posts frequently. I learn from many people and I like the blog format that allows us to post and link back to other sites who then might just reciprocate. I've had some good success with this."
>
> Ron Z. said: "I do. And have been reciprocated. Relationships are always forming. Some business, some personal."
>
> Mark B. said: "I do link to other sites and blogs within posts when applicable. Usually the other site owners will reciprocate and I have created some friendships

via those interactions. For example, back when my last album was released, I collaborated with a few different music blogs who were supporters of my music. One asked if I had any unreleased tracks I'd be willing to share with their readers so I put together an odds and sods digital EP for that blog's readers to download for free. The music blog hosted the download and wrote up a nice piece about the EP and I wrote up liner notes that discussed the background of each track in detail, which I hosted on my blog. So there's certainly a lot of potential for cross pollination in the blog world if you want to get into that sort of thing."

Travis W. said: "Yes, I am constantly thinking of ways to help other blogs out and link back to those that have inspired me along the way. It's a really great community and most writers and blogs with link back to you. There's a camaraderie in the social sharing world that's important to not forget."

David S. said: "We haven't linked to other blogs unless it pertains to what we're blogging about. We're less bloggers than we are musicians, so we're really not trying to build blogging cred. I'm a web developer, so I know the SEO benefits of creating reciprocal links, but we would rather always be genuine and organic rather than focused on cross promoting. Though I'm sure we've missed out on relationships with that mindset."

Matty K. said: "We link to other music and musicians whenever they come up in our blog posts, but we don't automatically link to other blogs. We link to

wherever makes sense for what we're blogging about. We don't have a blog roll (we have no objection at all to blog rolls; we just don't have one)."

Erica S. said: "I sometimes link to other blogs and yes, often those blogs are written by friends of mine on twitter. We actually have quite a community going and we tend to support each other by passing on each other's posts, commenting, and mentioning them in our own posts now and then. There was even one time where a handful of us wrote about the same topic and shared links to each other's posts. It was kind of like a communal blog post."

Doron O. said: "I have linked to other sites in my posts, and I even did an interview with the owner of a sax site in Germany. Those links have been reciprocated, and I've made some good relationships. I love meeting other website owners and believe that we should all lift each other up, so that we can create a more powerful and attractive online universe for sax players."

Blogger	Links to other blogs	Gets links back to their blog	Built relationship
Jennifer V.	Links to others	Unknown	Unknown
Joe G.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Graham C.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ron Z.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mark B.	Yes	Yers	Yes
Travis W.	Yes	Yes	Yes
David S.	No	No	No
Matty K.	Yes	No	No
Cheri L.	No	No	No
Jonathan C.	Yes	No	No
Frances W.	Yes	Yes	Unknown
Erica S.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ron D.	Yes	Yes	No
Roberta P.	No	Unknown	No
Judy C.	No	No	No
Steve N.	No	Yes	No
Doron O.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Jeff A.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Kyle G.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hank S.	Yes	Yes	Yes

How do you recognize if you have been successful with your blog? Number of readers, comments, trackback or backlinks or something else? How do you track this?

Not all musicians who said they wrote to gain business actually have defined a way to track their successes. Only four out of the twelve writers who said that they wrote for business reasons had goals that generally revolved around revenue. The interviewees did not give specific financial numbers. None of the writers who wrote only for personal reasons had goals in mind. A business goals is more clear-cut than personal: revenue earned and ad revenue for example.

Some quotes of interest:

Jennifer V. said: “I guess when I get an email or a few then that is how you have to gauge.”

Joe G. said: “My success is about income. I don’t worry about bounce rates, click-through, open rates for emails and all those stats people like to measure. They are good but they aren’t an indicator of success. I can have the best track record in the world and have a lot of people but if I’m not selling something then it doesn’t matter what the metrics say. If my income is up then I’m doing something right if its down then I’m not doing something right.”

Graham C. said: “I track number of visitors to my site, daily, weekly, monthly, number of subscribers to my newsletter, and of course product sales. I use a site called StatCounter to track people coming to my site. I track comments on posts to see which posts strike a chord with readers. If there are a lot of people discussing the content of a certain post it gives me a clue to what type of material is resonating with my readers. The same is true when no one comments on my posts.”

