



The business of writing today

Description

How blogging has changed the way we read and write

By **Mona Andrei**

If you could go back in time – even as recent as just ten years ago – and browse through the pages of a website, you'd notice that there's a big difference in the way we read today. I blame this on the constant stream of distractions that make up the moments of our lives. A 'ping' from our cells telling us that someone has just liked our recent Facebook update... An email notification suddenly appearing at the top of our computer screens... A text from our kids asking us what time we'll be home...

The distractions are many. And frequent. In fact, we're so connected, both online and off, that the line that separates our virtual and real lives is now a faded shade of "OMG! Where's my phone?!!"

If you don't believe me, consider this: our attention spans are now shorter than ever – down to about eight seconds.

So of course we've changed the way we read. Where once upon a not-so-long-time-ago we went in search of information and focused on the facts, today the facts aren't good enough. The message we tell the writers of the world: "You want me to keep reading? You better make it interesting!"

Do I consider this a bad thing? Nope. A Millennial problem? Again, nope.

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Going back even further – let's say 30 years – we're exactly the same... only different. While we may be a little more technically savvy today (and by a little I mean A LOT), our need to connect is inherent, no matter what decade we resonate with.

Example: Soap boppers

There was a time when our grandparents (or for some of us, our parents), looked forward to watching "their stories" every day. They needed to know if Rachel was going to choose Mac or Mitch. And God forbid they



should miss the episode of Luke and Laura's wedding. (If you have no idea who these daytime TV characters are, don't worry, neither do I *cough*)

As generations before us, we resonate with 'stories'. Tales of how two people met and fell in love, accounts of obstacles being overcome, details of people's lives. This is what we want.

Sure, knowing that a company in our respective industry is merging with another company is important information. But add in how the President of one of those companies runs in a marathon every year that benefits Alzheimer's disease in honour of her mother's memory, and suddenly you'll remember every detail of that merger.

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This change in the way that we read has directly impacted the way we write. Current news, industry trends, even recipes... Where do we turn for this information today? I can answer that with one word: our favourite bloggers. (Okay. That was three words.)

Why?

Because just like the soap boppers of yesterday, today's bloggers give us a glimpse into their lives. The facts that make up a news story are now told with personality. Keeping up with industry trends is now like getting the up-and-up from a trusted friend. Looking up the latest and greatest way to cook with quinoa is now paired with a tale of how another mother's toddler reacted to this dish.

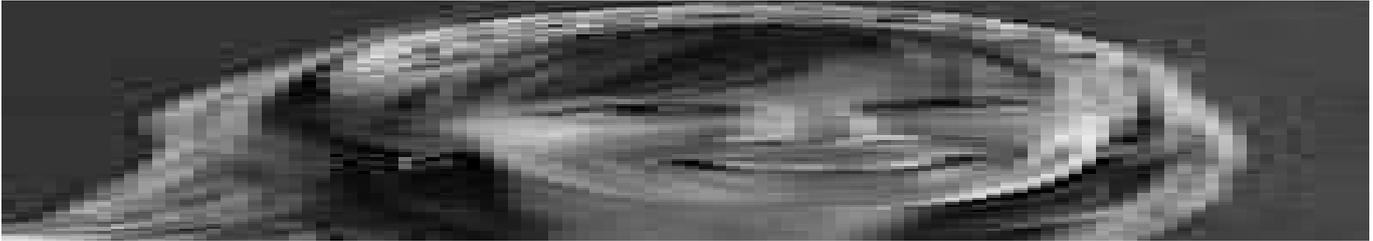
Gone are the days of dry, fact-driven copy. "Just the facts, m'am," are now words of another era.

'...today's bloggers give us a glimpse into their lives. The facts that make up a news story are now told with personality.'

As writers, whether we're developing content for the *About Us* page of an industrial company with global appeal, or a family-owned chocolate shop that caters to a local clientele, there are two things that will help keep our readers interested: one, sprinkle facts with story elements or personal details. And two, bring personality into the brand's voice. Just as bloggers have taught us, a conversational tone will draw readers in.

Tune in for Mona's follow-up article about the benefits of blogging for business.

Image: [Yoel Ben-Avraham](#) via [StockPholio.net](#)



Mona Andrei is a digital copywriter, writer, and social media strategist with over 20 years of experience, both on the advertising agency and corporate sides of the communication spectrum. When she's not working on client projects, she likes to write irreverent posts for her personal blog, [Moxie-Dude](#), where she writes about life updates gone wrong. Or right. She's undecided. You can connect with Mona on [Twitter](#) or email her at Mona@MonaAndrei.com



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