The Digital Water Cooler:

The Use of Weblogs in Corporate Communication

Prepared for: **Dr. Michael Hughes**

Prepared by: **Brian Cox**

July 21, 2008

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Introduction

As technology changes technical communications, new methods are constantly being developed to improve relationships and communications between employees or members of an organization. Electronic mail, or email, is one format that has been widely adopted as an easy-to-use and effective tool for communications. But, a more recent format that is being developed is the weblog or blog. This report looks at the results of a study to determine user preferences between email and blogs. The study attempts to find out if corporate employees would prefer the more recent tool, weblogs, to communicate with other employees.

Riding the Information Superhighway

Technological advances have always changed the way businesses communicate with the public. The advent of print, radio and television has altered the way that companies advertise their products, promote themselves, and handle their public relations (Ihator, 2004). The Internet has also drastically changed public relations and corporate communications. In the past, corporations could control what information was given to the public and the media acted as gatekeepers of information (Argenti, 2005). Today, the Internet has made that impossible.

The rapidly changing nature of the Internet and the access to information that it gives the public has corporate communicators constantly looking for more effective ways to distribute information. Where companies in the past could simply release reports to the press and send directives to employees, the new Internet-savvy employees, stock holders, and consumers demand accurate and timely information and if it is not given to them, they have the tools to gain this information for themselves (Argenti, 2005).

An Internet empowered public presents several new challenges to the corporate communicator. Internet rumors and damaging information can spread throughout the globe in the blink of an eye and companies have to be ready to respond. They have to be able to promote new products and connect to consumers in a way they have not in the past (Ihator, 2001).

However, today's corporations have adapted and are continuing to adapt to the rapidly changing flow of information. They are now using websites, email and sometimes

weblogs to communicate with the public. This allows them to respond to consumer issues, rumors and public image problems in a quick and responsive manner. It also allows customers more input into their products and services. What was once a one-way street is now a four-lane highway going in both directions (Bottazzo, 2005).

The New Water Cooler

The Internet has also had an effect on internal communications in corporations. In the past, employees developed relationships in the office and could feel a part of a team. They received information and announcements from management and could discuss them with coworkers. One place in the office often used as metaphor to describe this employee interaction was the water cooler. This was seen as a place where coworkers could connect and discuss personal and professional issues during their breaks (Ihator, 2001). This now is no longer possible.

Globalization has spread locations of corporate offices around the planet and people who work for the same company may be located on several different continents. Corporations are looking for a way to promote similar "values, culture and vision" (Argenti, 2005, p. 13) for their companies to these scattered employees.

Today's global employees are also as Internet-savvy as the general public. If an employee wants to find out information, he or she no longer has to wait for their superiors to pass down that information to them. The old top-down chain of command is no longer viable (Argenti, 2005). This leaves corporate communicators looking for new ways to build teams, train employees, and control information. They are attempting to recreate the old water cooler in a digital age.

Since the advent of the Internet and the global growth of corporations, technical communicators have used many tools to improve internal communications. Email, message boards, video conferencing and instant messaging (Argenti, 2005) are used to inform, train and create "enhanced shared meaning" (Ihator, 2001, p. 200) among employees in large companies. Most recently, corporate communicators have been experimenting with using weblogs, also called blogs, to communicate with members of their organizations.

Electronic Mailing: A History

According to LivingInternet.com, email, or electronic mailing first appeared in some form in the 1960's. On timesharing computers, research organizations wrote a program to share text messages and create real-time chatting between terminals. This, however, could only be used on a single computer system. However, by the 1980's email was being used at the University of California at Berkeley. Eric Allman created a program called delivermail and went on to later create a system called sendmail, which has become the most commonly used format on the web. In 1988, email started to be used commercially and by 1993 large networks such as America Online, Compuserve and Delphi were all providing email services (http://www.livinginternet.com/e/ei.htm).

Since then, electronic mail has become the standard form of communication among Internet users and within the business world. Because the cost is minimal and communication can be selectively targeted to specific departments or employees, email has become an integral part of any integrated communications plan (Vogel & Goans, 2005).

