

# BusinessWeek



## Blog to the Bloggers

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Adding a blog to your company's Web site is a great way to bolster your online marketing effectiveness. However, you should put aside dreams of directly building a broad readership and instead make other bloggers your primary intended audience. Your target customers are more likely to read and value the opinion of a third party than to hang on every word posted to your company blog. So an influential blogger citing your wisdom on a germane topic greatly multiplies the value of your original posting.

The blogosphere is built on that kind of conversation. To gain daily inspiration to write, bloggers read other blogs that focus on their area of interest. Job one is to determine who your industry's key influencers are and then to make insightful comments on and about their blog postings. What blogs do you turn to? And which blogs do they cite? Your list begins.

Another consideration is that blogging to bloggers can have a profoundly positive impact on search engine ratings. Two foundations of search engine optimization are that search engines value page content that changes regularly more highly than content that doesn't, and they rate a Web site's importance largely by what other "important" pages reference it.

A blog is nothing if not the easiest way to publish regular updates to a key page on your Web site; such continual change alone automatically boosts search engine rankings. If the changes also attract bloggers' attention, you win twice.

The real trick, of course, is mastering the ability to engage influential bloggers in conversation. Self-serving promotion raises red flags. Instead, post an insightful comment about one of their own postings, giving them food for thought—and grist for the mill that will be their next blog posting. That's the ultimate win-win scenario.

**Kevin Strehlo**  
**Senior Vice President, Global Client Services**  
**PowerMark**  
**San Juan Capistrano, CA**