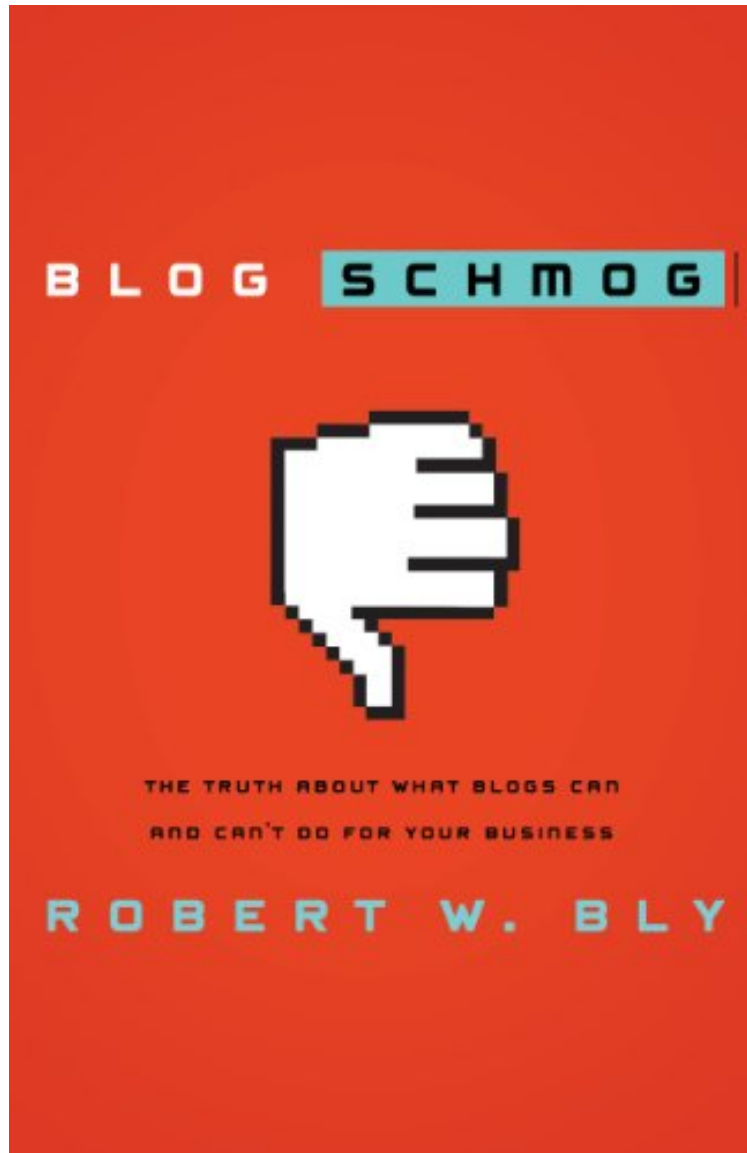



Blog Schmog: The Truth About What Blogs Can (and Can't) Do for Your Business

Robert W. Bly

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Robert W. Bly : Blog Schmog: The Truth About What Blogs Can (and Can't) Do for Your Business before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Blog Schmog: The Truth About What Blogs Can (and Can't) Do for Your Business:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. "Cherish those who seek the truth but beware of those who find it."
(Voltaire)By Robert MorrisThose who are about to read this book need to keep in mind that in it, Robert Bly shares his

thoughts about what blogs cannot do (nor be expected to do) as well as what they can do. Over the years, he has earned and deserves his reputation as a master of reasoning, reading, and writing skills...whatever the given genre may be. Among his previously published books, my own favorites are *The Copywriter's Handbook*, his *Guide to Freelance Writing Success*, and most recently, *The White Paper Marketing Handbook*. In his latest book, *Blog Schmog*, he focuses on "the strategy of using blogs as a business-building and marketing tool, explaining how your time is best bent on strategy, not fooling around with programming or design." Bly then goes on to explain, in the Introduction, that his book "is written from the point of view of a blogging skeptic and doubter, not one who has bought into the whole blogging fad without holding it up to close scrutiny... And my conclusions about blogging, unlike those of [blogging consultants, enthusiasts, and evangelists], are not always favorable; my positions on blogging are highly controversial within the blogosphere." He urges those who read this book to share their comments ideas, techniques, and/or success stories with him at rwby@bly.com or to visit [...]Who will derive the greatest benefit from this book? Probably, those in need of expert advice on how to start their own blog, and, those who have done so and are dissatisfied with the results thus far.