Ron Z. said: “I also receive new friend request's and of course the email questions. So I do have a barometer of how well a blog has been received. It has generally grown from blog to blog so I do know there are readers. Also my website has a tracking function.”

Mark B. said: "I'm not too crazy about the metrics. I generally take a peak at my Feedburner and Google Analytics stats from time to time but that's about it. I see the blog really as just one piece of the overall puzzle for me as a modern musician/producer. If things are going well for me on those main fronts then I kind of assume that success has to be due to all the things I'm doing, blogs included."

Travis W. said: "Other than just using Google Analytics, I really don't track it much other than the amount of twitter shares, comments, etc."

David S. said: "I used to focus intently on the number of comments, but now we honestly don't try to measure the "success" of the blog, as it's really a by-product of making music."

Matty K. said: "Since all of our posts include songs, our main measure of success is song plays, which we track via Soundcloud. Comments are a positive indicator, too, but track plays are paramount for us."

Cheri L. said: "We end up tracking plays on Soundcloud or Jango. There's no way of telling whether those plays originated from the blog, however."

Jonathan C. said: “I don't really track blog stats as much as I used to, it's become a less important part of the whole picture. I just assume people who want to read it do.”

Erica S. said: “For me it’s the number of comments and the basic statistics of how many people visit the blog. It’s always nice when you find out someone has linked to your blog too. I try not to think too much about the whole “success” thing – when I do I’m tempted to start writing to improve statistics and that rarely works out well, mostly for me personally. I prefer to stay true to myself.”

Doron O. said: “I use Google Analytics. I also pay attention to the number of comments and Facebook “Likes.” The number of subscribers to the newsletter is a big hint, and then the number of emails I receive from people asking me for help, or thanking me for my work on the blog.”

Jeff A. said: “I don’t give much thought to the “success” of my blog. I don’t really try to track it.”

Not many bloggers have a clearly defined goal. Some track but only passively. It would be interesting to know if the issue was a technical one, such as their lack of knowledge of analytics or whether they simply don’t care about data. Also, they seem to see other things are better indicators of success such as social media mentions and commenting.

Blogger	Clearly definied Goal	Use software to track
Jennifer V.	No	No
Joe G.	Yes	Google Analytics
Graham C.	Yes	StatCounter
Ron Z.	No	Yes
Mark B.	No	Yes - occasionally
Travis W.	No	Google Analytics
David S.	No	No
Matty K.	Yes	Yes
Cheri L.	No	No
Jonathan C.	No	No
Frances W.	No	Yes
Erica S.	No	No
Ron D.	No	Yes
Roberta P.	No	No
Judy C.	No	No
Steve N.	Yes	Google Analytics
Doron O.	Yes	No
Jeff A.	No	No
Kyle G.	No	Yes
Hank S.	No	Yes

Emerging Themes

Theme One: A major theme that emerged was that even when a musician blogger stated that they blogged for personal reason their stated reason for blogging would often show later to be more about the business of blogging. Business was not stated explicitly; however, they would discuss that they could promote their new music, get fans or even potentially grow their business through their blog.

When asked whether they gained business from their blogging it often emerged that sixteen of the twenty musicians believed they gained business from blogging. Those individuals knew they gained business, but the other four were not sure--it was not a

definitive yes or no. The question regarding whether they gained business really crystallized the business/personal aspect of blogging--particularly because most of the bloggers expressed their desire to increase their business as a musician--even when stating they blogged for personal reasons.

Jennifer V. is probably the best example of someone who stated his or her intent one way but often during the interview showed that business was important. Jennifer V. stated that she had not gained business, that it was not a motivation, that the blog didn't solicit business; however she stated during the interview that one of her main objectives was to make headway as a musician writing music for television and movies and hoped that someone in those industries might come across her blog. Jennifer V., even though stating her intention to the contrary, was writing with the hopes that someone from those industries would stumble upon her blog and book her for work.

Although not every musician's intentions follow this exact path, there are enough similarities in motivation from musician to musician. The rare musician such as Francis W. seemed to go against the norm; however, she was the least tech savvy of the entire group and was mostly unaware of how to take advantage of blogging to help her business. She had a general sense that it could help but was unaware of how to make that jump into using it as a promotional tool. This certainly could have affected the way in which she viewed blogging.