Email has other advantages as well. It solves the problems that come with an employee base that is dispersed due to globalization. Messages can be sent almost anywhere in the world and are less expensive than physical meetings or phone calls. Meetings and phone calls also require people to be available. In today's busy world an email can convey the information without having to coordinate people's schedules (http://www.livinginternet.com/e/ei.htm).

Email has been used for over a decade and was extremely effective, but is rapidly becoming more problematic. Email is also irretrievable once it sent out. This leads to possible privacy concerns if it is sent to the wrong person or leaked to the general public. There is also an increasing nuisance factor with the use of email today. Large batches of emails are unwieldy and are often ignored or lost in the shuffle as employees inboxes are inundated with missives (Vogel & Goans, 2005) and email can duplicate information annoying employees who receive repetitive information (http://www.livinginternet.com/e/ei.htm).

The format of email also can be problematic. When email is not written properly, context can be lost and misunderstandings can develop. It also allows people to avoid

confrontation or difficult situations and the workplace can become a less personal environment. Communicators are still looking for ways to replace the old water cooler.

Recently, many large corporation, such as IBM, Sun Microsystems (Holtz & Demopolous, 2006), Google (Jones, 2003), and Dresdner Kleinwort (Mitchell, 2004) have been experimenting with using weblogs within their companies to coordinate projects, post news and information, uncover hidden knowledge and develop closer relationships among people working in their companies.

Weblogs: A Primer

A weblog, more commonly known as a blog, is a webpage run by an author or multiple authors containing announcements, opinions or discussions, usually with hyperlinks to other blogs of interest on similar topics (Efimova, 2004). The first blog was begun in 1992 by Tim Berniers Lee and was named "What's New." The blog was a single page that provided links to other sources of news on the Internet. The term "weblog" was coined by Jorn Berger in 1997(Zuiker, 2004).

Since then weblogs have sprung up covering a wide variety of subjects ranging from theology and politics to sports and music. Authors give opinions, discuss issues, review and market products and create communities of interest. According to Technocrati, a website that keeps track of blogs and daily visitors to blogs, there are approximately 12.5 million blogs online today (http://technorati.com/about/).

Blogs come in several formats depending on the purpose of the blog. Hugh Hewitt (2004) in his book on blogging lists three basic types of bloggers—aggregators, pure analysts and a mix of the two. Aggregators gather information and links from other sources into one place. Analysts comment and opine on the subject of the blog. A mix is a combination of the two.

Unlike freewheeling message boards, which are similar in function, blogs have centralized control on limited subjects supervised by an authors or several authors (Holtz & Demopoulos). The blog organizes entries in chronological order with the most recent posting being at the top of the page and earlier posts being at the bottom of the page. Each post is time stamped which allows for easy searching (Vogel & Goans, 2005).

Older posts can be archived and knowledge can be preserved (Efimova & Grudin, 2007).

Blogging In Corporate America

Corporations have been using blogs for public relations and community outreach for several years now. Companies such as Microsoft have found that blogs are a good way to provide information to the public. They no longer need to use the media as a gatekeeper and can provide information about services and products to the public and can receive feedback from their customers as well. They have also found that by allowing employees to operate publicly available blogs on the Internet, they can build a sense of trust and authenticity with consumers that their normal website does not provide (Efimova & Grudin, 2007).

Internal blogging is increasingly being considered as a way to improve communications within companies. Communication directors see many advantages to blogs that are set up and operated within their companies. One company, Infoworld has been using blogs internally and is very happy with the project. "Our internal use of Weblogs has greatly accelerated and we're beginning to see more tangible benefits as we've begun to reach a critical mass of internal contributors," said Chief Technology Officer Chad Dickerson (Nacht, 2007, p.2)

In companies with dispersed employees, internal blogs offer a way to bring team members together across long distances and create camaraderie. Knowledge can be traded and shared not only within a team or department, but can also be read and spread to other seemingly unrelated departments (Kolari, Finin, Lyons, et. al, 2007). Management has found that the communications between employees tends to be free and gives them insights into employees wants, problems and issues. Instead of the top-down form of old communication, blogs become two-way communication (Bottazzo, 2005).

