

2006-02-19

## **Blogged out Fad may be fading, but some can't blog enough**

*By Robert Gold*

THE NEWS—TIMES

The small blue zeroes tend to bum Rick Bassett out.

The WestConn professor joined the world of blogs last fall. Now, Bassett just needs people to start making comments — the blue zeroes show no remarks.

"I was thinking of taking the comment part off because it was a bit depressing," Bassett said. "I'm not sure it gets a lot of play."

Welcome to the blogosphere.

Every day, thousands of blogs show up on the Internet. People spill their guts about their jobs, dogs, politics, significant others and just about everything else. BlogPulse.com counts more than 22 million blogs worldwide.

So is the blog craze taking over the Internet? Maybe not.

A recent Gallup poll indicated blog reading has stayed about the same in the past year unlike previous years. The December poll showed 9 percent of people read blogs frequently compared to the same percentage last February.

E-mail is still the king, with 67 percent surveyed sending or reading the messages. Also, shopping, paying bills, playing games and instant messaging still far outweighs blog reading.

The newness may have worn off, said Carolyn Lin, a professor of communication sciences at the University of Connecticut.

"To really keep up with a blog, you really have to have a lot of energy," Lin said.

And with so many people pecking away, the material is not always fine literature.

"If you read some of the (blogs), they are horrible," Lin said.

But Michele Lurie begs to differ.

Lurie, a Newtown graphic artist and mom of three, tosses her thoughts onto a blog whenever she gets a chance. She was inspired by reading [www.dooce.com](http://www.dooce.com), another mom blogger.

"I know a lot of friends that read blogs. There are a lot of people out there that are excellent writers but don't do it for a living."

Michele's blog time is 4 a.m.

"I documented my birth story (her 4-month-old son Brodie's birth). If you get on there, don't throw up," she said.

Meanwhile, her husband, Mark Lurie, downloads satellite pictures of his mountain bike trips around the area. When he flipped off his bike last September, he made sure to make it public.

"He came running home, all bloody, saying, 'Take my picture, take my picture'" Michele said. The blood-streaked face photos made his blog (<http://ctmtblog.blogspot.com>).

"I lost control, guess I was going a wee bit too fast for the conditions and rode the poney into the ground! Plenty of cuts and scrapes .ÿ.ÿ. " Mark told his online audience.

Mark said he doesn't care if people read his blog, but he promises plenty of info about local bike clubs.

People's natural curiosity means blogs are here to stay, he thinks.

"It's getting to be mainstream but a lot of it depends on actually wanting to know things. I think there are a lot of blogs today where people go to find info, whether it's true or not," he said.

Plenty visit Mike Kaltschnee's blog, [www.HackingNetflix.com](http://www.HackingNetflix.com). His blog, which is all about the online movie order company, gets about 150,000 visits a month

Anytime a news alert from Google pops up on his e-mail about Netflix, the Danbury resident checks it out and often sticks it on his blog. Surveys and movie ratings also are on his site.

"Immediately people can comment on what I write," Kaltschnee said. "It's interactive."

Nearly every day, Kaltschnee gets e-mails sending notes to his blog, praising his site.

But a blog's a bit different, he said, more like an online dairy constantly updated.

"I don't think people think they are reading blogs," he said.

Pete Cullen knows what a blog is — he's just not too interested to check them out much.

The 22-year-old Western Connecticut State University history student checks out his friends' blogs about once a week.

Yet, the blog craze hasn't left him impressed. To him, it's too similar to Web forums or Web sites to seem fresh. "I don't think that it's that revolutionary," he said.

"It's something to keep up with them to see what they're up to," he said.

As for Basset, he will keep his blog going. so friends and co-workers could check out what's going on with him.

They could snicker at pictures of him clearing away snow or read his venture into Wal-Mart the morning after Thanksgiving. His Rotary friends could learn the latest about their club.

While the jury is still out on the future of the blogsphere, it could still become mainstream.

"It took the Internet a few years to get going," Lin said.

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