

Cites & Insights

Crawford at Large
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Bibs & Blather

Two Million and Counting

Cites & Insights reached a milestone this year—twice. That milestone: **Two million words**. That's the equivalent of anywhere from 20 to 40 typical books. It is, by any measure, a lot of blather.

I say “twice” because the past year included a fair amount of republishing, and there had been some of it before. As a raw count—including all occurrences of the masthead, “Inside this Issue” and repeated material—the count passed two million words in the January 2009 issue. *Excluding* “Inside this issue,” the masthead and repeated material longer than a paragraph or so, the count passed two million words in April 2009. The difference, roughly 97,000 words, accounts for just under five percent of the material.

Through January 2009, the issues totaled just under 2,500 pages; through April, just over 2,600. Page and word counts exclude the annual indices and the phantom *Cites on a Plane* issue.

Overall Readership

There's a nice certainty to the word count and page count. After that, things get a little fuzzy. *Cites & Insights* began on the webpage that came with my AT&T dialup account; no usage figures were available. I really have no idea what the readership was like for the first two years—except that there was enough feedback to keep it going.

From late 2002 (the first issue in volume 3, published in December 2002) through early August 2006, *Cites & Insights* was hosted by Boise State University Libraries. During that time, there were just under 487,000 pageviews in some 546,000 sessions, representing 141,120 unique IP addresses from 157 different countries and other top-level domains.

Since mid-August 2006 (the September 2006 issue), *Cites & Insights* has had its own domain, hosted

on LISHost. But the domain moved in mid-March 2009 from one server to another, making for a discontinuity in logging. As far as I can tell, from mid-August 2006 through mid-March 2009, there were around 808,000 pageviews in 270,000 sessions, representing just under 76,000 unique IP addresses from 158 countries and other top-level domains.

The higher pageview count and lower session count make sense: HTML versions didn't begin until 2006 (with some retrospective conversion). It's hard to say whether readership is growing, shrinking or roughly the same—although those numbers might suggest some shrinkage.

Most Widely-Read Issues

These figures are at best a little fuzzy, since they entirely omit the first two years and come from two different statistical packages. They're also complicated by the HTML factor. So let's call this “most widely-downloaded full issues from December 2002 through early March 2009.” Note that I've excluded PDF pageviews; to the extent that people can view PDFs without downloading them, issue readership may be undercounted.

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The hot pair

You already know the most widely-downloaded issue: Volume 6 Issue 2, *Library 2.0* and “*Library 2.0*,” with 21,952 downloads (**not** including all the HTML views). One other issue shows more than 10,000 downloads: Volume 3 Issue 9, Midsummer 2003. That's also a special issue: *Coping with CIPA: A Censorware Special*.

A dozen issues have been downloaded 6,000 to 8,000 times. In descending order, there are four with

more than 7,000 downloads: Volume 4 Issue 12, Volume 3 Issue 14, Volume 5 Issue 10, Volume 3 Issue 8. Eight more have 6,000 to 7,000: Volume 6 Issue 10, Volume 4 Issue 3, Volume 4 Issue 2, Volume 3 Issue 11, Volume 3 Issue 12, Volume 3 Issue 1, the Volume 2 index, and Volume 4 Issue 1. I have no idea what (if anything) makes these issues special.

Notably, these are mostly older issues; Cites & Insights issues keep accumulating readership over time. Another 13 issues (including one index) have from 5,000 to 5,999 downloads—and those are all from volumes 3, 4 and 5. (Looked at pessimistically, this would suggest that 2003 through 2005 were the glory years and I should quit—but I prefer “readership builds over time.”) Twenty more issues and indexes have 4,000 to 4,877 downloads.

Of the 123 issues through mid-March 2009 (115 issues plus eight indexes), 12 have fewer than 1,000 downloads and 25 have fewer than 2,000. My checkpoint for “enough readers” has, informally, been 700 or so—and no issue that’s been around more than four months fails to hit that target. Four of the 12 low-readership issues come from 2001 and 2002, meaning that many readers aren’t counted.

Most Widely-Read Recent Essays

If the issue download counts are a little fuzzy thanks to multiple sites, it gets worse for essay readership. I’ve added the HTML pageviews for essays (or, in one case, PDF downloads for the separate essay PDF) to the PDF downloads for the issues in which those essays appeared. In some special-issue cases, I didn’t prepare an HTML separate—and, of course, there aren’t any HTML separates for the first three years.

Articles with more than 8,000 “readers.”

Article	Readers	Title
v6i2a	39,460	Library 2.0 and “Library 2.0”
v5i10b	20,020	Perspective: Investigating the Biblioblogosphere
v6i10a	14,476	Perspective: Looking at Liblogs: The Great Middle
v5i13a	12,954	Perspective: Life Trumps Blogging
v4i12a	10,758	Perspective: Wikipedia and Worth
v5i10d	10,575	(C)2 Perspective: Orphan Works
v5i5a	10,422	Bibs & Blather
v4i12c	10,076	Offtopic Perspective: The Rest of the DoubleDoubles
v4i12b	9,996	Copyright Currents
v4i3c	9,804	PC Progress, July 2003-January 2004
v4i12d	9,786	Interesting & Peculiar Products

v4i12e	9,706	Copyright Perspective: IICA: Inducing to Infringe
v7i2c	9,672	Perspective: Conference Speaking: I Have a Little List
v6i4a	9,642	Perspective: Folksonomy and Dichotomy
v4i12f	9,554	Trends & Quick Takes
v7i1b	8,970	Perspective: Book Searching: OCA/GBS Update
v6i4d	8,935	PC Progress, October 2005-February 2006
v5i3b	8,934	The Library Stuff
v5i7d	8,716	Ethical Perspective: Weblogging Ethics and Impact
v6i10b	8,566	Bibs & Blather
v4i3f	8,498	Interesting & Peculiar Products
v5i7e	8,434	ACRL 2005: What's Next? Academic Libraries in a Google Environment
v6i3a	8,366	Followup Perspective: Beyond Library 2.0 and “Library 2.0”
v6i3e	8,300	(C)2 Perspective: What NC Means to Me
v6i1e	8,220	(C)2 Perspective: Will Fair Use Survive?
v5i5c	8,202	PC Progress, November 2004-March 2005
v6i4b	8,198	The Library Stuff
v5i7a	8,163	(C)3 Perspective: FMA: Watching the Way You Want
v6i9a	8,141	Bibs & Blather
v6i4e	8,120	Offtopic Perspective: 50-Movie All Stars Collection 1
v5i5b	8,092	(C)4: Locking Down Technology
v5i5d	8,051	Interesting & Peculiar Products

Articles with 7,000 to 7,999 “readers”

v5i14a	7,961	Perspective: OCA and GLP 1: Ebooks, Etext, Libraries and the Commons
v4i1b	7,930	Ebooks, Etext and PoD
v5i3f	7,930	Session Reports: ALA Midwinter 2005
v6i7a	7,896	Perspective: Books, Blogs & Style
v6i4c	7,888	(C)1: Term & Extent
v6i1c	7,846	Interesting & Peculiar Products
v4i4d	7,837	The Censorware Chronicles
v4i1c	7,824	Copyright Currents
v4i4e	7,784	Library Stuff Book Perspective: Scholarly Publishing
v4i4a	7,779	Library Access to Scholarship

v4i11a	7,744	Perspective: The Quality Contradiction
v5i10c	7,700	Perspectives: Summertime Blahs
v6i1b	7,686	Followup Perspective: OCA and GLP Redux
v6i3c	7,657	Library Stuff Perspective: Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources
v6i7e	7,646	Library Access to Scholarship
v5i10a	7,642	Bibs & Blather
v6i3b	7,625	(C)4 Perspective: Analog Hole and Broadcast Flag
v5i4b	7,536	Perspective: The Dangling Conversation
v4i11b	7,445	The Library Stuff
v4i13b	7,407	Perspective: RSS and Multimodes Revisited
v7i1d	7,402	Finding a Balance: Patrons and the Library
v4i11c	7,384	Library Stuff Perspective: Information Commons?
v6i6a	7,384	Perspective: Discovering Books
v6i1f	7,364	Trends & Quick Takes
v4i13d	7,335	Perspectives: Three Brief Pieces
v4i13c	7,247	Library Access to Scholarship
v4i13a	7,162	The Library Stuff
v6i1a	7,146	Bibs & Blather
v6i1d	7,118	Following Up and Feedback
v5i4c	7,083	Offtopic Perspective: Family Classics 50 Movie Pack, Part 1
v5i6b	7,082	disContent Perspective: Readability
v4i11d	7,075	The Good Stuff
v4i3d	7,004	Copyright Perspective: Compulsory Licensing
v6i5a	7,004	Perspectives: Seventyfive Facets

In addition, 52 articles appear to have 6,000 to 6,999 readers and 42 have 5,000 to 5,999.

Conclusions?

Not many. I haven't tried grouping articles by topic to see whether some topics are more popular than others, partly because I don't think basic readership should be the controlling factor in how *Cites & Insights* works.

My general conclusion is that, despite fewer links from other sites than issues used to get, *Cites & Insights* still has enough readers—and is generally still enough fun—to be worth doing. Thanks to all of you for keeping it that way.

The Rest of the Issue

I can take a hint. Maybe not rapidly, but I *can* take a hint. When I've studied liblogs and reported the results here, for free, the articles have been widely read—more than 14,000 apparent readers in one case, more than 20,000 in another case. (See above.)

When I've tried to do that in book form, for a modest charge, not so much: To date, 80 copies of *Public Library Blogs* and 45 copies of *Academic Library Blogs*. *The Liblog Landscape 2007-2008* isn't quite burning up the market, either, with 50 copies to date, but it's a year newer.

Some authors find that making some or all of their books available for free improved sales of the print books. I don't expect that to be the case for the two library blog books. In retrospect, they were not as well thought out as they could have been. If I was doing them again, they'd have more in common with *The Liblog Landscape 2007-2008*—but would that make any difference?

What I'm doing here is offering most of the “first half” of each library blog book for free, with almost no editing. I'm not including the individual blog descriptions and samples. I'm also not including the complete lists of blogs and institutions, since those serve no real purpose outside book form (and are already available in .xls form on the web in any case). Will I offer the “first half” of *the Liblog Landscape 2007-2008* in a later issue (which, all by itself, would be a large issue)? Hard to say.

Public Library Blogs

Should your public library have a blog—or more blogs than it already has?

I can't answer that question. I can say there's a good chance your library could benefit from one or more blogs.

If anyone tells you that your library *must* have a blog, they're wrong. Very few solutions apply to every public library, no matter how large or small.

On the other hand, hundreds of public libraries (serving as few as 400 people and as many as 2.3 million) already use blogs to good effect. I believe thousands of public libraries could serve their communities well by initiating blogs or adding new blogs.

Why This Book?

This book won't tell you how to start and maintain a blog. You can find plenty of advice within the library

literature and elsewhere, including sources as diverse as Michael P. Sauer's *Blogging and RSS: a librarian's guide* (Information Today, 2006) and the first week's content in the **Five Weeks to a Social Library** course (www.sociallibraries.com/course/week1). For that matter, you can go to blogger (blogger.com) or wordpress (wordpress.com) and try one out, just to get started: It doesn't take long and it's absolutely free.

If you're reading this, you're probably thinking about a blog for your library or considering adding more to what you already have. Or you're at one of the 196 libraries included here and want to see how your blogs compare to others.

You could check out every public library blog listed in the two major sources (the "Weblogs – Public Libraries" page of LISWiki at liswiki.org/wiki/Weblogs_-_Public_Libraries and the "Public libraries" page of *Blogging Libraries Wiki* at www.blogwithoutalibrary.net/links/index.php?title=Public_libraries). But that's more than 530 links (in early August 2007)—a lot of blogs to go through.

The purpose of this book is to guide you to blogs that you might find particularly useful when thinking about your own library's case—blogs from nearby libraries, blogs from libraries with similar service populations or blogs that specialize in topics or work in ways that you'll find interesting.

Most of this book is examples: 252 blogs from 196 libraries, arranged geographically. It's not a comprehensive survey (I did exclude non-English blogs for reasons of practicality), but I did attempt complete coverage given a few basic criteria. I was impressed by the diversity and quality of what's out there.

What's a Blog?

A blog is a web site or portion of a web site consisting of multiple entries organized in reverse chronological order—that is, with the most recent entry at the top.

That's it—as much as I want to define blogs for the purpose of this book and maybe as tightly as you should define blogs in general. Here are other elements frequently included in definitions of blogs—and why I don't include them here:

- **A website:** Some of the blogs here function within larger websites, and that can be appropriate for library purposes.
- **Archived by date:** Some library blogs, typically those devoted to library events, don't have visible archives—and that can be appropriate.
- **Relatively brief entries:** While most library blogs run to one-paragraph entries, sometimes

very brief paragraphs, there are also interesting blogs consisting of longer essays.

- **Links:** It's possible to have worthwhile library blogs that don't have any links at all.
- **Permalink for each post:** In some cases, permalinks serve no purpose in specialized library blogs.
- **Built with blogging software:** Just as blogging software can be used for very different purposes, blogs can run on content management software or custom-built software.
- **Comments:** While comments can increase community interaction and may be a sign of blogs as social software, many public library blogs don't allow comments, sometimes for excellent reasons—and even more blogs don't *have* any comments.
- **Categories or tags:** Whether categories or tags are needed or useful depends on the purpose of the blog and its relationship to the library's website in general.
- **Dated entries:** There are very few occasions in which undated blog entries make sense—but "very few" does not equal "none."