Corporate communicators also find blogs to be a good way to tap hidden knowledge. In the discussions and postings, employees who may have nothing to do with a particular problem or project may have ideas to solve problems that have arisen. Management in

large corporations also can use postings to find talent and promote that talent to places where it can be used efficiently (Efimov & Grudin, 2007).

Blogs also have some advantages over email. Email tends to work well with targeted communication. If an employee does not have an interest in the subject of the email, it becomes just more noise in the employee's busy day and may be ignored. Blogs allow employees to selectively look and choose the blogs that cover topics pertinent to their jobs. Blogs can post all kinds of corporate communication. For example, they can post contracts, announcements, praise or commendation for a particular employee or team and general news about the corporation (Vogel & Goans, 2005).

In their book on building corporate blogs, Shel Holtz and Ted Domopoulos (2006) list several different types of blogs that can be used within corporations to improve communications. They are:

1. Project blogs—These blogs can coordinate projects and teams within a company.

2. News blogs—Companies can post news, updates and employees can discuss happenings within their companies.

3. Customer and competitor blogs—Employees can discuss competitors' products and customer issues.

4. Cross-functional team blogs—These are blogs for employees in different departments who don't see each other daily, but may be working on a particular project or need to share information.

5. Individual employee blogs—An individual employee can express his or her thoughts on work-related issues.

6. Department blogs—These blogs can keep the department up-to-date on news, deadlines and other issues they need to be aware of.

7. CEO blogs—CEOs can communicate directly with the employees of a company, get feedback and be aware of issues within the company.

8. Business Unit Leader blogs—This is a blog that works from the top down from the senior leaders to department heads. A goal or idea is articulated at the top and then passed down through management levels to the employees.

9. Corporate news blogs—News that is not sensitive or highly important can be delivered with this type of blog (p.43-52)

Not only does the blog offer employees a way to interact as they used to around the water cooler, they can also bring more people from more locations, as well as managers and CEOs who normally would be excluded from such discussions.

Pitfalls of Blogging

Both external and internal blogging have some disadvantages. When blogging externally, the free flow of information and the nature of blogging can sometimes lead to misunderstandings with the general public. In the past, for example, a Google employee was fired for content on his personal blog. Employees who blog for corporations have let important private information slip into the public internet and some employees who may be disgruntled or upset may post damaging information to the internet (Efimova & Grudin, 2007).

These problems cause concern for many corporations and these concerns carry over to many corporations' attitudes to internal corporate blogging. The same concerns of damaging information being distributed or misunderstandings occurring arise with internal blogs as do with external blogs. Employees can post opinions that reflect badly on the company. There is also the issue of who owns the content of the blog. Firm company policies have to be issued to make it clear who owns the copyright to the material; the company who hosts the blog or the author who writes on it (Cass, 2007).

Three Studies

While there are many studies on blogging and the effects that external blogs have had on companies, the use of internal blogs is relatively new. Studies looking at employee responses to internal blogs and interactions within the corporations using these blogs are few. There are, however, some organizations that have made an effort to use blogs as an internal communications tool and have studied the results. We will look at three: Microsoft, IBM, and the Georgia State University Library.

Microsoft

 In 2007, Lilia Efimova and Microsoft Researcher Jonathan Grudin did a study "to explore where, how, and why employees blog: how personal the writing is in work related weblogs; what happens when blogging becomes a formal work objective; perceptions of the personal and business impacts of blogging; and possible steps to make blogging more effective."(p.2) At the time of the study, there was approximately 800 intranet or internally hosted blogs operating within Microsoft. Efimova and Grudin looked at the websites, analyzed their distribution within the company and interviewed 38 people extensively about their blog use.

They found that most employees started using blogs out of experimentation and some felt pressure from others who already were blogging. Once they began to blog, the employees found that blogging was challenging to them and a good way to organize and document their work. Another aspect of blogging the employees also liked was that they could avoid spamming employees with email by posting their announcements and ideas to their blogs instead of sending them through email.

Although Efimova and Grudin (2007) point out that there was disagreement about what kinds of blogging made sense to Microsoft employees and what content was appropriate, they have compiled a list of benefits of blogging that employees sited in their interviews.

