

# More companies quit blogging, go with Facebook instead

April 23 2012, By Roger Yu

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With the emergence of social media, more companies are replacing blogs with nimbler tools requiring less time and resources, such as Facebook, Tumblr and Twitter.

A survey released earlier this year by the University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth says the percentage of companies that maintain blogs fell to 37 percent in 2011 from 50 percent in 2010, based on its survey of 500 fast-growing companies listed by Inc. magazine. Only 23 percent of [Fortune 500 companies](#) maintained a blog in 2011, flat from a year ago after rising for several years.

The trend in business is consistent with the broader loss of interest in blogging among all consumers. In late 2010, the [Pew Research Center](#) said blogging among adults ages 18 to 33 fell 2 percentage points in 2010 from 2008. "Blogging requires more investment. You need content regularly. And you need to think about the risk of blogging, accepting comments, liability issues, defamation," said Nora Ganim Barnes, a professor at the university who wrote the report. One benefit of a blog: "It's a tool and content you own."

It's not just mom-and-pop shops that dropped blogging. Those no longer updating or creating a blog range from Bank of America and building materials maker Owens Corning to Sport Chalet and dating website OkCupid. Others "never started a blog. They just went straight to social-media tools," Barnes said. "I don't know that they won't circle back and see value later - to do more in-depth writing. Twitter has a lot of noise."

T.J. Crawford, a Bank of America spokesman, says the bank dropped the blog because its social-media strategy is focused on [Facebook](#) and Twitter. "We want to be where our customers are," he said.

OkCupid, whose blog was ranked one of the 25 best by Time magazine last year, stopped updating in April 2011. It plans to revive the blog.

Companies often underestimate the amount of work a blog requires, said Pete Steege, director of marketing communications and Web strategy for Rimage, a digital storage device maker. "They think it's like a newsletter or an ad."

Others, such as Core-Mark Holding, stay on the sidelines, lest they talk too much. The fresh-food distributor, which is publicly traded, doesn't have a blog because it's worried about running into trouble with federal regulators about proper disclosure, said Milton Gray Draper, its director of investor relations. "If anything was said there and later it was misinterpreted, it could get us into a lot of trouble."

Lou Hoffman, CEO of The Hoffman Agency, a public relations firm, says many corporate blogs fail to attract readers because they exist solely to pitch products and are badly written. "Companies don't understand that the content on a blog shouldn't be 'about me.' Such information tends to be dull."

Still, engaging blogs can serve crucial marketing goals - especially executives out to establish expertise in their industry, said Scott Monty, head of social media at Ford Motor.

Rimage's Steege said his employer receives little press coverage compared with larger competitors, and the blog helps the [company](#) articulate industry issues.

"I just talk about customers' problems and consciously avoid, most of the time, selling our solutions. You have to have a human voice. We've had a lot of feedback. Even our employees now say, 'I get what we're doing.' "

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