As general as I'm trying to be in defining a blog, it's true that two or three candidate blogs were excluded from this survey if they did *not* have dated entries—and if they did not have any form of archive, unless the home page itself ran back to December 2006 or earlier.

Criteria for Inclusion

My intent was to include a broadly representative sample of successful and active English-language public library blogs. Here's how I went about it.

- I activated *every* English-language public library blog link in the two wiki lists noted above—the LISWiki public library blog list and the *Blogging Libraries* public library blog list. I added selective blogs from the "Library director" page of *Blogging libraries* if the blogs showed links to public libraries.
- If the blog couldn't be reached or it was obvious that it had ceased by February 2007 or began in 2007, I crossed it off the printed checklists I'd made of each blog list. Otherwise, I subscribed to its feed in a special Bloglines section for this purpose.
- Baseline criteria: The blog must have at least one post before calendar 2007 and must have at least one post in two of the three months used for

evaluation: March, April and May 2007. If a blog began in 2007, it's a little early to call it "successful"—while official library blogs seem less prone to enthusiastic starts and quick fadeouts than individual blogs, it still happens all too often. If a blog didn't include posts in at least two of the three spring months, it seemed fair to call it inactive. I can think of reasons why a blog might be silent for most or all of the summer; it's hard to imagine why an active blog would go silent for all of March and April, all of April and May, or all of March and all of May.

- Quick examination yielded a set of 238 blogs out of roughly 360 candidates (excluding duplicates). I encountered at least 68 defunct blogs and another 19 that weren't reachable. Sixteen blogs on the lists began in 2007—and I'm sure many more have, but aren't yet in the wikis. At least eight were non-English. Nine or more either weren't blogs at all or weren't from public libraries.
- Exporting the Bloglines section containing the 238 blogs, I imported the OPML to Excel, stripping out unnecessary columns and adding new columns for the metrics used in this study.
- I went through each blog, measuring the number of posts during March-May 2007, total length of posts, number of comments received on those posts (in some cases correcting for spam comments) and the number of illustrations (photos, book jackets and others) in those posts. I stored the name of the library and its Zip code (or Canadian postal code) and looked for the library's service area population using Worldcat Registry (and other sources when that didn't work). I also looked at the relationship of the blog to the library website and noted interesting blog template choices. Finally, I looked at two crude measures of blog visibility, although those measures are even less interesting and meaningful for library blogs than they are for personal liblogs.
- In the course of studying the blogs, another 29 fell by the wayside, most commonly because they failed to have at least one post in at least two of the three study months. One turned out to be a mischaracterized academic library blog; a few had gone missing between the initial pass and the second pass. In a couple of cases, I couldn't verify the age of the blog or analyze its contents because posts were undated or there was no archive of any sort. I note a few of those

blogs in a later chapter: While they didn't fit the study, they might still be worth checking out.

- That left me with 209 blogs representing 196 libraries. I then went back through these 196 libraries to add *other* blogs that met my criteria but weren't listed in either wiki. I limited each multi-blog library to a maximum of five blogs, which was only an issue with one or two libraries.
- The final list, represented in the last twelve chapters of this book, is 252 blogs from 196 libraries.

If that's too much detail for you, here are the criteria in brief: Each blog had to be English-language, beginning no later than December 2006, with at least one post in two of the three months March, April and May 2007—and with enough internal evidence to demonstrate those criteria.

Blogs by Type and Service Population

What "type" is a blog? In some cases it's clear from the name of the blog. In others, I assigned a type based on content of the posts within the study period. (Note: The Zip or Postal code would guide you to the blog discussion within the book.)

General and Multipurpose Blogs

This catchall includes most multipurpose blogs that aren't aimed at an age group—blogs that include library news and hours, events, new materials, reviews, what have you. This catchall type also includes those cases where the library webpage is a blog.

General—Under 1,000

Blog.....	Serves	Zip
Wetmore Public Library	400	66550
Seldovia Public Library	400	99663

General—1,000 to 2,000

Sodus Free Library blog.....	1,700	14551
Hopewell Public Library	1,900	08525
Madison Library news and links	2,000	03849

General—2,700 to 4,000

Whitewright Public Library	2,700	75491
Galway Public Library	3,600	12074
Oak Bluffs Public Library.....	3,800	01557
Wabasha Public Library	4,000	55981

General—5,000 to 9,900

Library Ledger Online	5,000	53040
Pioneer Memorial Library Blog	5,200	67701
Warsaw Public Library Happenings	5,400	14569
AliceBakerBlog.....	5,500	53119

The Short List.....	5,600	06426
Richards Free Library News from Richards Free Library		
.....	5,800	03773
h20boro lib blog.....	6,300	04030
Check out the Lyons Public Library!.....	7,000	14489
West Long Branch Public Library.....	7,600	07764
Ye Old Village Library Blog.....	9,200	19543
River Rouge Public Library.....	9,900	48218

General—10,000 to 24,000

Latest entries from lakevillelibrary.blog-city.com		
.....	10,000	02347
HCL News.....	10,000	49242
Carver Public Library . blog.....	11,000	02330
Fiske Free Library.....	12,000	03743
Off the Shelves.....	13,000	60526
Lane Memorial Library Blog.....	14,000	03842
Pburg Free.....	14,000	08865
Parma Kids.....	15,000	14468
Three Rivers Public Library News Blog		
.....	16,000	60410
Brooks Public Library.....	16,000	T1R 1B9
Hibbing Public Library.....	17,000	55746
What's New/Hot Topics.....	18,000	01301
BLog.....	18,000	11576
Brookfield Public Library - Recent News		
.....	19,000	60513
Mansfield Public Library.....	23,000	02048
Lucy Robbins Welles Library News	24,000	06111
Southlake Public Library.....	24,000	76092

General—25,000 to 44,000

What's New @ Roselle Public Library	25,000	60172
Bradford West Gwillimbury Public Library Blog		
.....	25,000	L3Z 2A7
Dover Public Library news.....	26,000	03820
Neptune Public Library.....	26,000	07753
West Islip Public Library.....	29,000	11795
Homer Township Public Library.....	29,000	60491
Albert Lea Public Library.....	30,000	56007
City of Monterey Monterey Public Library Blog		
.....	30,000	93940
Madison-Jefferson County Public Library - Library-Buzz		
.....	31,000	47250
The eStory.....	33,000	19380
Chelmsford Library Blog.....	34,000	01824
Woonsocket Harris Public Library	35,000	02895
Bartlesville Public Library News	35,000	74003
Whitley County Public Library.....	37,000	40769
Half Hollow Hills Community Library		
.....	43,000	11747
Highland County District Library Weblog		
.....	43,000	45133
New at Hackley Public Library.....	44,000	49440

General—51,000 to 96,000

The Perrot Memorial Library Blog.....	51,000	06870
Old Bridge Library Weblog.....	56,000	08857

Danbury Library Blog.....	63,000	06810
Waterloo Public Library Reference.....	69,000	50701
Madison County Public Library News		
.....	69,000	40475
LibLog.....	75,000	94063
Hot Topics.....	86,000	54901
Palatine Public Library District.....	90,000	60067
Fargo.....	91,000	58102
TCPL News.....	96,000	14850

General—105,000 to 231,000

HOOPLA.....	105,000	66061
Burbank Library Blog.....	105,000	91502
the New Cybrary.....	106,000	54911
WPLINFOSTUFF.....	113,000	N2L 5E2
ICARUS... the Santa Fe Public Library Blog		
.....	118,000	87501
Reading Public Library.....	127,000	19602
In the stacks.....	130,000	27203
By the Park: Archdale Public Library	130,000	27263
Marin County Free Library Blog.....	137,000	94903
Small Talk . . . KFPL.....	137,000	K7L 1X8
Birmingham Public Library's Latest News, Reviews & Info		
.....	146,000	35203
Kenton County Public Library.....	152,000	41011
Ann Arbor District Library -	155,000	48104
PaperCuts.....	167,000	66604
McBook.....	170,000	74501
SJCPL Blog.....	173,000	46601
Wellington City Libraries.....	180,000	NewZealand
CMRLS News.....	190,000	39043
The Atrium.....	197,000	49503
Sutherland Shire Libraries News.....	205,000	Australia
Galway Public Libraries Blog.....	231,000	Ireland

General—306,000 to 495,000

YARRA PLENTY LIBRARY BLOG.....	306,000	Australia
acpl.info.....	324,000	46802
Johnson County Library.....	380,000	66212
What's New @ Eastern Regional Libraries		
.....	392,000	Australia
Santa Clara County Library-The Latest SCCoop		
.....	406,000	95032
The Blog @ ppld.org.....	495,000	80903

General—670,000 and Up

Austin Public Library Blog.....	672,000	78701
Hennepin County Library: Catalog News		
.....	709,000	55305
Free Library Blog.....	1,511,000	19103
Invisible Ink.....	2,350,000	Australia

Books

These blogs focus on books—including new items and summaries. Note several other book-related types that follow.		
Inside the Pages.....	3,800	53010

International Falls Public Library Happenings	6,100	56649
Connections - Books	16,000	06820
Westport Public Library BOOK blog	22,000	06880
Monroe Township Public Library - Staff Picks	27,000	08831
Georgina Reads	45,000	L4P 3P7
MADreads	260,000	53703
Memphis Reads	892,000	38111

Books and More

These blogs primarily deal with books but include related posts.

Book Comments	17,000	20912
Hinsdale Public Library Reading Corner	18,000	60521
Lansing Library Adult News & Reviews Blog	28,000	60438
Emporia Public Library Blog	32,000	66801
HPL Book Hunt	34,000	11743
Book Lovers Online Guide	97,000	95678
Cambridge Libraries Blog	124,000	N1S 2K6

Book Clubs and Discussion Groups

Clymer Book Blog	11,000	18350
Berkeley Heights Public Library Book Blog	12,000	07922
52 Books, 52 Weeks	24,000	60106
SAPL Book Clubs	58,000	T8N 3Z9
Norwalk Public Library's Laid Back Book Club	69,000	06850
Book Discussion	80,000	03060

Book Reviews

These appear almost entirely devoted to book reviews; there may be some overlap with book clubs.

Delphi Public Library's Read Spot	7,900	46923
WLPL ONLINE BOOK CLUB	10,000	06096
book bits	14,000	02090
What We're Reading	17,000	10924
Juneau Public Library Book Blog	46,000	99801
Pete's Picks	58,000	T8N 3Z9
Newton Reads	84,000	02459
Guelph Public Library Book Buzz	115,000	N1H 4J6
BookFix	150,000	66101
Henderson Libraries Novel News	232,000	89012
Yarra Plenty Book Blog	306,000	Australia
Mostly NF Blog	497,000	98446

Reviews

These blogs focus on reviews of all sorts of material.

What We're Readin' and Watchin'	24,000	06111
Lost in the Stacks	69,000	50701
the Cybrary Reviews	106,000	54911
Turning the Page	815,000	45202

Movies and Music

Connections - Movies & Music	16,000	06820
Seen Scenes	21,000	44087

Westport Public Library MOVIE & MUSIC blog	22,000	06880
Music at HBPL	199,000	92648

New Item Lists

These blogs list new items with little or no annotation.

What's New at Carter Memorial Library	4,600	54963
S. W. Smith Library	9,200	16743
New Materials @ Menasha Public Library	24,000	54952

New Materials

These blogs list and discuss new items of all sorts.

What's New @ Coloma Public Library	1,700	54930
New Materials at the Poy Sippi Public Library	1,700	54967
Shelf Scene	59,000	20186
Business Lines	213,000	46410
eBranch Blog	1,321,000	77054

Directors' Blogs

Musings from Vermont	9,700	05301
Darien Library Directors Blog	16,000	06820
Administratively Speaking	17,000	10924
Hinsdale Director's Blog	18,000	60521
Monroe Township Public Library	27,000	08831
She Said/He Said:Kankakee Public Library Blog	27,000	60901
Director's Blog	29,000	60491
CFPLDirector	38,000	50613
WPLDirector	69,000	50701
Director's Blog	80,000	03060
Library Leader	971,000	32801

Events

These blogs feature almost exclusively library event listings.

