

BLOGGING: A NEW PLATFORM FOR SPREADING RUMORS!

Hewa Majeed Zangana¹

Yuliana Isma Graha²

Imad Fakhri Al-Shaikhli³

Department of Computer Science, College of Computer Science and IT/ Nawroz University, Kurdistan – Iraq¹, Mahasiswa STMIK Raharja², Department of Computer Science, KICT/ International Islamic University Malaysia, Malaysia³

Email hewa.majeed@yahoo.com, iz@raharja.info, imadf@iium.edu.my

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ABSTRACT

Blogs are a popular way to share personal journals, discuss matters of public opinion, pursue collaborative conversations, and aggregate content on similar topics. Blogs can be also used to disseminate new content and novel ideas to communities of interest. In this paper we present about the use of blogging in spreading rumors. Most blogs are interactive, allowing visitors to leave comments and even message to each other through widgets on the blogs and it is this interactivity that distinguishes them from other static websites. Topical content such as news and political commentary spreads quickly by the hour and then quickly disappears, while non-topical content such as music and entertainment propagates slowly over a much long period of time.

KeyWords : blogging, rumors, spreading

INTRODUCTION

Blogging is a Web based form of communication that is rapidly becoming an ordinary behavior. Weblogs or blogs are regularly updated Webpages with a chain of archived posts, usually in reverse sequential order. Most blogs are interactive, allowing visitors to leave comments and even message to each other through widgets on the blogs and it is this interactivity that distinguishes them from other static websites.

Blog posts are mainly textual, but they may contain photos or other multimedia content. Most blogs afford a hypertext links to other Internet sites, and allow audience to present their comments.

Blogging in its modern form began around 1997 with Dave Winer's Scripting News for an online record of Winer's reviews on an extensive collection of topics. In recent years, tools and gears have been developed to make blogging a lot easier and more

widely accessible, in short words we can describe blogging by "A Push button Publishing For The People."

In this paper we will try to discuss in brief some key features regarding blogging especially for the hasty relationship between blogging and spreading rumors from an Islamic perspective and try to form a mechanism to for an effective control of blogging.

USE OF BLOGGING



Figure 1: Dave Winer

A blog consist of episodic articles usually in overturn sequential order. It might be personal orcommunity blog, according to the interests of the blogger and his or her intellectual thinking.

There is a wide range of blogs such as professional, cultural, social, educational, political, business and scientific so each individual can join and use his or her favorite blogging community with ease and pleasure.

The use of blogging systems offers many choices of features that have both sides of bronze and cones, in this era people can share their thoughts without barriers by posting them as articles, wish raise the issues of public and private spaces.

Many of sites and tools for blogging may be found in the internet. Many companies found that offering blogging services as an end product, is a profitable business letting the rising and establishment of blogging industry to grow on and on.



Figure 2: Blogging is a Pushbutton away.

BLOGGING AND RUMORS

Blogs plays an important rule forming the infrastructure of Social networks. Rumor spreading is one of the basic mechanisms for information distribution on the web. Nowadays most of the rumors out online are from various blogs.

Spreading rumor can mislead a lot of people and in some times these rumors can turn into belief. Communication

experts said that responsible organization and people should handle blogging rumors by responding quickly to the accusations with information on their official Web blogs or sites, responses carefully and seek an objective party to verify that the rumors are not true, but often blogs rumors can have on their customers.

TYPES OF BLOGGING

There are five types of blogging:

1. Personal Blogs

The personal blog, an ongoing diary or commentary by an individual, is the traditional, most common blog. Personal bloggers usually take pride in their blog posts, even if their blog is never read. Blogs often become more than a way to just communicate; they become a way to reflect on life, or works of art. Blogging can have a sentimental quality.

2. Corporate & Organizational Blogs

A blog can be private, as in most cases, or it can be for business purposes. Blogs used internally to enhance the communication and culture in a corporation or externally for marketing, branding or public relations purposes are called corporate blogs.

3. By Genre

Some blogs focus on a particular subject, such as political blogs, travel blogs (also known as travelogs); two common types of genre blogs are art blogs and music blogs.

4. By Media Type

A blog comprising videos is called a v-log, one comprising links is called a linklog, a site containing a portfolio of sketches is called a sketch blog or one comprising photos is called a photo blog.

