

Steady Gains In Blogging By Marketers

Contributed by eMarketer
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43% of US companies will be blogging by 2012

The personal blogosphere, while it still boasts million of online journals and participants, has largely stalled in recent years.

Consumer use of social media has moved more toward social networking and microblogging, which seem to have eroded the perceived usefulness of full-fledged blogs. But in the corporate world, a different picture emerges.

In many studies, company use of social networks and Twitter does outpace the use of blogs, but for companies the platforms are not mutually exclusive.

“Companies are finding that blogs fill a specific niche that other forms of social media do not,” said eMarketer senior analyst Paul Verna.

Because of the apparent staying power of blogs in corporate settings, eMarketer forecasts continued growth in company use of blogs for marketing purposes.

This year, eMarketer estimates just over one in three companies have a public-facing blog used for marketing, a proportion that will rise to 43% by 2012.

“Studies have shown that marketers perceive blogs to have the highest value of any social media in driving site traffic, brand awareness, lead generation and sales” as well as improving customer service,” said Verna.

Surveys and studies of company blog use have estimated participation in a wide range, most likely due to methodological differences and the specific companies studied.

For example, the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth Center for Marketing Research has found lower usage among Fortune 500 companies and higher adoption among the fast-growing private companies on the Inc. 500 list.

“There is evidence that smaller companies are embracing blogging at greater rates than larger firms,” said Verna. “This might be because larger, public companies” particularly in industries such as pharma and financial services “have more legal, logistical and regulatory constraints than smaller firms.”

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