Osage City Public Library	2,900	66523
Parsons Public Library	11,000	67357
Carnegie Public Library of Steuben County	14,000	46703
Connections – Events	16,000	06820
Library Staff Weblog	17,000	20912
Harford County Public Library News & Events	22,000	21017
Delta Township District Library	30,000	48917
Buena Park Library District News	81,000	90620
C-Scapes	110,000	33755
Fresno County Library Events & Book Clubs	836,000	93721

Genealogy

History & Genealogy at the Culver Union		
-Twp. Public Library	3,100	46511
Anccestor Research Log	37,000	48170
Columbus Public Library Genealogy & Local History	197,000	31906
Yarra Plenty Genealogy	306,000	Australia

Technology

Technically Speaking	17,000	10924
Sites and Soundbytes	24,000	54952
Tuesday Technology Talks @ PPL.....	28,000	08542
Lansing Public Library Technology Blog		
.....	28,000	60438
Iosco-Arenac District Library Technology Blog		
.....	44,000	48730
Webmaster Blog.....	497,000	98446

Children and KidLit

Children's Books from Wright Memorial Public Library		
.....	9,100	45419
The Children's Room	17,000	20912
Kids Lit.....	24,000	54952
Wilmette Public Library Staff Book Reviews		
(Children's Books)	28,000	60091
Galesburg Library Kids	34,000	61401
Lisa's Blog.....	101,000	33401
Kid's Blog	495,000	80903
Toronto Public Library LOUD for Kids		
.....	2,300,000	M4W 2G8

Teens—9,100 to 35,000

Teen Scene.....	9,100	45419
Teen Blog@Brooks	9,700	05301
LWTeens	11,000	14103
Highland Park Public Library Teen Blog		
.....	13,000	08904
Parma Teens	15,000	14468
Goshen Teens	17,000	10924
Teen Book Buzz	17,000	20912
teen blog.....	18,000	60521
MGPL Teen Zone Blog	22,000	60053
What's happening for teens at the library?		
.....	25,000	K0K 2K0
Lansing Library Youth News & Reviews Blog		
.....	28,000	60438
Lansing Public Library Teen News & Reviews		
.....	28,000	60438
Stuff for Teens.....	35,000	74003

Teens—41,000 to 97,000

JMCPL Teen Scene.....	41,000	S6V 1B7
Orland Park Public Library Teen Blog		
.....	51,000	60462
The Loft online	54,000	60477
tuftsstuff teens	55,000	02188
SAPL Teen Corner Reviews.....	58,000	T8N 3Z9
in the teen zone	59,000	02860
Worthingteens	59,000	43085
HTFLteens.....	65,000	19083
FPL Teen Blog.....	67,000	01702
Teens @ Waterloo Public Library	69,000	50701
NPL Teen Reads.....	80,000	03060
Sellers Library Teens	97,000	19082

Teens—123,000 and up

Blogging Vortex	123,000	L4J 8C1
FCL Teen Talk	128,000	29506
Teen Corner Blog.....	130,000	27203
Graffiti.....	167,000	66604
JMRL Young Adult Services	184,000	22922
Camden County Library Teen Zone		
.....	224,000	08043
GVPL Book Picks for Teens	300,000	V8W 3H2
Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh – Teen		
.....	457,000	15213
Teen Zone Blog!.....	495,000	80903
Teen Blog	497,000	98446
B&ECPL Teen Space Blog.....	947,000	14203

Tweens (5th and 6th Grades)

MGPL 5th and 6th Graders	22,000	60053
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Young Adults (as defined by library)

Winfield Library's Y.A. Blog.....	8,700	60190
The Young Adult Loft	38,000	60068
The Zoo Informer.....	40,000	40004
PML YA Yakkers!	51,000	11772
YA Library News	56,000	43050
YA KNOW @ BCL.....	110,000	97005

Adult Literacy

Project Read of the San Francisco Public Library		
.....	793,000	94102

Censorship

Fahrenheit 451: Banned Books.....	16,000	LOS 1E0
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Websites

The In-Site Bank.....	5,600	06426
Latest entries from lucys-webrarians..	24,000	06111

Community, City, State

Darien Community Matters.....	16,000	06820
SkokieTalk –.....	63,000	60077

Construction

What's New With The Renovation Project		
.....	18,000	60521
Lafayette Public Library South Regional Library		
.....	195,000	70501

Digital Collections

Birmingham Public Library's digital collections		
.....	146,000	35203

Essays

These two blogs don't fit any other category—they're essays.

Wayne County Public Library	114,000	27530
The Librarian's Own Grove	277,000	92501

Friends

I suspect more Friends of the Library groups have blogs, but they're not in the library weblog wikis.		
Friends of the Lacey Library	31,000	98503

Gaming

GameBlog 173,00046601

Job Advice

Newton's Quick Job Search Blog 84,00002459

Library Staff

Library Musings: Kankakee Public Library

..... 27,00060901

Children's Department Paperless Notebook

..... 33,00015102

Currency 1,000,00066049

Local History

Yarra Plenty Library Local History Blog

..... 306,000 Australia

Nonprofits

Springfield-Greene County Library Nonprofit Prophet

..... 240,00065801

Parents

MGPL Parents 22,00060053

Podcasts

Sunnyvale Public Library Podcasts.. 132,00094086

Readers' Advisory

Readers' Advisory Knapsack..... 84,00002459

Reference

Hinsdale Reference..... 18,00060521

From the Reference Desk 80,00003060

What's New in Newton Reference?.... 84,00002459

What's Feasible?

The list above should challenge some of your assumptions as to what smaller libraries can and can't do. Book review blogs when your library serves fewer than 15,000? See 46923, 06096, 02090. Do directors of under-20,000-user libraries do their own blogs? Maybe even 10,000! See 05301, 06820, 10924, 60521—and, a little larger, the remarkable back-and-forth blog at 60901.

Surely only larger libraries could devote blogs to genealogy? 46511: Service area 3,100. A children's book blog from a 9,100-person library: 45419. Teen blogs for libraries of under 20,000? Eight of them—go look at the list (and don't forget the YA blog for a library serving 8,700 people).

As for doing blogs at all—well, the two libraries “under 1,000” actually have service area populations of fewer than 400 each. In both cases (as in a couple of other cases), the blog is the library's homepage—and it works well.

What's Not Here

I didn't include blogs that clearly began in 2007 or gave no evidence of starting earlier. Given the rate of failure

for very young blogs, it didn't seem realistic to include these startups. I also didn't include blogs that had no posts after February 2007—or, for that matter, that only had one post within the March-May 2007 period. They're definitely dormant and may have ceased.

Here are a few special cases that might be worth a look—blogs and bloglike sites that have been around for a while (or *may have* been around for a while) but didn't work for the body of this book.

Champaign Library Events (www.champaign.org/events) began in August 2006. It provides either a “month view” with color-coded items for days with events, or a “day view” with a little more information—but for past months, you can only see one day view at a time. All but two of the 91 days in the study quarter had events, and there are probably more than 200 posts. It's an interesting approach that just didn't fit.

Morrill Public Library (www.hiawathalibrary.org) appears to be using a blog as its home page (each entry has a “Posted in” mark with categories and “No comments” note). It's another clean example of using blog software as a library website. But the entries aren't dated and there's no archive whatsoever—which may work perfectly well for the library's purposes (and is certainly worth a look), but meant I couldn't verify eligibility or track posts during March-May 2007.

Pontiac Public Library (www.pontiacpubliclibrary.org/drupal/) is also in one of the library blog wikis and has the look of a blog-populated front page (again with no dates and no archive), but “drupal” suggests that it's driven by an open-source content management system rather than blogging software. Also clean, open, worth a visit.

The *PVLD Director's Blog* (Palos Verdes Library District, pvlddirectorsblog.typepad.com/kathy/) looks to be an interesting Directors' Blog, including some feedback—but there's no archive or other way to retrieve older posts and the earliest visible post is from July 2007.

Consider *Library Events* from the West Branch Public Library (www.westbranchlibrary.com/events.htm): The clean, open page says “Powered by Blogger” and a big “87” above a list of events suggests a blog entry—but there's no navigation at all. Again, this may work just fine for the patrons of West Branch—after all, do you really need to look back at old events?

Metrics and Standouts

What makes a library blog a success? That depends on the library. Each of the blogs may qualify as a success for the people who produce it and the patrons

who read it. I'm not planning to praise specific blogs. I'm *certainly* not planning to critique the writing.

What I can do as an outside observer is *describe* the blogs. A few metrics help flesh out that description. Here, I'd like to explain the metrics used and list the outliers—the blogs in the top quintile (top 20%) of a given metric.

Defining the Metrics

I noted and calculated the following metrics, in all cases based on tracking blog posts from March 1 through May 31, 2007.

- **Number of posts:** A simple count of blogging frequency. There were 91 days and 13 weeks in the quarter. You can calculate other frequencies based on that, although some blogs clump several posts on one day then go several days without posts. In one or two cases (noted in the profiles), I counted posts for one month and multiplied by three—because it was too cumbersome to count posts for all three months.
- **Number of comments and comments per post:** Many blogs don't support comments. Many more didn't have any. In a couple of cases where there were quite a few comments on one post and none on others, I found that the comments were spam and discounted them. Blog profiles include comments per post when that ratio is at least 0.3 (that is, three comments for every 10 posts), the mean figure for all blogs.
- **Number of illustrations and illustrations per post:** Quite a few blogs don't use illustrations. Others have at least one illustration for every post. I include illustrations per post within the blog profile when that ratio is greater than 0.7, the mean figure for all blogs.
- **Total words and average post length:** I included blog overhead *within* posts (e.g., “No comments” and “Posted on...”), but not *around* posts (sidebar contents). In a few cases (noted in profiles) where it was difficult to copy-and-paste blog archives, I determined the length of the most recent 10 (in one case 20) posts and extrapolated the overall length from that figure. Profiles don't include total words, but the most voluminous blogs are noted later in this chapter.
- **Longevity:** The profile includes the month in which the first post appeared, based on internal evidence.
- **Visibility:** This may be an entirely meaningless figure for public libraries, since blog visibility

within a community may show up in ways that don't influence this number. Profiles only include a visibility note when the visibility factor (described below) was at least 1.0.

The Visibility Factor is a SWAG—a statistical wild-ass guess as to a blog's visibility within the broader community. It's become more difficult to estimate visibility over time, as search engines have made it more difficult to count actual links to a blog. It's also clear that visibility isn't a linear issue: A blog with 1,200 Technorati links and 1,000 Bloglines subscriptions is *not* “ten times as visible” as one with 120 links and 100 subscriptions; it's perhaps twice as visible.

The Visibility Factor used for this book is a logarithmic measure: Log10 (that is, logarithm to base 10) of the sum of Technorati links and Bloglines subscribers, as reported by the website *popuri.us*. For 209 of the blogs, the *popuri.us* check was done on the same day in late May 2007. For the other 43 (“additional blogs” from the 196 libraries in the study), the check was done during the last week of July 2007. Visibility factors less than 1.0 are not reported.

I'm calling visibility factors between 1.0 and 1.9 “slightly visible” (the sum of links and subscribers is between 10 and 99). 2.0 to 2.9 “visible” (the sum is between 100 and 999). 3.0 to 3.9 “quite visible” (the sum is between 1,000 and 10,000). If there are any in the 4.0-4.9 range, they're labeled as “highly visible.” In the broader blogging world, “A-list blogs” have visibility factors in the 5.0 to 6.9 range.

For any set of metrics this large and varied, two “averages” both have meaning and tend to be different. What's usually called the average is the mean: The total of all values divided by the number of values. A few high values can throw off the mean significantly. Another average worth paying attention to is the median—the value for which half of the values are higher and half are lower.

Posts

I counted or extrapolated 5,976 posts among 253 blogs for the three months of March, April and May 2007. That's a mean of 23.7 posts—a bit less than two posts a week, not a bad average for blogs. But the median was 12.0 posts: Slightly under one post a week.

Working up from the least frequent (and noting that any blog with fewer than two posts was excluded), 26 of the blogs had two or three posts—no more than one a month on average. Another 40 had four to six posts, still less than one every two weeks. Thus, just over 26% of the blogs had very infrequent

posts. Sixty-six more blogs (another 26%) had seven to 12 posts—more than one every two weeks, less than one a week.

Getting from median to mean, 49 blogs had 13 to 23 posts—more than one but less than two per week. Another 20 had 24 to 32 posts—and that brings us up to the 20% of blogs with most frequent postings (shown in descending order):

Blog	Posts.....	Zip
Ann Arbor District Library -	400	48104
Inside the Pages	211	53010
SJCPL Blog.....	203	46601
PaperCuts	159	66604
ICARUS... the Santa Fe Public Library Blog	112	87501
SkokieTalk -	108	60077
Santa Clara County Library - The Latest SCCoop	108	95032
Kids Lit	105	54952
Sellers Library Teens	103	19082
Turning the Page... ..	92	45202
Dover Public Library news	86	03820
Sites and Soundbytes	83	54952
Southlake Public Library.....	83	76092
MADreads.....	80	53703
From the Reference Desk	74	03060
Burbank Library Blog.....	69	91502
52 Books, 52 Weeks.....	66	60106
Graffiti	66	66604
Columbus Public Library Genealogy & Local History	63	31906
What's New @ Eastern Regional Libraries.....	62	Australia
The Perrot Memorial Library Blog.....	60	06870
Free Library Blog	60	19103
Birmingham Public Library's Latest News, Reviews & Info	60	35203
Albert Lea Public Library	60	56007
Wellington City Libraries	60 ..	NewZealand
The Blog @ ppld.org	56	80903
The Atrium	55	49503
West Long Branch Public Library.....	54	07764
YA KNOW @ BCL.....	52	97005
Westport Public Library BOOK blog.....	51	06880
FPL Teen Blog	49	01702
The Short List	47	06426
Old Bridge Library Weblog	46	08857
HPL Book Hunt	45	11743
Sodus Free Library blog.....	45	14551
Fahrenheit 451: Banned Books	45	L0S 1E0
The In-Site Bank	44	06426
h20boro lib blog	42	04030
Warsaw Public Library Happenings	39	14569
Wilmette Public Library Staff Book Reviews (Children's Books).....	39	60091
Berkeley Heights Public Library Book Blog ..	38	07922

Children's Department Paperless Notebook.....	38	15102
Memphis Reads	37	38111
Norwalk Public Library's Laid Back Book Club	36	06850
Marin County Free Library Blog	35	94903
Toronto Public Library LOUD for Kids	35	M4W 2G8
Westport Public Library MOVIE & MUSIC blog	34	06880
Connections - Events.....	33	06820
New at Hackley Public Library	33	49440
Small Talk . . . KFPL	33	K7L 1X8

Comments

Blogs *may* be a great way to increase community involvement—but don't be too surprised if your library blog doesn't get many comments. While there were 1,768 comments on the posts—an average (mean) of seven per blog—that's a wildly misleading average. Nearly one-quarter of those comments were attached to gaming-related posts at Ann Arbor District Library's blog. The three most-commented blogs had 647 comments between them: 37% of the total, leaving 1,121 for the 249 other blogs, or an average of 4.5 per blog.