1. Helped to connect with other employees

2. Uncovered hidden information

3. Saved time by being able to refer to previously posted information

4. Ideas could find the right people even in unrelated projects or departments.

5. They exchanged information without knowing.

6. Provided employees visibility in the large company

IBM

IBM is another large corporation that has been using blogs for communication. As of 2007, they had 300,000 employees and 23,000 registered bloggers (Kolari, Finin et. al, 2007). Between November 2003 and August 2006, a team of researchers looked at 48,500 blog posts to find out how blogs were being used within IBM.

They found that blogging increased after formal policies were put into place putting rules on blogging. The formal rules made employees feel that the format had acceptance from management and felt freer to use the format. The researchers also discovered that bloggers were retained at a higher number the longer the study went on. Users doubled every 10 months (Kolari, Finin et. al, 2007).

They also found that reciprocity between blogs was high. Blogs who linked to other blogs or blog posts they found useful would often receive a comparable number of links. The interconnectivity of the blogs suggests that users found the community aspects of blogging to be an important part of the experience (Kolari, Finin et. al, 2007).

Georgia State University Library

One of the most thorough studies internal blogging was done by Teri Vogel and Doug Goans (2005) at the Georgia State University Library. In July 2003, Science Liaisons at the library began running an internal blog dealing with science issues at the library. The issue they were attempting to address was how to get information to science students and faculty members that avoided the disadvantages of printing a newsletter or sending emails.

The librarians thought that sending email had the problem of being overused and ignored because sending out emails every time new information became available would bombard faculty and staff with email.

The newsletter had a similar problem. Newsletters took time to produce and time to read. Limited space in the newsletters meant that the librarians would have to select which information they felt was important and leave out the rest. A blog seemed to be a perfect format to solve these problems.

The librarians built a blog in-house that began running in July 2003. They posted more than 200 items by March 2004 including library news, book availability, databases for research, instructional information, class schedules, and faculty articles and profiles. The website was run on Georgia State University servers and could only be accessed by Georgia State science students and faculty.

After nine months, the researchers came to some conclusions based on their experiences and the traffic the blog was getting. Their conclusions were that internal blogs need to be marketed. The target users have to be informed that the blog exists. It was also important to consistently add new content to keep users returning to the blog. In order to maintain credibility, the researchers were careful not to delete previous outdated posts, but rather to edit them.

During the first nine months the blog was viewed by 1,087 unique visitors. The blog rose again in January 2004 and remained level. Overall, The Georgia State University Library felt that the service was worth continuing and planned to add some more blogs in the future.

Research Question

These three studies show that employees and users see benefits in using internal blogs for communication. However, will inexperienced employees actually prefer blogs to email? My research goal was to examine whether employees in an organization prefer information delivered to them through blogs or would they rather get information through email.

Methodology

In order to determine whether users may prefer blogs as a mode of communication in the workplace, I set up a blog using tools at Blogger.com. I chose Blogger.com because of its ease of use, simple layout and its ability to lock unwanted users out of the site. The design layout was simple—a title, a log of posts on the right side of the screen and posts in the center of the page. I kept the design as traditional as possible with a simple white font on a black background (see Fig. 1)

Fig.1. Test Blog. Names have been removed.

Originally, the research project was to be made up of 2 teams. Each team was working on a separate project and the blog was to be a project blog(Holtz & Demopolis, 2006). One team would use the blog to coordinate their project from their various work locations and the other team would use email. They were to use their respective formats for a week. However, due to concerns with the company's legal department, they were forced to withdraw from the project at the last minute.

I was then able to put together two other tests groups from Acme Machell, Inc. in New Waukesha, Wisconsin. The test period had to be shortened to 5 days and the sample size reduced to 2 teams of 7 people each. Acme Machell, Inc. manufactures niche molded rubber and silicone products that are used in several industries and sold to companies such as Siemens, Hi-Lex Corporation and Harley Davidson. They employee 30 to 40 people in their corporate offices.

In addition to the drawback of a smaller sample size and a shorter testing period, the employees who agreed to assist in the project mostly work in the same office. This makes it easier for the employees to communicate directly and bypass email and blogging altogether.

From July 11 to July 16, 2008, 7 employees of Acme Machell, Inc. were given access to the weblog and the other 7 participants were asked to focus on their email communication for the same time period. Members of the blog group were each given a private user password allowing only them to access the blog and post messages. They were told to post any non-sensitive information, messages, announcements and other work-related materials.

