

**Exploring blogs as a collaborative tool for
advancing nursing informaticians'
professional development**

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Exploring blogs as a collaborative tool

Collaborating on various blogs, podcasts and other projects

www.hi-blogs.info



NI2006 blog and podcast:

www.difference-engine.net/ni2006blog

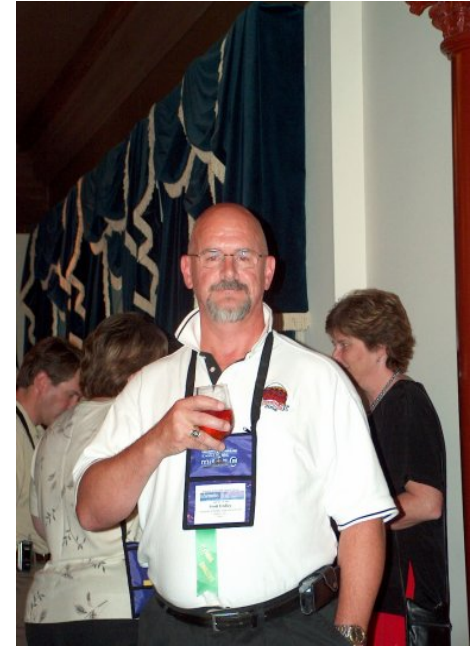
ni2006.blogspot.com

Exploring blogs as a collaborative tool

... and not forgetting other
co-conspirators ...



Scott Erdley



Bill Perry



Margaret Maag



Content

1. Blogs – some basics
2. Use of blogs for virtual conference participation
- theory and practice
3. Some lessons learned



Blogs – some basics

A blog (or weblog) is a website in which messages are posted and displayed with the newest at the top ... blogs often focus on a particular subject ... Some blogs function as online diaries.

A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, web pages, and other media related to its topic.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blog>



Blogs – structure (1/4)

A blog is usually edited, organised and published using a Content Management System (CMS) ... many of are built with Linux/Apache/MySQL/PHP (LAMP) architecture.

Blogger (www.blogger.com) - owned by Google

WordPress (www.wordpress.com) - FLOSS

Serendipity (s9y.org) - FLOSS



Blogs – structure (2/4)

A blog entry typically consists of:

- ⊕ Title - main title, or headline, of the post.
- ⊕ Body - main content of the post.
- ⊕ Comments - comments added by readers
- ⊕ Permalink - the URL of the full, individual article.
- ⊕ Post Date - date and time the post was published.



Blogs – structure (3/4)

A blog entry optionally includes the following:

- ⊕ Categories (or tags) - subjects that the entry discusses
- ⊕ Trackback - links to other sites that refer to the entry

A blog site typically contains a list of links, or blogroll, of other blogs that the blog author reads or affiliates with.



Blogs – structure (4/4)

And then it gets interesting ;-))

Other embellishments we have used:

- ⌘ automatic podcasts with text-to-speech software
eg Talkr, feed2podcast
- ⌘ RSS feeds – Feedburner, etc.
- ⌘ tags –Technorati, etc



Blogs – what you need to try it yourself

A (free) account with a blog provider

- eg blogger.com – easy steps, few skills needed
- or wordpress.com – a little more skill useful

Or paid hosting provider – do they offer more?

Set up your own using FLOSS applications (or get a friend to help setup) using Fantastico control panel or install yourself



Blogs for virtual conference participation

What we hoped for:

- ⌘ lots of people wanting to post items
- ⌘ lots of comments
- ⌘ lots of readers
- ⌘ demonstration of the collaborative model working.



Blogs for virtual conference participation

Some examples:

- ⊕ medinfo2004
- ⊕ SINI2005
- ⊕ MIE2005
- ⊕ HC2006
- ⊕ EFMI STC2006
- ⊕ NI2006
- ⊕ Rutgers2006



Blogs for virtual conference participation

What we found:

- ⊕ many promised but few delivered
- ⊕ the principal providers were the main bloggers
- ⊕ levels of use were lower than hoped
- ⊕ reminders to people help in readership levels
- ⊕ interaction is lower than hoped for



Blogs, interaction and participation – some theory

Rheingold H. Smart mobs: the next social revolution.

Siemens G. Connectivism: a learning theory for the digital age. <http://www.elearnspace.org/Articles/connectivism.htm>

'The wisdom of crowds'



Conference blogs

www.differance-engine.net/ni2006blog

www.differance-engine.net/SINI2006blog

Watch for the [medinfo2007](#) blog



Further information and contact

(and any updated version of presentation)

www.hi-blogs.info

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Blogging health informatics events