That number's also misleading. Only 118 of the 252 blogs had any comments *at all*, and another 25 had one comment each. The *median* number of comments is zero, since more than half the blogs had no comments. Many didn't allow them (entirely reasonable for an events blog) and many others just didn't have any. Fact is, it can be tough to get comments on an official blog—particularly if it doesn't involve trash-talking teenagers.

Blogs with more than five comments over the three-month period make up just less than 20% of the blogs. Here they are, in order by descending number of comments:

Blog.....	Comments.....	Zip
Ann Arbor District Library -	392	48104
SJCPL Blog	153	46601
The Loft online	102	60477
PaperCuts.....	72	66604
MADreads.....	71	53703
Kids Lit.....	70	54952
GameBlog.....	67	46601
Monterey Public Library Blog	46	93940
Fahrenheit 451: Banned Books	45	L0S 1E0
Mostly NF Blog.....	40	98446
Graffiti	36	66604
Sellers Library Teens	34	19082
Teen Blog	27	98446
Lucy Robbins Welles Library News.....	26	06111
Dover Public Library news.....	23	03820
The Perrot Memorial Library Blog.....	20	06870
The Blog @ ppld.org.....	19	80903

Kid's Blog	19	80903
Turning the Page	18	45202
Toronto Public Library LOUD for Kids	18	M4W 2G8
Worthingteens	16	43085
The Atrium	16	49503
52 Books, 52 Weeks	16	60106
She Said/He Said:Kankakee Public Library Blog	15	60901
Westport Public Library MOVIE & MUSIC blog	14	06880
Lisa's Blog	14	33401
Teen Scene	14	45419
Norwalk Public Library's Laid Back Book Club	13	06850
Birmingham Public Library's Latest News, Reviews & Info	13	35203
Hennepin County Library: Catalog News	13	55305
Teen Zone Blog!	12	80903
Webmaster Blog	12	98446
Half Hollow Hills Community Library	11	11747
Burbank Library Blog	11	91502
PML YA Yakkers!	10	11772
Free Library Blog	10	19103
Connections - Events	9	06820
C-Scapes	9	33755
Memphis Reads	8	38111
Brookfield Public Library - Recent News	8	60513
Georgina Reads	8	L4P 3P7
From the Reference Desk	7	03060
The In-Site Bank	7	06426
Darien Community Matters	7	06820
FPL Teen Blog	6	01702
The Short List	6	06426
Connections - Movies & Music	6	06820
Inside the Pages	6	53010
What's happening for teens at the library?	6	K0K 2K0

Comments per Post

If the median number of comments is zero, the median comments per post must also be zero. The mean number of comments per post—the average—is a modest 0.3, and only 45 blogs manage to beat that average. Instead of listing the 20% of blogs with the highest ratio, here are the 41 blogs (16%) with at least half a comment per blog during the three months:

Blog	Comments per Post	Zip
Teen Blog	13.5	98446
GameBlog	5.6	46601
Hennepin County Library: Catalog News	4.3	55305
The Loft online	3.3	60477
Monterey Public Library Blog	3.3	93940
JMRL Young Adult Services	2.5	22922
Mostly NF Blog	2.5	98446
Kid's Blog	1.9	80903
Webmaster Blog	1.7	98446

She Said/He Said:Kankakee Public Library Blog	1.5	60901
Teen Zone Blog!	1.5	80903
Teen Scene	1.3	45419
Fahrenheit 451: Banned Books	1.0	L0S 1E0
Ann Arbor District Library -	1.0	48104
Worthingteens	0.9	43085
Lucy Robbins Welles Library News	0.9	06111
MADreads	0.9	53703
What's happening for teens at the library?	0.9	K0K 2K0
The Young Adult Loft	0.8	60068
Georgina Reads	0.8	L4P 3P7
SJCPL Blog	0.8	46601
PML YA Yakkers!	0.7	11772
Musings from Vermont	0.7	05301
Teen Blog@Brooks	0.7	05301
Kids Lit	0.7	54952
Juneau Public Library Book Blog	0.7	99801
Currency	0.6	66049
Darien Library Directors Blog	0.6	06820
WPLINFOSTUFF	0.6	N2L 5E2
Graffiti	0.5	66604
Brookfield Public Library - Recent News	0.5	60513
Lisa's Blog	0.5	33401
Toronto Public Library LOUD for Kids	0.5	M4W 2G8
tuftsstuff teens	0.5	02188
Richards Free Library News	0.5	03773
Goshen Teens	0.5	10924
WPLDirector	0.5	50701
YARRA PLENTY LIBRARY BLOG	0.5	Australia
SAPL Book Clubs	0.5	T8N 3Z9
What We're Readin' and Watchin'	0.5	06111
PaperCuts	0.5	66604

Illustrations

Some book and book review blogs use book covers to illustrate almost every post. Some blogs include a fair number of photographs. Some use icons. A few blogs appear to use original miniature landscapes as illustrations. And, of course, some blogs don't use illustrations at all—70 of the 252 blogs had not a single illustration during the three-month study period. In all, there were 4,691 illustrations attached to the 5,976 posts.

The average number of illustrations is 18.6—but the median is 5.0. The top quintile begins at 24 illustrations over three months—almost five times the median and about one-third more than average.

Blog	Illustrations	Zip
SJCPL Blog	814	46601
PaperCuts	235	66604
The Short List	143	06426
Ann Arbor District Library -	133	48104
ICARUS... the Santa Fe Public Library Blog	130	87501
Kids Lit	113	54952

Santa Clara County Library - The Latest SCCoop	95	95032
Southlake Public Library	93	76092
YA KNOW @ BCL	90	97005
MADreads	89	53703
Turning the Page	83	45202
Connections - Movies & Music	80	06820
Graffiti	79	66604
Dover Public Library news	78	03820
Fresno County Library Events & Book Clubs	64	93721
Wellington City Libraries	60	NewZealand
Birmingham Public Library's Latest News, Reviews & Info	59	35203
The Perrot Memorial Library Blog	58	06870
Connections - Books	50	06820
Connections - Events	49	06820
Hopewell Public Library	49	08525
Albert Lea Public Library	49	56007
Old Bridge Library Weblog	48	08857
Madison County Public Library News	43	40475
SkokieTalk -	43	60077
Burbank Library Blog	41	91502
What's happening for teens at the library?	41	K0K 2K0
FPL Teen Blog	40	01702
The In-Site Bank	40	06426
Sodus Free Library blog	40	14551
Wilmette Public Library Staff Book Reviews (Children's Books)	39	60091
The Atrium	37	49503
Sites and Soundbytes	37	54952
Winfield Library's Y.A. Blog	37	60190
Sellers Library Teens	36	19082
Cambridge Libraries Blog	36	N1S 2K6
Warsaw Public Library Happenings	35	14569
Free Library Blog	35	19103
Memphis Reads	35	38111
Worthingteens	33	43085
Westport Public Library BOOK blog	31	06880
MGPL Parents	31	60053
Mostly NF Blog	31	98446
Fahrenheit 451: Banned Books	29	LOS 1E0
Homer Township Public Library	28	60491
eBranch Blog	28	77054
Lucy Robbins Welles Library News	27	06111
Westport Public Library MOVIE & MUSIC blog	27	06880
the New Cybrary	25	54911
Parma Teens	24	14468

Illustrations per Post

As with comments, the raw number of illustrations can be misleading—very busy blogs tend to have more illustrations. The average number of illustrations per post may be a more meaningful number. Here, the

median and the mean are close together: the average or mean is 0.7 illustrations per post, while the median is 0.5 illustrations per post.

Too many blogs have 1.0 illustrations per post to draw a boundary anywhere near the 20% mark. That makes sense: What's more natural for some types of blog than to have exactly one illustration per post? (Actually, for a variety of reasons, "one illustration per post" tends to mean anywhere from 0.8 to 1.1 illustrations per post.)

The top group in this case is 44 blogs with at least 1.1 illustrations per post—17% of the blogs.

Blog	Illustrations per Post	Zip
Fresno County Library Events & Book Clubs	12.8	93721
What's happening for teens at the library?	5.9	K0K 2K0
Highland Park Public Library Teen Blog	5.0	08904
Wetmore Public Library	4.5	66550
SJCPL Blog	4.0	46601
Pioneer Memorial Library Blog	4.0	67701
Lafayette Public Library - South Regional Library	3.8	70501
MGPL Parents	3.1	60053
The Short List	3.0	06426
Connections - Movies & Music	3.0	06820
Madison County Public Library News	2.9	40475
Hopewell Public Library	2.6	08525
eBranch Blog	2.5	77054
Connections - Books	2.4	06820
YARRA PLENTY LIBRARY BLOG	2.3	Australia
MGPL Teen Zone Blog	2.1	60053
Parma Teens	2.0	14468
Galesburg Library Kids	2.0	61401
SAPL Book Clubs	2.0	T8N 3Z9
Worthingteens	1.9	43085
Mostly NF Blog	1.9	98446
Cambridge Libraries Blog	1.9	N1S 2K6
YA KNOW @ BCL	1.7	97005
Connections - Events	1.5	06820
PaperCuts	1.5	66604
Kid's Blog	1.4	80903
Parsons Public Library	1.4	67357
Pete's Picks	1.4	T8N 3Z9
By the Park: Archdale Public Library	1.4	27263
Teen Blog@Brooks	1.3	05301
Hennepin County Library: Catalog News	1.3	55305
Darien Library Directors Blog	1.3	06820
Winfield Library's Y.A. Blog	1.3	60190
Music at HBPL	1.3	92648
Graffiti	1.2	66604
ICARUS... the Santa Fe Public Library Blog	1.2	87501
Galway Public Libraries Blog	1.2	Ireland
Southlake Public Library	1.1	76092
Homer Township Public Library	1.1	60491

MADreads.....	1.1	53703
Johnson County Library	1.1	66212
Waterloo Public Library Reference	1.1	50701
McBook	1.1	74501
Kids Lit.....	1.1	54952

Total Length of Posts

Here's a metric that doesn't appear directly within blog profiles: Total words in all posts for March through May 2007. "Words" includes internal post overhead such as "Permalink" or "x Comments" or "Posted on..." but not sidebar material. In a few cases, overall words are extrapolated from a sample of the first 10 or 20 posts...

The complete set of posts totaled 1,038,237 words—roughly ten full-length novels. The average blog had 4,120 words in all its posts, but the median was less than half that number: 1,968 words. That's not too surprising: 69 blogs had fewer than 1,000 words each.

In this case, the set of "long blogs" is a little more than 20% of all blogs, using 5,000 words as a cutoff:

Blog.....	Total Words	Zip
Ann Arbor District Library -	53,520	48104
PaperCuts.....	50,006	66604
SJCPL Blog	44,839	46601
Turning the Page.....	42,118	45202
From the Reference Desk.....	27,455	03060
52 Books, 52 Weeks	20,657	60106
MADreads.....	20,404	53703
Sellers Library Teens	19,130	19082
ICARUS... the Santa Fe Public Library Blog	18,882	87501
Kids Lit.....	18,796	54952
SkokieTalk -	16,600	60077
Birmingham Public Library's Latest News, Reviews & Info	16,375	35203
Dover Public Library news.....	15,490	03820
Southlake Public Library	14,025	76092
Burbank Library Blog.....	12,577	91502
Westport Public Library BOOK blog..	12,006	06880
Graffiti	11,798	66604
Connections - Events.....	11,729	06820
Fahrenheit 451: Banned Books	11,300	L0S 1E0
The Atrium	10,670	49503
Santa Clara County Library - The Latest SCCoop	10,654	95032
Memphis Reads	9,842	38111
What We're Reading	9,578	10924
The Perrot Memorial Library Blog.....	9,510	06870
Free Library Blog	9,200	19103
Columbus Public Library Genealogy & Local History	8,978	31906
Westport Public Library MOVIE & MUSIC blog	8,565	06880

the New Cybrary	8,542	54911
Sites and Soundbytes.....	7,962	54952
Seldovia Public Library.....	7,818	99663
Berkeley Heights Public Library Book Blog	7,791	07922
What's New @ Coloma Public Library..	7,782	54930
What's New @ Eastern Regional Libraries	7,662	Australia
YA KNOW @ BCL.....	7,582	97005
Sutherland Shire Libraries News.....	7,515	Australia
Mostly NF Blog	7,309	98446
Albert Lea Public Library.....	7,218	56007
The Blog @ ppld.org	7,014	80903
New at Hackley Public Library	6,975	49440
Three Rivers Public Library News Blog..	6,860	60410
Austin Public Library Blog.....	6,820	78701
Austin Public Library Blog.....	6,820	78701
FPL Teen Blog	6,348	01702
HPL Book Hunt.....	6,284	11743
Darien Community Matters.....	5,857	06820
Lisa's Blog.....	5,797	33401
C-Scapes	5,717	33755
The Short List.....	5,649	06426
History & Genealogy at the Culver Union-Twp. Public Library.....	5,410	46511
West Long Branch Public Library	5,196	07764
Connections - Movies & Music	5,184	06820
Old Bridge Library Weblog.....	5,114	08857
Small Talk . . . KFPL.....	5,077	K7L 1X8
Toronto Public Library LOUD for Kids...	5,019	M4W 2G8

Average Post Length

Traditional blog advice—if there is such a thing as tradition for blogs—is that posts should be brief, no more than a paragraph or so. While you can turn almost anything into a single paragraph, typical paragraphs run 75 to 150 words, frequently much fewer. This paragraph, for example, is 53 words.

The "average average" post length—that is, the average of all words-per-post figures for the blogs—was 187.3 words, roughly two typical paragraphs. The median was 153.8 words, roughly one long paragraph.