On the other side of the spectrum was Steve N. who understood marketing online and that he could use his blog to be found on Google just by writing about things people were searching for. Steve took the approach of manipulating search for his benefits and to grow his business.

Theme Two: Li found that individuals were motivated often in what might appear to be self-interest. What emerged from the interviews was that 14 of the bloggers stated they wrote in part for self-interest/personal reasons. But as the interview progressed through discussions about gaining business, who they thought were reading their blog and how they determined whether they were successful, it became obvious that business was at the forefront of their satisfactions for blogging. Many either held onto the hope of gaining business from their blog or were seeing actual financial success from selling products.

When someone would state that they received inquires about lessons or performing, it became obvious that there was a satisfaction derived from this. Motivations start from creating a blog, but it is the satisfactions that force them to continue writing and updating their blog. What satisfied all of the bloggers, except Francis, who wasn't sure how to calculate some level of engagement from her blog, was the direct knowledge of gaining business from blogging or the expectation that it would happen. Just as a musician takes a risk trying to become a well-known musician, some were taking the risk that their blog would be the catalyst for this hope or dream. Blogging now took form as a new media form of pamphlet and touring over and over again hoping to gain a reputation and audience. Blogging became another marketing and promotional tool for their ultimate goal of becoming a successful musician. One who is well known within their particular industry and at the end of the day would make them successful regardless of the way they deemed success.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

Much of what Li (2005) observed has been used in the evaluation of the uses and gratifications theory. Some of Li's observations hold up, while others appear to only hold true for people who blog for personal reasons without any other motivation in mind—whether their ultimate goal is to make money from their blog or not. Musicians may say they were not motivated to blog for the sake of gaining business but once this was this investigated further it became apparent that many musicians were blogging for business without recognizing the reason as a motivation. They were hoping to promote themselves and their music even if it wasn't tied directly to immediate financial rewards.

Going through Li's motivations we can find items that relate directly and others that don't appear to be motivations for a niche group like musician bloggers.

Li found that self-documentation was a motivator because bloggers like to present themselves online and get feedback from readers. Five musicians fit into this motivation. While some musicians appear to be interested in documenting for the sake of feedback, others document for the sake of business and promotion. A few musicians documented because they wanted readers to listen to their music or watch a video, but one could argue these all are business motivations.

Often these musicians were posting new songs for readers to hear and as a result received feedback. Sometimes the musicians would ask for feedback other times they implied they wanted feedback without being direct in their request. Those who teach online tended to work in a more traditional business manner where they offer paid lessons

and tutorials on their blog, but because of the medium, there is the ability for readers to provide feedback or asking questions. That does not mean the musician was soliciting it.

Another of Li's motivations was to improve writing skills to help with self-presentation and readership expectation. This study did not find a single musician blogger that cared about their writing skills or even mentioned it enough to even believe it was a motivator for any of the musicians. These musicians wrote to capture information, train or promote themselves. Writing was nothing but a vehicle for delivering their message.

Li also found self-expression predicts self-presentation, readership expectation, and design elements use. Self-expression did appear to be a motivator for half of the musician bloggers. It was not a motivator for those who were blogging to strictly make money. Most of the bloggers who weren't seeking immediate financial rewards were driven by the desire to express themselves as musicians. Even if they were promoting a song it could be argued that this was a way of self-expressions even if it came in the form of an audio file or video. However, not every musician who blogged for personal reason was motivated by self-expression. Some were just blogging to get information out about their music even if making money from it wasn't their intention.

Li also found that medium appeal motivation predicts self-presentation. The medium is an easy and cheap way for a musician to promoting themselves. A musician who wanted to promote himself or herself as a music teacher in the past would be relegated to classifieds in magazines or other avenues. Bands who wanted to promote their shows had to put up posters and hand out leaflets. This style of promotion was far more physically demanding, time consuming and costly in nature—it is was not nearly as effective or efficient as blogging. This has certainly cut into profits of such old media

businesses as newspapers, magazines, printers and audio companies. A potential study could be on the shift of advertisers from publications to online where they can deal directly with the consumer. Medium appeal, the simple ability for a blogger to get online without much intervention, was certainly an appeal for musician bloggers. It was an obvious motivator for all twenty bloggers.