In order to see if there were any tendencies for one gender to use the blog or email more than another, I tried to split the groups among men and women as equally as possible. The blog group consisted of four women and three men and the email group was made up of three women and four men.

Both groups were then given a survey (Appendix A) designed to compare their responses to their business communication format. The survey asked them to give details about their frequency of use and then rate the usability, accessibility, readability and ease of use of their respective formats. They were also asked if they would be willing to use weblogs as a communications tool in the future.

Analysis and Discussion

Of the 14 subjects who were given surveys, 100% responded. This provides a firm guide to the preferences of the subjects; however, the sample is a sample of convenience and cannot be used as a representation of many companies. The margin of error for this sample is $\pm$ 30.99%, so the results of the surveys cannot be taken to be representative of the larger population.

Another interesting angle to take is to look at the use of the formats by gender. Of the sample that used the blog, the females used the blog at a much heavier rate. In this sample, there were 4 women and 3 men, but the women posted at an overwhelmingly higher rate than the men. There were 15 posts on the blog during the study, and 10 of them came from women. This may suggest women would be more open to blogs as communications tools, but the sample size and testing period were both too small to allow one to come to any conclusion. Also, the survey does not indicate the gender of the subjects. From this study, it is impossible to come to any firm conclusions as to the role of gender in use of blogs or email.

The surveys began by asking both the email group and blogging group to give the number of times they checked their emails or how many times they checked the blog. This was an attempt to gauge the interest of each group in their form of communication. 57.1% of the bloggers reported checking the website 1-5 times per day and 42.9% reported checking it 6 to 10 times. No one reported checking it more than 10 times a day. On the other hand, the email users reported much more activity. 28.6% said they checked their email 0 to 10 times a day, 57.1% checked their email 21 to 30 times a day and 14.3% said they checked theirs 31 to 40 times a day.

Blog and email activity seem to back these user trends. The email users claimed they received many more emails a day than the bloggers posted. 28.6% email users receive 1 to 5 emails a day; 14.3% said they receive 11 to 15 emails a day; 28.6% received 16 to 20 emails a day; and 28.6% said they receive over 20 a day. The bloggers posted 15 posts with 10 additional comments over 5 days, an average of 5 entries a day.

The next 5 questions on the survey asked the users to rate various aspects of their format. When comparing these numbers, one should use a chi-square to test the results. While the scope of this research project does not cover that technique, many interesting inferences can be drawn about the research samples' responses.

Usability—Both groups found the formats to be easy to use. The email users rated the usability an average of 4.43 and the bloggers' mean was 4 on a scale of 1 to 5 where 5 is the easiest to use (Fig. 2). Both seemed to find the formats usable, but the higher Standard Deviation for the blog users indicates that there was more variation in the ratings the users gave the blog. This may be due to the short time period of the test and the novelty of the blog format.

	Usability		**Accessibility**	
	email	Blog	email	Blog
n	7	7	7	7
mean	4.43	4	4.43	3.86
SD	0.333	0.489	0.535	1.07

Fig. 2. Usability and Accessibility Results

Accessibility—Divisions started to show when users answered questions about accessibility. The ratings for the two groups were similar, with email users rating their format slightly more favorably. Again, the Standard Deviation for the blogs was higher than the email Standard Deviation. The bloggers' Standard Deviation was at 1.07. This indicates the bloggers' ratings varied more on the accessibility of the blog (Fig. 2).

Readability—Readability had comparable results to accessibility. The email group agreed on the ease of readability with a standard deviation of .378 and a mean of 4.14, which is "easy to read." The blog users also answered that they found their format "moderately readable" to "easy to read." However, there was also more disagreement among the blog group about readability with a standard deviation of 1.27 (Fig. 3).

	Readability		**Ability to Post/Send**	
	email	Blog	email	Blog
n	7	7	7	7
mean	4.14	3.43	4.14	3.29
SD	0.378	1.27	0.378	0.951

Fig. 3. Readability and Ability To Post/Send Results

Ability to Post/Send—Email also had a slight edge over blogs on the ease of posting or sending messages. Email users rated email at a mean of 4.14 and tended to agree that email was "easy to send." The blog users rated ease of posting at an average of 3.29 leaning toward "moderately easy to post messages (Fig. 3)."