Uniquely for this metric, it makes sense to point out two outlying groups: The blogs with considerably longer-than-average posts...and the blogs with considerably *shorter*-than-average posts ("terse blogs").

Relatively Long Posts

Blog.....	Average Post Length	Zip
What's New @ Coloma Public Library ...	865	54930
Highland Park Public Library Teen Blog ..	863	08904
Wayne County Public Library	822	27530
Fresno County Library Events & Book Clubs	789	93721
Administratively Speaking.....	596	10924

Seldovia Public Library	558	99663
History & Genealogy at the Culver Union-Twp. Public Library.....	541	46511
Business Lines.....	462	46410
Turning the Page... ..	458	45202
Mostly NF Blog.....	457	98446
What We're Reading.....	435	10924
SAPL Book Clubs.....	406	T8N 3Z9
Tuesday Technology Talks @ PPL.....	401	08542
Guelph Public Library Book Buzz	387	N1H 4J6
From the Reference Desk	371	03060
Library Musings: Kankakee Public Library	367	60901
Library Leader.....	366	32801
Director's Blog.....	365	60491
Ye Old Village Library Blog	363	19543
Connections - Events	355	06820
S. W. Smith Library	353	16743
Whitewright Public Library.....	350	75491
Sutherland Shire Libraries News	327	Australia
Pete's Picks.....	322	T8N 3Z9
Bradford West Gwillimbury Public Library Blog	321	L3Z 2A7
Carver Public Library . blog	321	02330
Friends of the Lacey Library.....	318	98503
YARRA PLENTY LIBRARY BLOG	315	Australia
PaperCuts	315	66604
52 Books, 52 Weeks.....	313	60106
Book Comments	304	20912
WPLINFOSTUFF.....	298	N2L 5E2
Project Read of the San Francisco Public Library	295	94102
Lane Memorial Library Blog.....	288	03842
the New Cybrary.....	276	54911
Iosco-Arenac District Library Technology Blog	274	48730
Birmingham Public Library's Latest News, Reviews & Info	273	35203
Highland County District Library Weblog..	273	45133
International Falls Public Library Happenings	271	56649
CFPLDirector	269	50613
Invisible Ink.....	268	Australia
New Materials at the Poy Sippi Public Library	268	54967
Memphis Reads.....	266	38111
She Said/He Said:Kankakee Public Library Blog	262	60901
Director's Blog.....	261	03060
Lost in the Stacks.....	260	50701
Galway Public Libraries Blog.....	257	Ireland
MADreads.....	255	53703
Clymer Book Blog.....	255	18350
Westport Public Library MOVIE & MUSIC blog	252	06880
Fahrenheit 451: Banned Books	251	L0S 1E0

Relatively Terse Posts (Shortest First)

Blog.....	Average Post Length.....	Zip
What's New at Carter Memorial Library ...	11	54963
Inside the Pages	19	53010
Teens @ Waterloo Public Library	39	50701
Wetmore Public Library.....	45	66550
HCL News.....	45	49242
Galesburg Library Kids	49	61401
Off the Shelves.....	49	60526
Newton's Quick Job Search Blog.....	50	02459
Bartlesville Public Library News.....	53	74003
Orland Park Public Library Teen Blog.....	53	60462
Wellington City Libraries.....	53	NewZealand
Whitley County Public Library	55	40769
Brookfield Public Library - Recent News..	60	60513
Warsaw Public Library Happenings	61	14569
MGPL Parents.....	61	60053
Goshen Teens	63	10924
West Islip Public Library.....	63	11795
Readers' Advisory Knapsack	67	02459
LibLog	68	94063
tuftsstuff teens	68	02188
Hot Topics	70	54901
River Rouge Public Library	71	48218
MGPL 5th and 6th Graders.....	71	60053
Check out the Lyons Public Library!.....	72	14489
Wabasha Public Library	74	55981
Osage City Public Library	76	66523
Norwalk Public Library's Laid Back Book Club	76	06850
The In-Site Bank	77	06426
Fargo	77	58102
FCL Teen Talk	77	29506
Latest entries from lakevillelibrary.blog-city.com	80	02347
Fiske Free Library.....	85	03743
Sodus Free Library blog.....	86	14551
Monroe Township Public Library - Staff Picks	86	08831
Lafayette Public Library - South Regional Library	86	70501
h20boro lib blog.....	86	04030
Birmingham Public Library's digital collections	86	35203
Yarra Plenty Genealogy	87	Australia
Carnegie Public Library of Steuben County	88	46703
Neptune Public Library	88	07753
Palatine Public Library District	89	60067

Longevity

All of these blogs have been around since at least December 2006—that's one of the rules for inclusion. Some have been around a while longer.

Most of these blogs began in 2006—155 of the 252. Another 38 began in the last half of 2005. That leaves the blogs that had been around for at least two years by the end of the study.

There's a special case at the start of this list: Waterboro's *h20boro lib blog*. You can't date the blog by internal evidence—but I *know* this blog has been around since the start of the millennium, since I wrote about it then. Within a year, blogs are arranged by the month in which they began.

Began in 2000

h20boro lib blog..... 04030

Began in 2002

LibLog..... 94063

TCPL News..... 14850

Began in 2003

Sites and Soundbytes..... 54952

FPL Teen Blog..... 01702

Kids Lit..... 54952

PaperCuts..... 66604

Marin County Free Library Blog..... 94903

Children's Department Paperless Notebook.. 15102

Off the Shelves..... 60526

eBranch Blog..... 77054

Began in 2004, January-June

the Cybrary Reviews..... 54911

Wilmette Public Library Staff Book Reviews
(Children's Books)..... 60091

Old Bridge Library Weblog..... 08857

SJCPL Blog..... 46601

BLog..... 11576

Parma Teens..... 14468

Parma Kids..... 14468

Book Comments..... 20912

Library Staff Weblog..... 20912

Friends of the Lacey Library..... 98503

What's New @ Roselle Public Library..... 60172

What's New/Hot Topics..... 01301

in the teen zone..... 02860

Sellers Library Teens..... 19082

The Children's Room..... 20912

Began in 2004, July-December

Lafayette Public Library - South Regional Library..... 70501

CMRLS News..... 39043

Homer Township Public Library..... 60491

Santa Clara County Library - The Latest SCCoop..... 95032

What's happening for teens at the library?..... K0K 2K0

New Materials at the Poy Sippi Public Library..... 54967

Madison Library news and links..... 03849

Delta Township District Library..... 48917

Whitewright Public Library..... 75491

JMCPL Teen Scene..... S6V 1B7

Began in 2005, January-March

Hot Topics..... 54901

What's New @ Coloma Public Library..... 54930

Buena Park Library District News..... 90620

Lansing Library Adult News & Reviews Blog..... 60438

Lansing Library Youth News & Reviews Blog..... 60438

Lansing Public Library Teen News & Reviews..... 60438

Lansing Public Library Technology Blog..... 60438

The Loft online..... 60477

ICARUS... the Santa Fe Public Library Blog..... 87501

Library Ledger Online..... 53040

What's New at Carter Memorial Library..... 54963

Fahrenheit 451: Banned Books..... LOS 1E0

Began in 2005, April-June

Musings from Vermont..... 05301

In the stacks..... 27203

New at Hackley Public Library..... 49440

Johnson County Library..... 66212

Pioneer Memorial Library Blog..... 67701

Bartlesville Public Library News..... 74003

book bits..... 02090

Berkeley Heights Public Library Book Blog... 07922

JMRL Young Adult Services..... 22922

Ann Arbor District Library -..... 48104

Visibility

This crude measure of blog visibility is, as noted earlier, even less useful for public library blogs than for liblogs and others. That said, there are a handful of public library blogs with more general visibility than most, possibly because they've been around a while, they've been used as examples in various articles, books and sessions, or they have unusually compelling content:

Blog.....	Visibility.....	Zip
Ann Arbor District Library -.....	3.4.....	48104
SJCPL Blog.....	3.1.....	46601
h20boro lib blog.....	2.5.....	04030
PaperCuts.....	2.4.....	66604
MADreads.....	2.3.....	53703
Marin County Free Library Blog.....	2.3.....	94903
Fahrenheit 451: Banned Books.....	2.3.....	LOS 1E0
Kids Lit.....	2.2.....	54952
Library Leader.....	2.1.....	32801
Worthingteens.....	2.0.....	43085
Darien Library Directors Blog.....	2.0.....	06820
Bartlesville Public Library News.....	2.0.....	74003
Sites and Soundbytes.....	2.0.....	54952

Academic Library Blogs

Should your academic library have a blog—or more blogs than it already has? I can't answer that question.

I can say there's a good chance your library could benefit from one or more blogs.

If anyone tells you that your library *must* have a blog, they're wrong. Very few solutions apply to every library, no matter how large or small.

On the other hand, dozens of academic libraries already use blogs to good effect. I believe most academic libraries could serve their communities well by initiating blogs or adding new blogs—although some of those blogs might not *look* like blogs.

Special Note

If you've already read *Public Library Blogs: 252 Examples*, much of the wording in the first few chapters here may seem familiar. That's not surprising. I used the same methodology for academic library blogs as for public library blogs—the same time period, the same rules for inclusion, the same metrics. The only real difference is that I didn't attempt to determine the size of user communities for academic library blogs.

Since I wrote the public library book first, I'm reusing the first few chapters—but, of course, all the facts are different...

Why This Book?

This book won't tell you how to start and maintain a blog. You can find plenty of advice within the library literature and elsewhere, including sources as diverse as Michael P. Sauer's *Blogging and RSS: a librarian's guide* (Information Today, 2006) and the first week's content in the **Five Weeks to a Social Library** course (www.sociallibraries.com/course/week1). For that matter, you can go to blogger (blogger.com) or wordpress (wordpress.com) and try one out, just to get started: It doesn't take long and it's absolutely free.

If you're reading this, you're probably thinking about a blog for your library or adding more to what you already have. Or you're at one of the 165 academic institutions or libraries included here and want to see how your blogs compare to others.

You could check out every academic library blog listed in the two major sources (the "Weblogs – Academic Libraries" page of LISWiki at liswiki.org/wiki/Weblogs_-_Academic_Libraries and the "Academic libraries" page of *Blogging Libraries Wiki* at www.blogwithoutalibrary.net/links/index.php?title=Academic_libraries). But that's more than 525 links (in late December 2007)—a lot of blogs to go through.

The purpose of this book is to guide you to blogs that you might find useful when thinking about your own library's case—blogs from nearby libraries, blogs

from institutions you consider peers or blogs that specialize in topics or work in ways that you'll find interesting.

Most of this book is examples: 231 blogs from 156 institutions (165 libraries) arranged geographically. It's not a comprehensive survey (I did exclude non-English blogs for reasons of practicality), but I did attempt complete coverage given a few basic criteria.

[Next section omitted as entirely redundant]

Criteria for Inclusion

My intent was to include a broadly representative sample of successful and active English-language academic library blogs. Here's how I went about it.

- I activated *every* English-language public library blog link in the two wiki lists noted above—the LISWiki academic library blog list and the *Blogging Libraries* academic library blog list. I added selective blogs from the "Library director" page of *Blogging libraries* if the blogs showed links to academic libraries.
- If the blog couldn't be reached or it was obvious that it had ceased by February 2007 or began in 2007, I crossed it off the printed checklists I'd made of each blog list. Otherwise, I subscribed to its feed in a special Bloglines section for this purpose.
- **Baseline criteria:** The blog must have at least one post before calendar 2007 and must have at least one post in two of the three months used for evaluation: March, April and May 2007. If a blog began in 2007, it's a little early to call it "successful"—while official library blogs seem less prone to enthusiastic starts and quick fadeouts than individual blogs, it still happens all too often. If a blog didn't include posts in at least two of the three spring months, it seemed fair to call it inactive. I can think of reasons why an academic library blog might be silent for most or all of the summer; it's hard to imagine why an active blog would go silent for all of March and April, all of April and May, or all of March and all of May.
- More than 160 blogs that were in the candidate lists didn't make it into this study. Fifty-four had ceased by February 2007. Twenty-three were new in 2007. Twenty-three aren't in English. Twenty-two were still around but inactive by my minimal standards: That is, they only had posts in one of the three months listed. Seventeen were problematic—they had no archives, un-

dated posts, or other technical issues that made it impossible to determine whether they qualified. Finally, 23 were “wrong” for one reason or another: The URL didn’t work, the blog wasn’t from an academic library, what I reached wasn’t a blog at all. If you’re trying to add these figures up to the overall total, the remainder are duplicates: Blogs that appear in both wikis.

- Some libraries have more than one blog; some have *many*. I took up to five blogs for a given library (or group of libraries within the same zip code). In a few cases, I discovered additional blogs for a library while doing metrics—and added those, again with a five-blog limit.
- I went through each blog, measuring the number of posts during March-May 2007, total length of posts, number of comments received on those posts and the number of illustrations (photos, book jackets and others) in those posts. I stored the name of the library and its Zip code (or Canadian postal code). I also looked at the relationship of the blog to the library website and noted blog template choices. Finally, I looked at two crude measures of blog visibility, although those measures are even less interesting and meaningful for library blogs than they are for personal liblogs.
- The final list, represented in the last twelve chapters of this book, is 231 blogs from 165 libraries or groups of libraries within 156 academic institutions or campuses.

If that’s too much detail for you, here are the criteria in brief: Each blog had to be English-language, beginning no later than December 2006, with at least one post in two of the three months March, April and May 2007—and with enough internal evidence to demonstrate those criteria.

