

Use of business blogs also growing

By STACY VOGEL

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Somewhere between a traditional Web site and a MySpace page sits the blog, short for “Web log.”

Blogs offer more content and user interaction than traditional Web sites and are much easier to maintain, said Brian Brown, a local blog consultant.

The blogging trend doesn’t seem to have caught on yet in Janesville’s business community, but Brown has made a living creating blogs for businesses across the country. He offers a list of reasons why companies should consider creating blogs, even if they already have traditional Web sites:

- They’re much cheaper than traditional Web sites. Some blogs are free, and most are less than \$150 a year.
- They’re search-engine friendly. Blogs tend to have lots of content and are updated often, which search engines like. That increases a site’s chances of turning up at or near the top of a Google search.
- It’s easy for business owners to maintain blogs themselves, instead of relying on Web site professionals.
- Customers can provide valuable feedback through comment options.

Brown created a blog for the Janesville Performing Arts Center, though he had to give up maintaining it because he was too busy with other projects.

The blog got a good response because people could see pictures and summaries of performances before they went to them, said Laurel Canan, executive director of JPAC.

Canan hopes to be able to start updating the blog again soon, she said.

Steve Dean, owner of Mocha Moment, uses his blog to keep the “community” at his coffee shop connected, he said.

He started the blog about a year ago to supplement the business’ Web site because he likes to write, he said.

“It’s a way to let everyone know what’s going on,” he said.

He often posts about benefits and events at the shop. A Jan. 1 entry talks about the birds that congregate on the shop’s porch and a photographer who captured them in a book.

Dean recommends posting lots of pictures in a blog and keeping entries short.

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