Blogs with shorter posts and mixed media types are called tumble logs.

5. By Device

Blogs can also be defined by which type of device is used to compose it. A blog written by a mobile device like a mobile phone or PDA could be called a moblog. One early blog was Wearable Wireless Webcam, an online shared diary of a person's personal life combining text, video, and pictures transmitted live from a wearable computer and EyeTap device to a web site.

RUMORS SPREADING IN ISLAM

Backbiting, insulting and spreading rumors and suspicions about others are major sins in Islam. These are despicable acts in the sight of Allah (SWT).

It is well known that verifying news is a significance importance according to Shariah, as Allah Almighty says:

(O you, who believe if an evil person brings you tidings, verify it, lest ye smite some folk in ignorance and afterward repent of what ye did) Al-Hujurat 49:6.

The Quran issued a strict warning against passing on all news that one hears without any verifications. It was also narrated from Abu-hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (PBUH) said: "It is enough sin for a man to speak of everything that he hears."

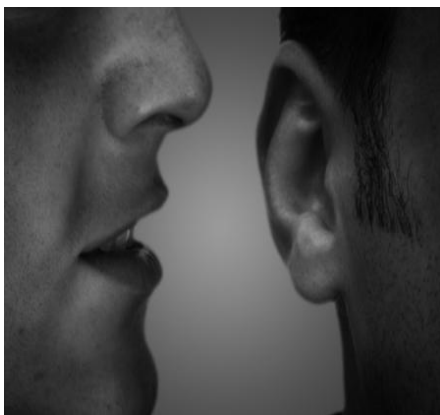


Figure 3: Rumors can spread Quickly.

Commenting on the above hadith, imam An-Nawawi said: "Usually a person hears truth and lies, so if he speaks of everything that he hears, he is lying by telling of things that did not happen, and lying by speaking of something other than the way it happened; and he does not have to do that deliberately (in order to be regarded as telling lies.)"

DEALING WITH RUMORS

There are firm and assured ways which help bloggers deal with rumors, especially those related to news and here are some of them:

A. Deliberation

The Prophet (PBUH) said: "Deliberation is from Allah and haste is from the Satan." (As-Silsilah as-Sahihah) It is worth stressing here that the one who deliberates may meet some of his needs while the one who is hasty may slip.

B. Verifying News

Allah Almighty says, (O ye who believe! If an evil person brings you tidings, verify it, lest ye smite some folk in ignorance and afterward repent of what ye did) (Al-Hujurat 49: 6). What is meant by verifying is to conduct a demanding effort to find out the facts behind a certain concerns or problems so as to realize whether this can be proven or not. Verifying also means to be certain of the truth of various events and its state of affairs. Al-Hasan al-Basri said: "The believer reserves judgment until the matter is proven".

SIX RULES OF BLOGGING

On the internet there are six common rules which can help with blogging and bloggers are advised to consider them:

A. Provide Value

What distinguish your blog from the hundreds of other blogging blogs out there? While answers to this may fluctuate, the underlying factor is that the site provides value to you in one way or another and you don't want to miss it. That is the single most important reason anyone subscribes to a blog.

B. Do not Flood Readers with Posts

Certain types of blogs have a different level of posting frequency, people have a limit of what they can process and digest regarding information, Unless you run a news blog that needs to be updated multiple times per day, try to find a nice posting schedule that you can keep to.

C. Take Part in the Conversation

Blogging is not just about you and it's actually not even just about your readers. It also includes the conversation that goes on between your blog and others in the same industry. Read the blogs of others and leave comments to let them know what you think of their sites.

D. Make Your Blog Unique

There are a lot of things you can do to make your blog stand out:

- a. Have a unique design.
- b. Write long, detailed posts in a niche that writers short informative ones (or vice versa).
- c. an idea nobody else uses like the bloggers face-off or a list of top blogs.

- d. Bring in authority figures for interviews.
- e. Offer content in different formats such as audio and video.

E. Make It Easy For Readers to Connect

Make it easy for your readers to get to know you and connect. Some easy ways to do this include having an informative about page, using your name on posts and blog comments and even sharing your personal stories at times in your blog posts.