Blogs by Type

What “type” is a blog? In some cases it’s clear from the name of the blog. In others, I assigned a type based on content of the posts within the study period or the nature of the library. I omitted general-purpose and library news blogs.

Antarctic

Antarctic Studies.....New Zealand

Architecture

Architecture Studies..... 89154

Art

Arts and Humanities News from Sterne Library..... 35205

PNCA Library..... 97209
National Art School Library.....Australia

Astronomy

Institute for Astronomy Library Weblog 96822

Biology

BANR..... 80523

BioBlog..... 61801

Bioblog.....New Zealand

Department of Biological Sciences..... 70803

Books

Books and Libraries..... 30303

Business

Business Blog..... 45701

Business Blog..... 80523

Business Library News..... 52242

Business News and Resources at the Sterne Library... 35205

BU Libraries Business Blog 13902

Kresge Library News 48109

Children’s Literature

Children's Literature at the Education & Social Science
Library..... 61801

Classical/Antiquities

Blegen Library NewsGreece

Conference reports

K-State Libraries: Conference Reports 66506

Design

Design Library News..... 27695

Digitization and digital resources

Digital Library Services..... 52242

Digitization Projects at UNLV Libraries..... 89154

UConn Information Community at the L.M.Stowe Library

* E-Resource News and Problems..... 06034

Director’s blog

@ the library 81001

The Director's Blog..... 32789

McMaster University LibraryL8S 4L6

Moving forward: think, reflect, play..... 91106

Twilight Librarian--Jim Rettig's ruminations on libraries,
librarianship, the infosphere, and more ... 23173

Distance education

Distance Learning Library Services..... 47306

Wired Distant-Pierce Library News & Views 97850

Economics

Economics Library Blog.....New Zealand

Education

CIMC "news" Page 53706

Coutts Canadian-Flavoured Education News T6G 2E1

Education News 30303

Gargoyles Loose in the Library 61801

Instructional Resource Center, Ashland University Library

..... 44805

Engineering

Cog 'n Blog - Engineering Library news New Zealand
Engineering LibraryS7N 5A9
Englibrary19104
Wendt Library Blog, UW College of Engineering53706

Environment

School of the Coast and Environment70803

ERC

Wired Funny-Life in Pierce Library's ERC.....97850

Gaming

Gaming Research Weblog..... T6G 2C5

Geology

GeoSciences Library Blog..... New Zealand

Google Scholar

UBC Academic Search - Google Scholar Blog V6T 1Z4

Government and Government Documents

Blog: Kennedy School of Government Library02138
California Policy Inbox94720
GovBlog: UC Berkeley.....94720
Government and Legal Information35205
Government Publications Library -- University of Colorado
.....80309
Swem Government Information.....23187
WMU Libraries - Government Information...49008

Indigenous Studies

iPortal News.....S7N 5A4

Journalism

Journalism @ the BSU Libraries47306

Law (Blawgs)

BoleyBlogs!97219
Carolina Blawg.....27599
Law Dawg Blawg.....62901
Law In The News.....97219
Law Library Blog.....V6T 1Z4
University of Baltimore Law Library Weblog`21201
WisBlawg - From the UW Law Library53706
ZiefBrief94117

Learning Commons

Learning Commons Blog.....30303

Linguistics

Linguistics and Language Resources..... V6T 1Z4

Management

The WML Spotlight37203

Maps

Geospatial Resources & Map Collection.....47306

Media

Alpha Channel: The Studio @ Hodges Library37996

Medicine

CWML Blog.....065201
Hardin News.....52242e

Health Sciences Information at UNLV Libraries89154
IU Medical Library News.....462021
Lister Hill Library of the Health Sciences News352051
Mulford Library Blog436141
UMN: Bio-Med Library - Public Health554551

Midwifery

RCM Library midwifery information..... England

Okavongo

Flow : information for Okavango Delta planning.. Botswana

Physiotherapy

UBC Physio Info-blog..... V6T 1Z4

Podcasts

Lewis & Clark Law School Podcast.....97219

Poetry

Poetry at Beinecke Library06520

Population Research

News from the PRI Library and Data Archive16802

Reference

Alkek Library's Reference Blog.....78666
KSL Reference & Instruction44106

Repository

Bond's Research Repository Australia

Research

Research behind the News.....80204

Resources

Connections49001
Information Resources60465
K-State Libraries: E-Resources66506
Levy Library10029
Todd Library: Featured Resources.....60554
University of Calgary Library Collections News.... T2N 1N4

Reviews

Bookends.....80903
BookMarks: Beyond the Page.....28235
Vairo Blog19063

Scholarly Communication

Scholarly Communication61801
Transforming Scholarly Communication.....77004

Science

BU Science Library Blog.....13902
Physical & Engineering Sciences News27695
Science @ UCD Library Ireland
Science News.....30303
Science-Health Science Library Blog47306
SciTech News @ the UT Libraries37996

Special Collections

Hyde Collection Catablog.....02138
North Carolina Miscellany27514
Special Collections52242
Special Collections LSU708031

Staff

K-State Libraries: Annex	66506
K-State Libraries: Staff Bulletin	66506

Systems and Technology

Ask Sassy Systems... ..	71103
Emerging from the Blog.....	94928
Wayne Graham's Blog.....	23187

Textiles

Burlington Textiles Library	27695
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Thanks

K-State Libraries: Kudos	66506
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Undergraduate

R.B. House Undergraduate Library	27514
Undergraduate Library	61801

Metrics and Standouts

What makes a library blog a success? That depends on the library. Each of the 231 blogs profiled in the book may qualify as a success for the people who produce it and the patrons who read it...

What I can do as an outside observer is *describe* the blogs. A few metrics help flesh out that description. Here, I'd like to explain the metrics used and list the outliers—the blogs in the top quintile (top 20%) of a given metric.

Defining the Metrics

I noted and calculated the following metrics, in all cases based on tracking blog posts from March 1 through May 31, 2007.

- **Number of posts:** A simple count of blogging frequency. There were 91 days and 13 weeks in the quarter. You can calculate other frequencies based on that, although some blogs clump several posts on one day then go several days without posts. In one or two cases (noted in the profiles), I counted posts for one month and multiplied by three—because it was too cumbersome to count posts for all three months.
- **Number of comments and comments per post:** Many blogs don't support comments. Many more didn't have any. In a couple of cases where there were quite a few comments on one post and none on others, I found that the comments were spam and discounted them. Blog profiles include comments per post when that ratio is at least 0.1 (that is, one comment for every 10 posts), the mean figure for all blogs.
- **Number of illustrations and illustrations per post:** Quite a few blogs don't use illustrations. Others have at least one illustration for every

post. I include illustrations per post within the blog profile when that ratio is greater than 0.4, the mean figure for all blogs.

- **Total words and average post length:** I included blog overhead *within* posts (e.g., “No comments” and “Posted on...”), but not *around* posts (sidebar contents)...
- **Longevity:** The profile includes the month in which the first post appeared, based on internal evidence.
- **Visibility:** This may be an entirely meaningless figure for libraries, since blog visibility within a library community may show up in ways that don't influence this number. Profiles only include a visibility note when the visibility factor (described below) was at least 1.0.

The Visibility Factor is a SWAG—a statistical wild-ass guess as to a blog's visibility within the broader community. It's become more difficult to estimate visibility over time, as search engines have made it more difficult to count actual links to a blog. It's also clear that visibility isn't a linear issue: A blog with 1,200 Technorati links and 1,000 Bloglines subscriptions is *not* “ten times as visible” as one with 120 links and 100 subscriptions; it's perhaps twice as visible.

The Visibility Factor used for this book is a logarithmic measure: Log10 (that is, logarithm to base 10) of the sum of Technorati links and Bloglines subscribers, as reported by the website *popuri.us*. Because quite a few blogs were added during the survey, I checked all blogs on December 29-30, 2007. Visibility factors less than 1.0 are not reported. I'm calling visibility factors between 1.0 and 1.9 “slightly visible” (the sum of links and subscribers is between 10 and 99). 2.0 to 2.9 “visible” (the sum is between 100 and 999). 3.0 to 3.9 “quite visible” (the sum is between 1,000 and 10,000). Any in the 4.0-4.9 range are labeled as “highly visible.” “A-list blogs” have visibility factors in the 5.0 to 6.9 range, which I call “extremely visible.”

For any set of metrics this large and varied, two “averages” both have meaning and tend to be different. What's usually called the average is the mean: The total of all values divided by the number of values. A few high values can throw off the mean significantly. Another average worth paying attention to is the median—the value for which half of the values are higher and half are lower.

Posts

I counted 6,229 posts among 231 blogs for the three months of March, April and May 2007. That's a mean

of 27 posts—a bit more than two posts a week, not a bad average for blogs. But the median was 14.0 posts: Just over one post a week.

Working up from the least frequent, 15 of the blogs had two or three posts—no more than one a month on average. Another 29 had four to six posts, less than one every two weeks. Thus, just over 19% of the blogs had very infrequent posts. Fifty-four more blogs (another 23%) had seven to 12 posts—more than one every two weeks, less than one a week. Eighteen had 13 or 14 posts, bringing us up to the median.

Getting from median to mean, 53 blogs had 15 to 26 posts—more than one but no more than two per week. Another 18 had 27 to 34 posts—and that brings us up to the 20% of blogs with most frequent postings (shown in descending order):

Blog	Posts	Zip
Law In The News	762	97219
Swem Government Information	468	23187
Physical & Engineering Sciences News	240	27695
News from the PRI Library and Data Archive	114	16802
WisBlawg - From the UW Law Library	90	53706
Economics Library Blog	89	New Zealand
View from the library	83	30102
Library News	78	T6G 2E1
Government Publications Library -- University of Colorado	73	80309
iPortal News	73	S7N 5A4
UW Libraries Blog	69	82071
Mulford Library Blog	68	43614
Ball State University Libraries' News	67	47306
Instructional Resource Center, Ashland University Library	65	44805
Research behind the News	65	80204
aRKive	62	Scotland
Wendt Library Blog, UW College of Engineering	61	53706
Homeland Security Digital Library Weblog		
- On the HomeFront	59	93943
Law Dawg Blawg	56	62901
MIT Libraries News	56	02139
Flow : information for Okavango Delta planning	55	Botswana
Coutts Canadian-Flavoured Education News	54	T6G 2E1
spineless?	53	Scotland
Education News	52	30303
The Compass	52	23464
Cites & Bytes @ Bailey	50	16057
K-State Libraries: Staff Bulletin	49	66506
News from the Mudd	49	54912
CSB/SJU Library Blog	48	56374
UGA Libraries News & Events	47	30602
Cog 'n Blog - Engineering Library news	46	New Zealand

UConn Stamford Library Blog	46	06901
Temple University Library News	43	19122
..STCC Library 'blog.	42	01102
Gargoyles Loose in the Library	42	61801
Lewis & Clark Law School Podcast	42	97219
Library News & Events	41	L8S 4L6
CIMC "news" Page	40	53706
Carmichael Library's Blog	39	35115
From Clement C. Maxwell Library	38	02325
SciTech News @ the UT Libraries	38	37996
GovBlog: UC Berkeley	35	94720
UBC Physio Info-blog	35	V6T 1Z4
ZiefBrief	35	94117

Comments

Blogs *may* be a great way to increase community involvement—but don't be too surprised if your library blog doesn't get many comments. In all, there were 575 comments on the posts—an average (mean) of 2.5 per blog—but 145 blogs (almost 63%) had no comments at all, frequently because they weren't allowed (at least 62 blogs don't allow comments). Another 21 blogs had one comment each and 18 more had only two.

The *median* number of comments is zero, since more than half the blogs had no comments. Fact is, it can be tough to get comments on an official blog—particularly if it doesn't involve trash-talking teenagers.