Li also found that information motivation predicts feedback management, use of hyperlinks, self-presentation, readership expectation, and design elements. Li expressed this in many ways. The part of this regarding the building of community and sharing among similar bloggers doesn't seem to be a major motivator for musician bloggers. Half said they made friends, but it wasn't something that they sought. Making friends appeared to be a byproduct. The other half of the bloggers didn't really care about making friends online with other bloggers. In fact, some musicians who are in the business of selling lessons or other products actually sought to outperform those who offer similar products or services. They are motivated to beat their competitors to the top of search for terms that drive users to their blogs. Also, most musicians use social media, particularly Twitter and Facebook, as the vehicle for communicating and creating connections with other musicians.

Li found that the passing-time motivation, which predicts self-presentation, design elements, and readership expectation. This never appeared to be a motivator for any of the musicians who blog. In fact, a lack of time often reduced the amount of their blogging. Musicians are busy, especially those who are fulltime musicians. Some were quoted as saying they should be blogging more and that time slipped by and they weren't as dedicated as they once were because of how busy they were. Boredom was not a

factor, if anything this proves that these bloggers were blogging because they recognized how important it was to their business, career or hobby. It was a way to promote either directly or indirectly otherwise they would abandon their blog were it not successful in this motivation.

Li's final finding was that socialization motivation predicts use of hyperlinks, self-presentation, and readership expectation. 14 of the bloggers linked to others. This appears to be the best indicator of some socialization. The caveat is that only 10 of those 14 believe they created relationships with others.

Dan Li's seven motivations for blogging	self-documentation	improving writing	self-expression	medium appeal
Jennifer V.	x		x	x
Joe G.				x
Graham C.				x
Ron Z.			x	x
Mark B.				x
Travis W.				x
David S.			x	x
Matty K.			x	x
Cheri L.			x	x
Jonathan C.				x
Francis W	x		x	x
Erica S.	x		x	x
Ron D.			x	x
Roberta P.				x
Judy C.				x
Steve N.				x
Doron O.				x
Jeff A.			x	x
Kyle G.	x			x
Hank S.	x		x	x

Ultimately the goal of this thesis was to determine the motivations and satisfactions derived from blogging by musicians. Below are some final thoughts and questions that still need to be answered to understand whether or not bloggers are different based upon their blogging niche.

So, what was the motivation of musicians to blog? Ultimately most bloggers expressed their desire to improve their business whether they said it directly or not. As the discussion progressed it was clear that promoting themselves as musicians was the primary purpose for blogging. Some times a musician was simply telling readers they had a new song out, were on tour or were literally selling a product or service.

What satisfactions did musicians receive from blogging? It was not clear from all musicians what motivated them to start blogging versus what keep them motivated enough to continue blogging and added to their continued satisfaction. Some of the bloggers discussed why they started to blog, but it didn't seem clear whether those who started it in an altruistic way understood that they were deriving satisfactions from more people coming to their shows, buying their music or services or listening to their music.

It is not clear whether those musicians understood their own needs and gratifications. There were certainly those musicians who spoke about blogging as a true financial play—where they earned money by promoting themselves online directly through purchases of products or services. Some musicians said they wanted to express themselves; however, they soon realized that by blogging they were gaining more attention to themselves, their music and profession.

Finally, this study sought to focus on the understanding of musicians' motivation for writing about their own lives rather than following the traditional model of journalists

writing about musicians. Certainly some of the musicians discussed their lives, but most sought to discuss them through the lens of their profession. They did have lives and families but all of that came secondary to their primary motivation: being a professional musician.

One thing is clear: professional musicians in this study used blogging as a way to continue to grow their business, whether they recognized that as a motivation or not. When they expressed joy about new fans, new customers or new listeners it was clear this continued to motivate them and give satisfaction. What isn't clear is what happened to those who have stopped. This study found so many bloggers who discontinued their blog that at some point it appeared that may have been as interesting a study as this one. In fact, the numbers of musicians who stopped blogging appear to outnumber those who were still blogging.