Efficiency—Where the two groups greatly diverged was in their ratings of efficiency. The email users found their medium to be "efficient" and were all in agreement. The mean rating for email in this category was 4 and the standard deviation was .577. In contrast, the blog users rated their format as "inefficient." The mean rating was 2.29, which leans toward "inefficient" on the 5-point scale. The bloggers also varied more on their answers than in any other rating. The Standard Deviation was 1.11 and answers were distributed across the 5 choices from "very inefficient" to "efficient (Fig.4)."

Efficiency was the property that put off users the most. Email users agreed that their familiar format was efficient. The Bloggers also felt that email would be more efficient. In the final two questions on the survey, I asked if they would be willing to use a blog for corporate communications in the future (Appendix A). Out of the group that used the email, there was an aversion to using a blog in the future to communicate at work. 57.1% said "no." However, 28.6% said maybe and 14.3 % said "yes." The sample that used the blog were still hesitant about using the blog, but they were also less likely to say no and more likely to say maybe than their email counterparts. (Appendix B). This seems in keeping with the findings of the Georgia State study (Vogel & Goans, 2005), IBM study (Kolari, Finnin, et.al, 2007) and the Microsoft study (Efimova & Grudin, 2007) that the longer users work on blog the higher the usage and greater the retention levels.

Efficiency

	email	Blog
n	7	7
mean	4	2.29
SD	0.577	1.11

Fig. 4. Efficiency Results

This may also reflect the nature of the work the users are currently doing. One of the subjects commented on the survey about using blogs in the future, "It depends on how broad an audience you are trying to reach. Alot of my communication are targeted at one person--usually on confidential issues. The blog is not good for that application."

In the end, 100% of the sample said they would prefer to use email. So, at this time the research question of "would employees in an organization prefer information delivered to them through blogs or would they rather get information through email," would have to be answered email.

Conclusions

The results of the survey would seem to indicate that my research question was roundly rejected and users would prefer email to blogging when it comes to corporate communication. This is possible, but I would caution against making such assertions. The margin of error in this study of ± 30.99% makes such conclusions risky. I would suggest further research on this topic with a larger sample and a longer testing period.

As the studies at IBM (Kolari, Finnin, et. al, 2007), Microsoft (Efimova & Grudin, 2007) and Georgia State (Vogel & Goans, 2005) cited above illustrate, there are useful applications for blogging within large and dispersed companies. Even the short period of time during my research seemed to affect the outlook of the blog users. More of them said they would be willing to try blogging in the future and less of them rejected it outright than the subjects who used email only (Appendix B). One of the blog subjects seemed to realize that while blogging didn't suit her needs at this time, it might be useful in other contexts. The subject said blogs may be useful "with group projects from remote locations perhaps (such as taking a course online), but to coordinate business operations I feel email is easier, more personal, and more confidential."

As technical communicators in large organizations look for more effective ways to integrate external and internal communications for an increasingly fractured and diffuse audience, they are going to need a medium to supplement the current tools. As more internet—savvy employees enter the work force the barriers that have kept internal corporate communication a one way street are going to crumble even faster and weblogs may be the tool communicators need to create the digital equivalent to the old fashioned water cooler.

Thanks

I would like to extend a special thanks to the employees of Acme Machell, Inc. who assisted me in this research.

Appendix A

Survey For Blog Users

1. Approximately how many times per day did you visit the weblog?

1 to 5

6 to 10

11 to 15

16 to 20

20 or more

2. On a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being the easiest and 1 being the most difficult, rate the usability of the blog.

1. Very Difficult To Use
2. Somewhat Difficult To Use
3. Moderately Usable
4. Easy To Use
5. Very Easy To Use

3. On a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being the easiest to access and 1 being the most difficult, rate the accessibility of the blog.

1. Very Difficult To Access
2. Somewhat Difficult To Use
3. Moderately Accessible
4. Easy To Access
5. Very Easy To Access

4. On a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being the easiest to read and 1 being the most difficult, rate the readability of the blog. Was the blog easy or difficult to read?