Blogs with more than three comments over the three-month period make up 18% of the blogs. Here they are, in order by descending number of comments:

Blog	Comments	Zip
UW Libraries Blog	66	82071
Gargoyles Loose in the Library	61	61801
Cites & Bytes @ Bailey	37	16057
McMaster University Library	31	L8S 4L6
spineless?	20	Scotland
Temple University Library News	18	19122
Library Log	17	19104
CSB/SJU Library Blog	15	56374
Ask Sassy Systems	13	71103
What's New Weblog	12	59812
Wayne Graham's Blog	11	23187
WisBlawg - From the UW Law Library	11	53706
K-State Libraries: Staff Bulletin	10	66506
The Director's Blog	10	32789
UBC Academic Search - Google Scholar Blog		
	10	V6T 1Z4
UBC Physio Info-blog	10	V6T 1Z4
Twilight Librarian--Jim Rettig's ruminations on libraries, librarianship, the infosphere, and more.	9	23173
Western Kentucky University Libraries Blog	9	42101
Cog 'n Blog - Engineering Library news	8	New Zealand
reading girl speaks	8	44074

Welcome to the MSVU Library	8	B3M 2J6
..STCC Library 'blog.....	7	01102
Economics Library Blog.....	7	New Zealand
K-State Libraries: Conference Reports.....	7	66506
Leddy News.....	7	N9B 3P4
The Compass.....	7	23464
Geospatial Resources & Map Collection	6	47306
National Art School Library.....	6	Australia
ZiefBrief.....	6	94117
Hardin News	5	52242
Wendt Library Blog, UW College of Engineering	5	53706
Wired Funny-Life in Pierce Library's ERC ..	5	97850
@ the library.....	4	81001
Architecture Studies.....	4	89154
ASU Libraries News.....	4	85287
BookWise! The blog of the Merner Pfeiffer Library	4	37371
Buswell Library News & Research	4	60187
DACC Library BlogSpot.....	4	61832
The WML Spotlight	4	37203
Tutt Library News.....	4	80903
University of Baltimore Law Library Weblog..	4	21201
Wired Distant-Pierce Library News & Views..	4	97850

Comments per Post

If the median number of comments is zero, the median comments per post must also be zero. The mean number of comments per post—the average—is a tiny 0.1, and only 51 blogs (22%) manage to beat that average. here are the 37 blogs (16%) with at least 0.3 comments per post during the three months:

Blog.....	Comments per Post	Zip
Wayne Graham's Blog.....	2.2	23187
McMaster University Library.....	1.6	L8S 4L6
What's New Weblog	1.5	59812
Gargoyles Loose in the Library.....	1.5	61801
UBC Academic Search - Google Scholar Blog	1.3	V6T 1Z4
UW Libraries Blog	1.0	82071
Twilight Librarian--Jim Rettig's ruminations on libraries, librarianship, the infosphere	0.8	23173
Cites & Bytes @ Bailey.....	0.7	16057
reading girl speaks.....	0.7	44074
Wired Distant-Pierce Library News & Views	0.7	97850
The Director's Blog	0.6	32789
Ask Sassy Systems... ..	0.5	71103
Hardin News	0.5	52242
Library Log.....	0.5	19104
National Art School Library	0.5	Australia
Rio Hondo College Library Weblog	0.5	90601
Welcome to the MSVU Library	0.5	B3M 2J6
Wired Funny-Life in Pierce Library's ERC... ..	0.5	97850
ASU Libraries News.....	0.4	85287

Leddy News	0.4	N9B 3P4
spineless?	0.4	Scotland
Temple University Library News	0.4	19122
Architecture Studies	0.3	89154
Bond's Research Repository	0.3	Australia
BookWise! The blog of the Merner Pfeiffer Library	0.3	37371
Buswell Library News & Research.....	0.3	60187
Children's Literature at the Education & Social Science Library.....	0.3	61801
CSB/SJU Library Blog	0.3	56374
DACC Library BlogSpot	0.3	61832
Gaming Research Weblog.....	0.3	T6G 2C5
Geospatial Resources & Map Collection ..	0.3	47306
In Blume: News from the Blume Library .	0.3	78228
K-State Libraries: Conference Reports	0.3	66506
See What We Can Do For You - GTCC Library	0.3	27282
Tutt Library News.....	0.3	80903
UBC Physio Info-blog.....	0.3	V6T 1Z4
Western Kentucky University Libraries Blog	0.3	42101

Illustrations

Some book and book review blogs use book covers to illustrate almost every post. Some blogs include a fair number of photographs. Some use icons. And, of course, some blogs don't use illustrations at all: 96 of the 231 blogs (more than 41%) had not a single illustration during the three-month study period. In all, there were 3,662 illustrations attached to the 6,229 posts—but that's a misleading figure, since one blog accounts for 1,975 of those 3,662 illustrations.

The average number of illustrations is 15.9; excluding that one heavily-illustrated case, the average is 7.3 illustrations. The median is one. Roughly the top quintile begins at 12 illustrations over three months—about two-thirds more than the adjusted average.

Blog.....	Illustrations	Zip
Physical & Engineering Sciences News ..	1,975	27695
MIT Libraries News.....	138	02139
spineless?	100	Scotland
UW Libraries Blog.....	60	82071
Cites & Bytes @ Bailey	50	16057
Law Dawg Blawg.....	50	62901
Burlington Textiles Library	49	27695
Instructional Resource Center, Ashland University Library	49	44805
Gargoyles Loose in the Library	43	61801
From Clement C. Maxwell Library.....	41	02325
Library News.....	36	52242
UBC Physio Info-blog.....	35	V6T 1Z4
YOUR Alexandria Campus Library.....	33	22203
Library News.....	32	60465

UT Library News.....	31	37996
Ball State University Libraries' News	30	47306
Western Kentucky University Libraries Blog	30	42101
Flow : information for Okavango Delta planning	27	Botswana
Library Log	27	19104
WisBlawg - From the UW Law Library	26	53706
@thelibrary	25	83725
Buswell Library News & Research.....	25	60187
Science @ UCD Library.....	25	Ireland
Pensacola Junior College Library Blog.....	22	32504
Geospatial Resources & Map Collection.....	20	47306
Haselwood Library.....	20	98337
Bookends	19	80903
Langsdale Library News	19	21201
NYIT Library Blog.....	19	11568
Welcome to the MSVU Library.....	16	B3M 2J6
Library Newsletter	15	12866
reading girl speaks	15	44074
The L Files	15	Australia
NCSU Libraries.....	14	27695
North Carolina Miscellany	14	27514
UGA Libraries News & Events	14	30602
mclnews.....	13	27710
Blog: Kennedy School of Government Library	12	02138
BookWise! The blog of the Merner Pfeiffer Library	12	37371
Design Library News.....	12	27695
Library News & Events	12	L8S 4L6
SBU Library	12	14778
Special Collections	12	52242

reading girl speaks.....	1.3	44074
UT Library News	1.2	37996
Wired Distant-Pierce Library News & Views	1.2	97850
From Clement C. Maxwell Library.....	1.1	02325
Geospatial Resources & Map Collection ..	1.1	47306
Library News	1.1	52242
YOUR Alexandria Campus Library	1.1	22203
ASU Libraries News.....	1.0	85287
Bookends.....	1.0	80903
BookMarks: Beyond the Page.....	1.0	28235
Cites & Bytes @ Bailey.....	1.0	16057
Gargoyles Loose in the Library.....	1.0	61801
Hyde Collection Catablog.....	1.0	02138
In Blume: News from the Blume Library..	1.0	78228
Northeastern State University Libraries --		
What's New at the Library	1.0	74464
NYIT Library Blog.....	1.0	11568
Pensacola Junior College Library Blog.....	1.0	32504
Science @ UCD Library	1.0	Ireland
UBC Physio Info-blog.....	1.0	V6T 1Z4
Welcome to the MSVU Library	1.0	B3M 2J6
@thelibrary.....	0.9	83725
Law Dawg Blawg	0.9	62901
Library Newsletter	0.9	12866
Lister Hill Library of the Health Sciences News	0.9	35205
UBC Academic Search - Google Scholar Blog	0.9	V6T 1Z4
UW Libraries Blog	0.9	82071
Western Kentucky University Libraries Blog	0.9	42101
WVU Libraries News	0.9	26506

Illustrations per Post

With so many blogs having no illustrations at all, the median illustrations per post is naturally quite low: 0.1. The mean is 0.4 illustrations per post.

The top group in this case is 42 blogs with at least 0.9 illustrations per post—17% of the blogs.

Blog	Illustrations per Post.....	Zip
Physical & Engineering Sciences News	8.2	27695
Special Collections	3.0	52242
MIT Libraries News.....	2.5	02139
SBU Library	2.4	14778
Buswell Library News & Research.....	1.9	60187
spineless?	1.9	Scotland
Library News	1.7	60465
BRAIN_blog.....	1.6	L8N 3T2
Distance Learning Library Services.....	1.6	47306
Langsdale Library News	1.5	21201
Burlington Textiles Library.....	1.4	27695
Digital Library Services	1.3	52242
Learning Resources Library	1.3	27695
More News & Events	1.3	40475

Total Length of Posts

Here's a metric that doesn't appear directly within blog profiles: Total words in all posts for March through May 2007. "Words" includes internal post overhead such as "Permalink" or "x Comments" or "Posted on..." but not sidebar material.

The complete set of posts totaled 852,930 words—roughly eight full-length novels. The average blog had 3,692 words in all its posts, while the median was 2,244 words. Fifty-six blogs had fewer than 1,000 words each.

In this case, the set of "long blogs" is just under 20% of all blogs, using 6,000 words as a cutoff:

Blog.....	Total Words.....	Zip
Swem Government Information.....	39,000	23187
Ball State University Libraries' News ..	28,351	47306
Physical & Engineering Sciences News.	23,915	27695
Government Publications Library -- University of Colorado	23,643	80309
K-State Libraries: Conference Reports	14,066	66506

MIT Libraries News	12,589	02139
WisBlawg - From the UW Law Library.	11,817	53706
Temple University Library News.....	11,481	19122
K-State Libraries: Staff Bulletin	11,431	66506
Wendt Library Blog, UW College of Engineering		
.....	11,170	53706
Design Library News	11,021	27695
spineless?.....	10,202	Scotland
Cites & Bytes @ Bailey.....	10,150	16057
Mulford Library Blog	9,948	43614
Law Dawg Blawg	9,775	62901
Research behind the News	9,711	80204
DACC Library BlogSpot.....	9,139	61832
News from the PRI Library and Data Archive		
.....	9,006	16802
Homeland Security Digital Library Weblog		
- On the HomeFront	8,956	93943
Scholarly Communication	8,775	61801
View from the library.....	8,745	30102
arKive	8,641	Scotland
Law In The News.....	8,637	97219
UW Libraries Blog	8,178	82071
From Clement C. Maxwell Library.....	8,009	02325
CIMC "news" Page.....	7,919	53706
YOUR Alexandria Campus Library	7,850	22203
Library News	7,577	52242
Haselwood Library	7,481	98337
UT Library News	7,391	37996
SciTech News @ the UT Libraries	7,329	37996
ZiefBrief.....	7,259	94117
Flow : information for Okavango Delta planning		
.....	7,126	Botswana
Burlington Textiles Library	7,070	27695
Coutts Canadian-Flavoured Education News		
.....	6,863	T6G 2E1
UGA Libraries News & Events.....	6,691	30602
Moving forward: think, reflect, play....	6,594	91106
Instructional Resource Center, Ashland University Library		
.....	6,519	44805
The Compass.....	6,512	23464
Gargoyles Loose in the Library.....	6,508	61801
Library News	6,407	T6G 2E1
California Policy Inbox.....	6,190	94720
Transforming Scholarly Communication		
.....	6,161	77004
BRAIN_blog.....	6,102	L8N 3T2

Average Post Length

The “average average” post length—that is, the average of all words-per-post figures for the blogs—was 177.7 words, roughly two typical paragraphs. The median was 143.5 words, roughly one long paragraph.

Uniquely for this metric, it makes sense to point out two outlying groups: The blogs with considerably

longer-than-average posts (“essays,” but many of these aren’t long enough for that term) and the blogs with considerably *shorter-than-average* posts (“terse blogs,” in some cases just lists of authors, titles and maybe call numbers). I’m using the same criteria for long and terse posts as in *Public Library Blogs: 252 Examples*—more than 250 words and fewer than 90 words, respectively.

Relatively Long Posts

Blog	Average Post Length	Zip
Children's Literature at the Education & Social Science Library	897	61801
BRAIN_blog	872	L8N 3T2
Design Library News	689	27695
DACC Library BlogSpot	653	61832
Science-Health Science Library Blog.....	624	47306
Law Library Blog	621	V6T 1Z4
Digital Library Services.....	526	52242
K-State Libraries: Conference Reports ...	502	66506
Arts and Humanities News from Sterne Library		
.....	453	35205
WVU Libraries News.....	430	26506
Wired Funny-Life in Pierce Library's ERC		
.....	424	97850
Ball State University Libraries' News.....	423	47306
Digitization Projects at UNLV Libraries...	372	89154
Lidcombe College Library	372	Australia
Learning Resources Library	354	27695
Special Collections	345	52242
Buswell Library News & Research.....	342	60187
Wayne Graham's Blog.....	339	23187
Twilight Librarian--Jim Rettig's ruminations on libraries, librarianship, the infosphere...	335	23173
Distance Learning Library Services.....	329	47306
Scholarly Communication	325	61801
Government Publications Library --		
University of Colorado.....	324	80309
Business Library News.....	324	52242
In the Spotlight	323	60208
Hardin News	320	52242
Moving forward: think, reflect, play.....	314	91106
K-State Libraries: E-Resources	285	66506
UT Library News.....	284	37996
Special Collections LSU.....	279	70803
National Art School Library.....	274	Australia
RCM Library midwifery information	269	England
California Policy Inbox.....	269	94720
Haselwood Library	267	98337
Temple University Library News	267	19122
BookMarks: Beyond the Page	265	28235
YOUR Alexandria Campus Library	262	22203
NCSU Libraries	256	27695
What's New Weblog	256	59812
Alkek Library's Reference Blog	251	78666

Relatively Terse Posts (Shortest First)

Blog	Average Post Length	Zip
Law In The News	11	97219
Library News	33	New Zealand
tclibrary Blog	35	55404
Latest entries from dundalkinstitute.library-blogs.net	39	Ireland
What's New @ UWM Libraries	40	53211
Health Sciences Information at UNLV Libraries	48	89154
PNCA Library	49	97209
University of Baltimore Law Library Weblog	49	21201
WMU Libraries - Government Information	51	49008
Engineering Library	51	S7N 5A9
Pensacola Junior College Library Blog	57	32504
Economics Library Blog	62	New Zealand
Antarctic Studies	65	New Zealand
The Orbit	67	75080
iPortal News	67	S7N 5A4
BU Library News & Exhibits	68	13902
Undergraduate Library	71	61801
At the Library	74	94928
Alpha Channel: The Studio @ Hodges Library	74	37996
What's New at the Purchase College Library?	76	10577
Bioblog	79	New Zealand
News from the PRI Library and Data Archive	79	16802
GeoSciences Library Blog	80	New Zealand
Princeton University Library News	81	08544
Library News	82	T6G 2E1
Swem Government Information	83	23187
Rio Hondo College Library Weblog	84	90601
Ryerson Library News	85	M5B 2K3
College Libraries News	85	13676
What's New at the Auburn Libraries	85	36849
Gaming Research Weblog	86	T6G 2C5
Get It At Gutman	86	19144
K-State Libraries: Annex	86	66506
Blogos	87	19422
What's New!	87	23173
K-State Libraries: Kudos	88	66506
Blegen Library News	88	Greece
KSL Reference & Instruction	89	44106

Longevity

All of these blogs have been around since at least December 2006—that's one of the rules for inclusion. Some have been around a while longer.

