Collaboratory blogging: Many minds are better than one

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With the onset of the Information Age, a new breed of communication is gaining momentum. Since the late 1990’s, the Internet has provided users with a novel framework for publishing content in the form of interactive weblogs (blogs). By enabling new patterns of use, blogs have the potential to transform the general realm of the Internet1. For the last decade, blogs have typically been solo endeavors, of ever, multiple-author blogs (MABs) have started to dominate the blogosphere. Group blogs consists of multiple contributors, each with their own writing style, strengths, and unique personal experiences. It is expected that multiple authors are going to share different viewpoints and opinions. Consequently, the authors, as well as the readers, are exposed to diverse perspectives from a variety of different topics. In the sciences, such as conservation science, this is critical because actors within the field hold widely varying viewpoints and perspectives.

Diverse Perspectives

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Time is Precious

Producing fresh, stimulating content on a regular weekly basis is quite onerous for anyone, but especially for scholars who are already swamped by the demands of academia. If posts are not published routinely enough, you risk losing the attention of readers. By cooperating through multi-author blogging, academics are able to contribute a reasonable level of submissions without sacrificing valuable time.

In addition to creating networks among scientists, blogging has the capacity to promote “broader impacts” by enhancing communication between academics and the general public2. Scientists are obligated to disseminate the findings of their research to the public, especially with recent skepticism and negative public sentiment towards science (e.g., climate change). Scientists must try harder to convey why science and research is important. Blogging is one avenue that academics can use to provide the public and fellow scientists with accessible information on leading edge research. Collaboratory blogging may be used as a channel for communicating scientific knowledge and generating topical discussion with a broad audience, while breaking free from the restrictive, esoteric means of exclusively conveying data to other scientists in the same field.

Researchers working on individual goals, and through shared experiences and learning, provides support through a common interest. Collaborative blogging improves interdisciplinary understanding and provides an avenue for moving away from silos towards synergy, in a more creative and accessible arena.

References