1. Very Difficult To Read

2. Somewhat Difficult To Read

3. Moderately Readable

4. Easy Read

5. Very Easy To Read

5. On a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being the easiest to post and 1 being the most difficult, rate the ability to post to the blog. Was it easy or difficult to post messages?

1. Very Difficult To Post Messages

2. Somewhat Difficult To Post Messages

3. Moderate Ease To Post Messages

4. Easy To Post Messages

5. Very Easy To Post Messages

6. On a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being the most efficient and 1 being the least efficient, rate the efficiency of the blog. Did the blog deliver information in an efficient manner?

1. Not efficient at all

2. Somewhat inefficient

3. Moderately efficient

4. Efficient

5. Very Efficient

7. Would you be willing to use blog to coordinate work in the future?

Yes

No

Maybe

If maybe, why?

8. Would you rather use a blog or email for your business communication?

Email

Blog

Survey For Email Users

1.Approximately how many business emails do you receive a day?

1 to 5

6 to 10

11 to 15

16 to 20

20 or more

2. Approximately how many times do you check your email perday

1. 0-10 times/day

2. 11-20 times/day

3. 21-30 times/day

4. 31-40 times/day

5. 41 or more times/day

3. On a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being the easiest and 1 being the most difficult, rate the usability of email.

1. Very Difficult To Use

2. Somewhat Difficult To Use

3. Moderately Usable

4. Easy To Use

5. Very Easy To Use

4. On a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being the easiest to access and 1 being the most difficult, rate the accessibility of email.

1. Very Difficult To Access

2. Somewhat Difficult To Use

3. Moderately Accessible

    4. Easy To Access

    5. Very Easy To Access

5. On a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being the easiest to read and 1 being the most difficult, rate the readability of email. Was email easy or difficult to read?

    1. Very Difficult To Read

    2. Somewhat Difficult To Read

    3. Moderately Readable

    4. Easy Read

    5. Very Easy To Read

6. On a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being the easiest to post and 1 being the most difficult, rate the ability to post to the email. Was it easy or difficult to send messages?

    1. Very Difficult Send Messages

    2. Somewhat Difficult To Send Messages

    3. Moderate Ease To Send Messages

    4. Easy To Send Messages

    5. Very Easy To Send Messages

7. On a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being the most efficient and 1 being the least efficient, rate the efficiency of the email. Did the email deliver information in an efficient manner?

    1. Not efficient at all

    2. Somewhat inefficient

    3. Moderately efficient

    4. Efficient

    5. Very Efficient

8. Would you be willing to use blog to coordinate work in the future?

Yes

No

Maybe

If maybe, why?

9. Would you rather use a blog or email for your business communication?

Email

Blog

Appendix B

Survey Ratings

Usability	email	Blog
	4	
	4	
	4	
	4	
	5	
	5	
	5	
		2
		3
		4
		4
		4
		4
		4
n	7	7
mean	4.43	4.00
SD	0.535	0.787

Accessibility	email	Blog
	4	
	4	
	4	
	4	
	5	
	5	
	5	
		3
		3
		3
		3
		5
		5
		5
n	7	7
mean	4.43	3.86
SD	0.535	1.07

Readability	email	Blog
	4	
	4	
	4	
	4	
	4	
	4	
	5	
		2
		2
		3
		3
		4
		5
		5
n	7	7
mean	4.14	3.43
SD	0.378	1.27

Post/Send	email	Blog
	4	
	4	
	4	
	4	
	4	
	4	
	5	
		2
		2
		3
		4
		4
		4
		4
n	7	7
mean	4.14	3.29
SD	0.378	0.951

Efficiency	email	Blog
	3	
	4	
	4	
	4	
	4	
	4	
	5	
		1
		1
		2
		2
		3
		3
		4
n	7	7
mean	4	2.29
SD	0.577	1.11

Would you be willing to use blog to coordinate work in the future?

Email: Yes 14.3%   **Blog: Yes 0%**
No   57.1%   **No 28.6%**
Maybe 28.6%   **Maybe: 71.4%**

Do you prefer email or blogging for business communications? 100% responded email.

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