F. Make Content Easy To Read

There is nothing worse than a content that is just split into huge chunks of text with no line breaks. Some tips on making your content easy to read include:

- a. Spell-checking your posts before you publish them.
- b. Use bullet points where necessary.
- c. Create sub headings for longer, in depth posts.
- d. If you are doing a list post, separate the points with bold headings for people who scan.
- e. Include paragraph breaks after every 3 or 4 sentences.
- f. Read the post by yourself to see that it all flows properly.

SOLVING BLOGGING RUMORS

The reliability and integrity of the blogs can be solved by making bloggers follow several effective rules. Those rules should become known, like a standard mechanism. Those rules can become an integrity and ethics values that can be a mandatory for bloggers work. Here by we suggest 10 rules for a more responsible blogging that have been developed by few

bloggers. The 10 Rules for Responsible Blogging are:

- A. Check your facts: Make sure to check your facts before publishing posts or articles, otherwise you might deceive and harm other people.
- B. Respect Copyright Law: Learn the fundamentals of the Copyright Law and cyberlaw to avoid unnecessarily mistakes.
- C. Consider the implications: information on the Internet spreads like fire. Think about the consequences, before you hit "Publish" because then you will instantaneously lose control over those words.
- D. Control the comments: your blog is your responsibility, it include both the information you post and the comments your readers add. Therefore a comment policy should be provided in order to insure the legitimately and integrity of your blog.
- E. Give credit where credit is due: at all times always reference your sources by adding add a hyperlink at the end of the post". This practice is vital for your ethical point of view, so your readers can eventually confirm the origin and the source of the facts.
- F. Disclose professional relationships: as an employee of a company or an organization you have to clearly declare that the views expressed on your blog are your own point of view and not the ones from your employer, unless you are blogging for your company.
- G. Disclose sponsored posts: regardless of the fact that bloggers use sponsored posts for earning some money. However it is essential that you have to state your position regarding those posts before your readers.
- H. Be transparent with affiliate links: countless affiliate and other associate marketers use methods like "Link Cloaking" so that readers will not be able to recognize affiliate links. And as they say "A deceived visitor is a lost visitor". If people believe in your work and effort they will definitely acknowledge your recommendations for products.
- I. Respect Tax Law: bloggers and webmasters likely tend to equate online money with tax free. Under the U.S. Law any income you make is taxable. The key factor is whether your blog is a hobby or a business, other countries rules of tax payment should be considered too.
- J. Avoid "black hat" methods: By "black hat" methods we mean trying to cheat social bookmarking sites for example: buying Diggs, or trying to cheat search engines, there will be always people trying to find shortcuts. If you want to make your blog or website popular simply you just have to work hard for it.

The Future of Blogging

A recent survey revealed that the popularity of blogging among teens and young adults has declined significantly from 28 percent to 14 percent from 2006 to 2009. While this wasn't a comprehensive scientific study, it does clearly show that blogging is losing its luster with today's younger generation.

There are several factors that could have contributed to this extreme decline, such as the overabundance of real time communication platforms like social networks, the sudden increase of gaming platforms (Wii, Playstation, Xbox). Regardless of the reasons, the bottom line is that young people are getting fed up and bored and of traditional blogging.

It is agreed to say, part of the problem with blogs is that they are too static and tedious. We need to introduce new life into blogs and make them more dynamic. We need to do something that will change the public understanding for blogging.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we advise everyone to consider the deliberation and verifications of news and matters before they been posted in blogs and not to rush to pass on news until they are sure that it is true so rumors cannot be spared, even if the news is superior because if it becomes apparent that the one who passed it on is mistaken and misguided, he will lose credibility before the people, and anyone can and may will use it against him.

Allah (SWT) Said in the Quran: "O you who believe! Avoid much suspicion, indeed some suspicions are sins. And spy not, neither backbite one another. Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? You would hate it (so hate backbiting). And fear Allah. Verily, Allah is the one Who accepts repentance (tauba), Most Merciful." (49:12)

The Prophet (PBUH) in a hadith said: Do you know what backbiting is? The Companions replied and said: Allah and his messenger know best. Then the (the Prophet) said: "Backbiting implies your talking about your brother in a manner which he does not like." It was said to him: What is your opinion about this that if I actually find (that failing) in my brother which I made a mention of? He (the Prophet) said: "If that failing is actually found in him, you in fact back bit him and if that is not in him, it is slander (buhtaan)." (Sahih Al-Muslim)

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