Time Out: There are significant differences between personal blogs and institutional blogs. Therefore, those who are about to launch either a personal blog or an institutional blog should first answer the six questions posed on Pages 55 56 in Chapter 2, "How to Start Your Own Blog." (Bly cites Elisa Camahort's *Worker Bees* as their source. Her Web site is workerbeesblog.blogspot.com.) Moreover, I think that those who have already launched a blog and are not satisfied with results thus far should also answer these six questions. For those with a special interest in institutional blogs, Bly provides an insightful analysis of do's and don'ts in Chapter 7. Then in Appendix E, he identifies "Business Blogs Every Blogging Newbie Should Know" and provides links to them.

To me, some of the most valuable information and counsel are found in Chapter 3, "Blogetiquette: The Rules of Blogging." He shares his responses to a number of frequently asked questions. For example: Is "selling" a person, a company, or a product acceptable in the blogosphere? How to treat copyrighted material in a blog? Why are corporations afraid of blogging? What is the "bloatosphere" and what's wrong with it? (Note: Bly cites Steven Streight, president and CEO of Streight Site Systems, as his source for much of the response provided.) What is "ghost-blogging" and why does it occur? What about other types of blogs such as "simulated," "drivel," "sleazy link," "fictional persona," and "link farm?" What does Bly think of each? Throughout his narrative, Bly inserts a series of "Rules" (also listed in Appendix B) and provides a context for each. (I highlighted each of them to expedite periodic review of them later and suggest that other readers do the same.) He concludes this chapter with Rule 8A: "To be effective marketing vehicles, blogs should be relatively free of marketing. They should contain useful content and the truth, not hype or sales talk. To violate this rule not only costs you sales and credibility, but it also incurs the disdain and wrath of the blogosphere." He makes essentially the same assertion about white papers in an earlier book, *The White Paper Marketing Handbook*. In the final chapter, He shares a number of opinions whether or not blogging has a future and many of these opinions are certain to generate controversy. (Bly urges those who disagree with any of them to contact him at rwby@bly.com. He plans to share feedback with readers of the next edition of this book.) I strongly recommend, however, that the first nine chapters be read with great care, first. I cannot think of a better way to conclude this review than to share the conclusion to Bly's book: "So blog if you want to. If you don't like blogs, don't bother. And if you think the advice in this book is great, and you want to let me know, or if you think I don't know beans about blogging and that my advice is useless, you can certainly say so - on my blog." Best of luck to you in the blogosphere - and outside it!

11 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Should I Start a Blog? By Jay Ehret Finally a business book that is unpretentious. *Blog Schmog* is not one of those books that takes one good idea and then tries to stretch it beyond its boundaries just to get a specified page count. Bob Bly is a direct mail copywriter and by his own admission does not buy into the blogosphere hype. But he decided to delve into the world of blogging and find out what it was all about (probably so he could write a book). The fact that Bly is not a blogging expert is exactly what makes this book valuable to someone thinking of starting a blog. This book gives you an unbiased view of starting a blog from scratch and leaves out the sales pitch you would get from a blogging guru trying to sell you the latest patented system for starting a blog. BS is short on technical advice but does give you resources and plenty of website addresses to get you started. What you will get out of this book is why you should start a blog (if you should) and what is the most effective way to write a blog. If you are already a seasoned blogger, this book is probably not for you. If you are thinking of starting a blog, or just trying to get more comfortable writing one, I recommend this book. You won't be an expert after you read it, but you will have a better perspective of blogging.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Blog writers are wasting their time if they don't also . . . By Brian Morris In the old days we stood on Main Street and shouted. Now we write a blog. BUT, if no one reads your blog you've wasted your time. Surely it is worth \$10 to find out how to write in an interesting way so millions of people will read what you write. That's what people like John Grisham, Jeffrey Archer and Richard Webster do. Hey, what you write might morph from being a blog into being an eBook. Then you'll earn royalties. They roll in from every month. Virtually forever. Tip: put a bit in your will that royalties from your sales go to your favorite charity after you die. Otherwise they'll get lost. Make a start today. How to write a novel that becomes a best-seller

Blog Schmog takes a look at the blogging phenomenon and its impact on politics, writing, marketing, public relations, publishing, journalism, and all other forms of communication. Written from a skeptic's point of view, Robert Bly holds blogging up to close scrutiny, giving practical, easy-to-use tips that can help you master blogging and its application. This book cuts through the hype surrounding blogging, enabling you to get a true and accurate picture of blogging's potential as well as its limitations. Inside you'll discover how the blogosphere operates along with real-world advice from blogging experts on how to write an effective, reader-oriented blog.

About the Author Robert W. Bly has more than twenty-five years experience as a copywriter specializing in direct marketing. His clients include IBM, Lucent Technologies, Nortel Networks, and Sony. He has won numerous marketing awards and is the author of more than sixty books. Bob and his wife, Amy, have two sons.