Just under 100 of these blogs began in 2006. Another 34 began in the last half of 2005. That leaves the blogs that had been around for at least two years by the start of the study.

Began in 1998

mclnews 27710

Began in 1999

WVU Libraries News 26506
 Library News - Georgia State University Library 30303
 GPC Decatur Campus Library 30034

Began in 2002

..STCC Library 'blog..... 01102
 Hardin News 52242
 In the Spotlight..... 60208
 iPortal News S7N 5A4
 Library Newsletter 12866
 MIT Libraries News 02139
 Science News..... 30303

Began in 2003

Bookends..... 80903
 BRAIN_blog..... L8N 3T2
 CIMC "news" Page..... 53706
 Connections 49001
 Education News..... 30303
 Ginn Weblog 02155
 Institute for Astronomy Library Weblog..... 96822
 IU Medical Library News 46202
 Learning Resources Library..... 27695
 Library News T6G 2E1
 NCSU Libraries..... 27695
 Ohio University Libraries News 45701
 PNCA Library 97209
 RCM Library midwifery information..... England
 Rio Hondo College Library Weblog 90601
 UConn Information Community at the L.M.Stowe Library
 * E-Resource News and Problems 06034
 University of Baltimore Law Library Weblog. 21201
 VT Library News 24062

Began in 2004, January-June

Alpha Channel: The Studio @ Hodges Library..... 37996
 Business Blog..... 45701
 Data Library News Blog S7N 5A4
 Homeland Security Digital Library Weblog
 - On the HomeFront 93943
 Information Resources 60465
 Library News 52242
 Library News 60465
 Lister Hill Library of the Health Sciences News 35205
 livelibrary 67042
 McPherson Library News..... V8W 3H5
 SciTech News @ the UT Libraries 37996
 Todd Library: Featured Resources..... 60554
 UMN: Bio-Med Library - Public Health 55455
 University of Calgary Library Collections News.... T2N 1N4
 UWinnipeg Library..... R3B 2E9
 What's New! 23173
 What's New at the Auburn Libraries 36849
 What's New @ UWM Libraries..... 53211

WisBlawg - From the UW Law Library	53706
Began in 2004, July-December	
AIDallas Library.....	75231
Auraria Hot Topics.....	80204
Burlington Textiles Library	27695
Cites & Bytes @ Bailey.....	16057
College of DuPage Library Weblog.....	60137
CSB/SJU Library Blog.....	56374
Gaming Research Weblog	T6G 2C5
Gargoyles Loose in the Library.....	61801
Hunter Library News.....	28723
LaGuardia Community College Library	
Media Resources Center Blog.....	11101
Latest entries from dundalkinstitute.library-blogs.net	
..... Ireland	
Law Dawg Blawg	62901
Law Library Blog	V6T 1Z4
Library News	43081
Library News & Events.....	L8S 4L6
Schurz Library News	46634
Tutt Library News.....	80903
UConn Stamford Library Blog	06901
UT Library News	37996
Vairo Blog.....	19063
Wayne Graham's Blog.....	23187
Began in 2005, January-March	
BU Library News & Exhibits	13902
BU Science Library Blog.....	13902
Carolina Blawg.....	27599
KSL News Blog.....	44106
KSL Reference & Instruction	44106
Leddy News.....	N9B 3P4
LRC Blog	Wales
Muskingum College Library Update	43762
NYIT Library Blog.....	11568
R.B. House Undergraduate Library	27514
Temple University Library News.....	19122
UE Library News	47722
UGA Libraries News & Events.....	30602
Began in 2005, April-June	
College Libraries News	13676
CPCC Libraries Blog	28235
DACC Library BlogSpot.....	61832
Design Library News	27695
Hyde Collection Catablog.....	02138
Instructional Resource Center, Ashland University Library	
.....	44805
Library NewsNew Zealand
North Carolina Miscellany	27514
Scholarly Communication	61801
Snoopings.....	94928
Swem Government Information	23187
St. Petersburg College Library Blog.....	33781
UBC Academic Search - Google Scholar Blog	V6T 1Z4
View from the library.....	30102

What's New -- library.austincc.edu.....	78701
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Visibility

This crude measure of blog visibility is, as noted earlier, even less useful for public library blogs than for liblogs and others. That said, there are a handful of academic library blogs with more general visibility than most:

Blog	Visibility	Zip
MIT Libraries News.....	5.2.....	02139
California Policy Inbox.....	3.9.....	94720
News from the PRI Library and Data Archive		
.....	3.2.....	16802
UBC Academic Search - Google Scholar Blog		
.....	2.7.....	V6T 1Z4
McMaster University Library	2.5.....	L8S 4L6
Law Dawg Blawg	2.3.....	62901
WisBlawg - From the UW Law Library....	2.3.....	53706
UBC Physio Info-blog.....	2.1.....	V6T 1Z4
Scholarly Communication	2.1.....	61801

Miscellany

A few odd notes on this collection of academic library blogs:

- Just over half of the blogs—128—have signed comments, although the signature may be “library” or the like.
- Fifty-nine blogs are hosted on Blogspot and use Blogger software; another six blogs hosted elsewhere use Blogger.
- Thirty-eight blogs use WordPress software; of those, 15 are hosted by WordPress.
- Twelve blogs identified Movable Type as the software being used; three are at TypePad.

Comparing Academic and Public Library Blogs

Since *Public Library Blogs: 252 Examples* used the same rules for inclusion, the same study period and the same metrics as this book, it's possible to make some comparisons between the two types of library blogs.

- Academic library blogs tend to have slightly more frequent posts than public library blogs.
- Academic library blogs have even fewer comments than public library blogs—and on a comments-per-post basis, the difference is striking.
- Eliminating the one academic library blogs with a huge number of illustrations, academic library blogs have about half as many illustrations as public library blogs.

- While the average (mean) total length of posts is slightly higher for public library blogs, the median length is slightly higher for academic blogs—but only by about 10%.
- Individual posts also tend to be slightly longer in public library blogs.

In Closing

Pardon the repetition. It's inherent in the fact that these chapters come from two related books.

If you're interested in the individual blog profiles, which include all relevant metrics and more, these books are still available from Amazon (paperback) and Lulu (PDF ebook). For that matter, if you find some blog names ambiguous, the geographically-arranged book makes them easy to identify.

The books will go out of print (taken off sale) after three months with no sales. That means the books will be available at least through June 2009.

My Back Pages

Changing Everything

I should probably have included *PC World's* December 2008 "FuturTech" set of Hot New Technologies for 2009 in the March Predictions roundup—but maybe it works just as well here. After all, we're told in the first paragraph that the memristor "is already starting to revolutionize everything we know about computing." That's a tall order for a device that only exists in labs (and represents a concept that's 38 years old). As one who would love to replace CFLs with LED lights, preferably OLED, who thought I'd be able to buy either an OLED HDTV (bigger than 12") or an FED HDTV a couple of years ago, I'd surely love to believe that creating something in a laboratory means it's *right around the corner* in vast commercial quantities—but it rarely works that way. "Researchers say that no real barrier prevents implementing the memristor in circuitry immediately." Even though *there are no commercial products and none expected until 2012*, the article still says this development "is already starting to revolutionize" and says memristors "will likely replace both DRAM and hard disks" in 2014-2016! Of course, based on predictions like that, hard disks disappeared more than a decade ago. Didn't they?

What else? Your single-core CPU is "officially a dinosaur" (so much for all those netbooks!) and we'll have 32-core CPUs Real Soon Now. (If everything's moving to the cloud, why would you need 32-core CPUs in your netbooks? Silly question, I suppose.)

After—yawn—64-bit computing, we get this lovely headline: "Windows 7: It's Inevitable." They're going to come to your door and *force* you to turn in your Mac OS X, Linux, Vista and Windows XP machines in favor of Windows 7.

But here's a fast shiny new toy to distract you while the "inevitable" happens: USB 3.0, since the sluggish 480Mb speed of USB 2.0 "just doesn't cut it any longer." Instead, you'll get 4.8Gb/second throughput. I'm sure you're chafing at the bit, finding that USB 2.0 is the bottleneck in your everyday computing, right? (The article also suggests a boost in FireWire speed—but what new computers even ship with FireWire since Apple went to USB 2.0?)

What else? The ever-promising wireless power transmission—although this time it's over a distance of "a few feet" with 70% efficiency, which seems like a truly awful idea in a time when ecology is supposed to matter. Hand gestures to control your wall-size TV (if you're thinking what I'm thinking, stop it!). And a bunch of other stuff, some of it probably quite reasonable. A sidebar includes some of their "greatest hits" and "biggest misses" in 25 years of predictions—but a "hit" depends on your interpretation. A 1988 prediction said we'd all have a little box containing all our files and programs, and would carry it with us all the time. Their take? That's a big hit—but "for most people, that little box is now also their MP3 player or cell phone." Really? **Most** people carry *all their files and programs* on their MP3 player or cell phone?

Pity the Poor Leveler

An editorial in the February 2009 *Stereophile* offers another take on why the True Golden-Eared Audiophiles hear "huge" differences between vastly expensive pieces of audio equipment and only moderately expensive alternatives—while the rest of us may hear no differences at all, and certainly not the kind of difference that justifies spending half a megabuck on a stereo system.

It's a psychological theory, another nice black-and-white distinction, saying we're either Sharpeners or Levelers. Sharpeners exaggerate differences (or, in their minds, are capable of distinguishing differences) while Levelers minimize or ignore differences (or, in the minds of Sharpeners, are deaf). And maybe it's an *inherent personality characteristic*—different people simply have different "just noticeable difference" levels. Or maybe, as the writer suggests, it's learned—and learning to exaggerate (sorry, "notice") difference is "part of the learning process of becoming an audio-

phile.” Oddly, in giving an example, the writer assumes that “seasoned audiophiles” will in fact *hear* differences in every case—but that the “relative sharpener” will call the difference something like “a lifting of several veils” while the “relative leveler” will say the difference, “*while worthwhile*, is fairly small.” Emphasis added: The writer does not admit to the possibility that a seasoned audiophile will say “What difference?” or “That difference isn’t worth a dime, much less \$50K.”

And, of course, to be a reviewer, you must be a Sharpener—able to hear minute differences and deem them important. Or maybe to hear differences whether they’re there or not...

(The writer is actually arguing that, once you’ve chosen your system, you should switch back to Leveler mode so you can actually enjoy listening to the music. Can you really switch learned hyperacuity and the tendency to exaggerate differences on and off that easily?)

Think I’m kidding about the half-megabuck system? In *The Absolute Sound’s* February 2009 report on the Rocky Mountain Audio Fest, Steven Stone’s “best sound” award goes to Ray Kimber’s room—a system costing \$535,000, *not* including turntable (unless I’m mistaken). On the other hand, another room at RMAF was, apparently, very impressive—and total cost of the full system was \$7,200, which would be less than one-fifth of the *sales tax* on the Kimber system in California.

Ending Debates

The March 2009 *Absolute Sound* spells it out simply, in a piece by Robert Harley on choosing an LP playback system: “It’s worth noting that at the highest levels of music playback, there’s not much of a debate; LP is the clear winner.” And, if you believe Harley, it’s not even a matter of the CD standard being refined enough: “There’s just a fundamental musical rightness to a pure analog source (one that has never been digitized) that seems to better convey the music’s expressiveness (and to more completely involve the listener in that expressiveness).”

That’s it: *There’s not much of a debate*. If you’re a True Audiophile, you know that digitization destroys music by chopping it up into little slices. Never mind the strong indication that much of the LP mystique has to do with—as also noted in this piece—setting up and tweaking a turntable, “putting a large black disc on a slowly rotating turntable” and all that. Harley admits that LPs mistrack, have ticks and pops, have surface noise and wear badly—but *proper* listeners “hear past the LP’s flaws and enjoy the medium’s

overall musicality.” See, all those problems are *nothing* compared to “the distortion imposed by digitally encoding and decoding an audio signal.” The piece continues into outright advocacy—basically, Harley says that if you think CDs sound good you just haven’t heard a good LP setup.

Which really makes you wonder about another article in this “analog focus” issue of the magazine: “Converting LPs to digital files: A step-by-step process.” The author, Steven Stone, calls it “archiving.” Stone’s definitely a high-ender: He spends “at least 40 minutes” just tweaking his turntable and arm *before* each digitization session. But why would you do this at all? Haven’t you destroyed the musicality by digitally encoding it, even at the high data rates Stone recommends? (It’s an interesting article in other ways: After noting Apple Lossless and FLAC data formats, both of which compress files *with absolutely no loss of data*, Stone adds: “[D]epending on the software used and your own degree of perfectionism you may find that any amount of data compression, even if lossless, is unacceptable.” *What part of lossless do these people not understand?* “Lossless” means that *precisely the same bitstream* emerges from decompression as went into compression.

Ah, but it gets even better. Stone talks about “archiving” and Harley admits that records slowly wear away (not so slowly if you’re not careful)—but in a turntable review later in the issue, Robert E. Greene says “vinyl is, to all intents and purposes, eternal.” Really! (Honest, I couldn’t make these things up. Oddly, the turntable reviewed is relatively cheap: A mere \$2,850. I did say “relatively.”)

Masthead

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