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Intelligent Marketing. Profitable Results.

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**Intelligent Marketing**

## **Blogging: Is it right for your business?**

We've all heard the term by now. There are over 26.7 million blogs on the internet as logged by technorati.com. Lately we're often asked should I do it? Is there a return on the investment of time and money?

The first question to answer is – Does the target market you want to influence read blogs? If the answer is yes, then read on. If you're not sure, find out. You don't want to waste time and money.

A blog is a short way to say, "Web log." It's an online diary on a web site, updated on a regular basis with links to other blogs and websites. Readers can post feedback on what they read and bloggers tend to post whatever they want (good or bad). In the not to recent past, when blogs were new, they were mostly personal diaries; where I went this weekend, photos of me and my friends, etc. but over the last couple of years businesses have been increasing their presence.

From a public relations view, blogging is our worst nightmare and best friend. It can help and hurt a company. Once someone posts a blog, it's available forever. Remember Intel's quandary with their chip or Master Lock with being able to open it up with a pen. Just take a look at all the negative feedback Exxon/Mobil is getting from their record-breaking profit. On the other hand, blogs have diffused some of the power that reporters and publishers have. It has created a new generation of influencers that exist only in the blogosphere.

There are five basic objectives to blogging that we consider a litmus test to see if it's right for you. When reviewing them, remember that blogging is not the answer, just another piece of the marketing puzzle to help a business grow.

- Introduce an idea
- Improve your search engine rankings
- Position yourself as an expert or thought leader
- Influence public opinion
- Engage in your customers

If you strongly desire any one of the above objectives, starting a blog might be part of the answer. Keep in mind that blogging is a commitment like any other marketing tool and must be carefully considered before you start. It must be consistent with the business objectives and your company must be willing to be transparent. It would not look good for a blogger in a company to start a blog only to have it shut down by management because of the content.

Questions? Comments? We'd love to hear from you.