It seems that it is easy to get motivations and satisfactions from those who are successful bloggers, but it would be just as interesting to know why those musicians who started blogs gave up on their blogs.

Certainly the list of reasons could be vast: don't understand blogging, technology issues, no more ideas on what to blog about, don't fully understand marketing, moved to social media, ran out of time, were bored, etc. But it's hard to know if they had ideas of building an online business and that failed to materialize so they quit. This might help in discovering what motivates many musicians to start blogs in the first place.

As the use of the Internet continues to evolve it appears that the uses and gratifications theory will either have to evolve or another theory may be necessary to understand the many interactions and motivations that are derived from blogging and

online interactions. Uses and gratifications theory sought to explain the use of media. The Internet has evolved beyond a simple type of medium. The internet is unlike traditional media, television and radio, that is a one way communication that only required the user to make a selection of what programming to be engaged with.

It is obvious that the Internet has become far more interactive with content often created in part by its users. Television is the opposite; it is completely passive. The Internet is a push and pull medium whereas television is a push media. Blumler and Katz believed that media consumers chose the type of media they consumed and allowed to influence them. But the Internet has grown in many ways; it is no longer accessed simply for media. Blogs, too, have evolved and have gone from a strictly digest of text to vast image galleries, video, audio, social discussions, tutorials, and more. Media as defined by uses and gratifications theory may need to be redefined.

Li's list of motivations isn't enough. Nowhere does Li discuss entrepreneurship, specifically those who blog to make money, nor does his study focus on the social media aspects (mostly because of the study's date). My study found that musician bloggers were motivated by the potential for growing their business. Even that motivation is not specific enough. There were individuals who blogged specifically to sell products or services and those who were motivated specifically for trying to expand their reach.

Musician bloggers didn't want to become better writers or specifically interested in learning how to express themselves better. Perhaps that is because musicians used music as their way to express themselves. Many of the musicians appeared to write more for self-interest than any other factor. The blog was a means to market themselves as musicians. Li's motivations may be relevant for those who are writing personal blogs, but

they are not relevant for musicians who blog. Many write for notoriety and to grow their business.

Finally, the type of music or genre did not effect the motivations or satisfactions derived from the musicians. Across the board, regardless of niche, the musician's motivations were generally the same. There were individuals who were in rock bands, session guitarists, concert musicians and studio musicians. Aside from those who ran active studios, which created a secondary business opportunity for these musicians, their motivations were not vastly different. The only general difference was in how they answered the question of why they blogged. Those who were more likely to be performers, meaning they performed for an audience rather than being behind the scenes, often said they blogged for personal reasons. Why? It would seem that they see their blogs as possibly having minimal impact on their shows as there are other forms of marketing and promotions. Those who work behind the scenes recognized that their blogs were their primary form of marketing and promotions. However, as the interviews went on it was obvious that even those performers started to discuss how their blogs would bring people to them who may want to learn to perform or to hire them to perform. Although these musicians initially saw blogging as their personal outlet they all recognized later in the interview that blogging was a tool for marketing and promotion and they continued to blog to satisfy their desire to become better known and to frankly continue to be a touring musician or to earn a living as a musician.

New Theoretical Framework

Li's thesis came at a time before social media emerged as a dominant force in communication online. Facebook has emerged as the largest destination for communication online pushing blogging back as the once favored platform. The reality is that many of the motivations and satisfactions that Li found amongst bloggers may be split between blogs and social media. For example, a blogger who once wrote to gain friends or to converse with friends can now use Facebook or Twitter. That same blogger may no longer feel a need to post their daily status and/or photos on a blog because they can do it on their Facebook page and reach all of their relevant friends. Facebook has created a push style of communication where the user is pushing their communication to their friends rather than a pull style of communication where their friends have to come to them to find out their information. This certainly simplifies the process and creates a more efficient form of communication.

So, how does this change affect Li's motivators?

- Self-documentation can come through many platforms such as blogging and social media.
- Improving writing does not appear to be much of a motivator for an individual who is writing for the sake or marketing or promotions.
- Self-expression can be done across many platforms, such as social media—and far more efficiently.
- Medium appeal is no longer the standard for blogging. It is easier to tweet on Twitter or post your status on Facebook. Not to mention that the use of mobile devices makes this even easier by not requiring the user to be near a computer.

- Information feedback is far slower on blogs. You have to wait for someone to find your post in order to comment or link to it. On Facebook and Twitter it can be instantaneous.
- Passing time was the opposite for those who write as a form of marketing and promotions. They are writing to be efficient in their promotions, not to waste time.

Social media such as Facebook and Twitter have become disrupters of the blog as a medium of communication for personal information and digests. How many people have given up on their blogs for social media is unknown, however it is obvious by the statistics and usage of blogs verse Facebook alone how disruptive it has become. But how that has detracted from the amount of usage of individual blogs is unknown at this time.

Facebook and Twitter are being used by musician bloggers but the ability to do certain things such as instruct a reader on how to learn jazz riffs on a piano or how to break into the music industry are far more restricted because of the limited ability to write on those platforms. Blogs are still extremely efficient and all for an endless array of options for promoting themselves. The musician blogger has areas to advertise their products with in the blog design and no limitations on length. For these bloggers social media is a way to promote their blog. Also, to be found in search, musician bloggers utilize a headline that might be searched which is lost within the Twitter and Facebook ecosystems.

It appears that individuals who blog for themselves as professionals utilize blogs in a far different way than individuals. And even though they may feel that blogging is

done for personal reasons ultimately it is to grow their business. Even if the writer may discuss personal things on their blog it is to humanize themselves but ultimately still with the goal of growing their business. The degree for which they balance direct promotion with personal promotion would need a quantitative study across many different niches of business bloggers.

This thesis theorizes that an individual who blogs does not do it solely for personal growth and friendship. The true motivation and satisfaction comes from the following potential developments that may occur as an effect of blogging:

1. Notoriety. Bloggers want to be viewed as a expert in the field they discuss on their blog
2. Financial rewards, either from a service provided or from selling a product
3. Personal discussion is used to humanize their blog not specifically to try to make friends. The goal is not to write like an inanimate object such as a business but to show you are a human who a reader can relate to
4. Social media is used as a tool to promote themselves and their blogs. It is one tool in their promotional toolkit
5. Commenting is not used as a simple way to make friends, but as an opportunity to deliver customer service and to further expand on their level of expertise by engaging their audience as the expert. Users come to their blog and comment, which can sometimes be in the form of a question they hope the author will answer, and the blogger gets another chance to show their expertise.

Further Studies

This study raised many questions and potential future study ideas. Social media has grown massively; it would be interesting to understand how bloggers have shifted some, or, in some cases, all of their efforts towards social media. One blogger mentioned that he might stop blogging entirely in order to focus solely on social media.

Also, how has social media affected blogging either by driving traffic to individual blogs or increasing their interactivity. Another driver is mobile and how much they will affect the usage of any of these tools. Social media is easy, if not easier, to access on a mobile device than writing a full blog.

Another potentially interesting study would be to find out why so many people abandon blogs or websites. This study could affect the understanding of what part of the web is essentially dead and what portion is updated and kept alive. A study could focus on the motivation of users who start and then stop writing blogs. Also, why do some bloggers leave their websites up even though they are no longer updating them?

Also, why do people stop blogging? Why do bloggers not completely kill their blogs and just keep them alive when they are no longer writing or doing anything with them. This would be an interesting counter-study to this current study. I have found individuals who continue to blog, thus they found some sort of motivation and satisfaction to continue bloggin. But what about those who at some point decided to stop blogging? What was their motivation to start and motivation to stop? What satisfactions were envisioned then not met and then no longer maintained?

Musicians are not the only type of bloggers who generate revenue from blogs. There are many different types of bloggers who make money online from selling

products, services to just running ads on their blogs. There are many potential impacts that could be studied that would certainly impact motivation but also the vast markets that exist online. An interesting study would be about the business of blogging and those bloggers who make a living from blogging by promoting their products, services, etc. The study could attempt to understand what it takes to be successful and have some metrics around those successes.

Finally, a new set of motivations may have to be created for those who blog as professionals and want to become well known in their industry or within a specific niche. Blogging is one way to show one's level of expertise within a certain field and understanding the motivation whether it is to gain business, caché or some other reason would be valuable.

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