
Web Tools You Can Use: Blogs and Blogging

Transportation Research Board
85th Annual Meeting
Library and Information Science for
Transportation Committee
Matthew Barrett - Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority

What is a Blog?

- A weblog is a hierarchy of text, images, media objects and data, arranged chronologically, that can be viewed with an HTML browser.
- A weblog post has three basic elements: title, link, and description.
- Best technical description: Harvard Law Blogs -
 - <http://blogs.law.harvard.edu/whatMakesAWeblogAWeblog>
- Blogging has become a mainstream form of collaborative dynamic communication and simplified web publishing.
- Technorati.com claims there are over 23 million blogs, National Institute for Technology and Liberal Education (nitle.org) claims there are 2.87 million blogs of which 1.97 million are active, and 1.37 million are in English.

Why Blog?

- Increases the “surface area” of your website.
- Extends reference services, current awareness and professional development.
- Expands your influence, builds constituency and customer base.
- Markets your services and research -
 - Convenient for publishing subject area bibliographies, new sources/references, new reports, new analysis, podcasts, and custom aggregated information.
 - Makes content more dynamic and easily available for customers to pull using RSS feeds or receive via email.

Transportation Blogs

- Nevada DOT
 - <http://www.douglascounty395.com/blog.asp>
 - Focus – community relations/public affairs
- General Motors
 - <http://fastlane.gmblogs.com/>
 - Focus – marketing and marketing research
- Chicago Transit Authority
 - <http://www.ctachair.blogspot.com/>
 - Focus – build constituency
- University of South Florida – TDM & Telework Clearinghouse
 - <http://www.nctr.usf.edu/clearinghouse/>
 - <http://tdmtalk.blogspot.com/>
 - Focus – distribute research to practitioners

Transportation Blogs (con't)

- Urban Transport Issues in Asia
 - <http://urbantransportasia.blogspot.com/>
 - Focus – analyze and distribute transport research
- U.S. Carsharing
 - <http://carsharingus.blogspot.com/>
 - Focus – promote carsharing and carsharing research
- UMTRI News / Science of Driving
 - <http://www.umtri.umich.edu/umtri/inthenews.html>
 - Focus – promote and distribute UMTRI info
- SciTech Library Question Blog
 - <http://stlq.info/> Information for sci-tech librarians

Blog Sample – U. South Florida

Blogger™

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TDM Talk

TDM Talk is a group blog providing an outlet for discussion and debate about programs, practices, and policies that affect the impact of transportation demand management (TDM). This blog complements the TRANSP-TDM listserv hosted by the National Center for Transit Research (NCTR)'s National TDM and Telework Clearinghouse at University of South Florida.

Contributors

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Previous Posts

- [Are the declines in carpooling significant?](#)
- [GMC Pad - a response to long commutes and high housing prices](#)
- [TDM in 2005 - What's Ahead in '06?](#)
- [Universal name for TDM](#)
- [TDM Talk](#)
- [Taking a swim in a very big pond](#)
- [Where is matching going?](#)
- [Sustainable Housing and the Global Oil Peak](#)
- [H.R. 1891 - Gasoline for America's Security Act of ...](#)
- [President Bush Directs Executive](#)

Thursday, January 12, 2006

Are the declines in carpooling significant?

Use of commute alternatives continues to fall according to new [State of the Region](#) report released by Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) released on January 5, 2006. SCAG reports that "Between 2000 and 2004, carpooling share of work trips dropped by almost 3 percent with corresponding increases in drive-alone commuting."

Using the data from the [American Community Survey](#) for 2004 for some select MSAs, it appears that LA isn't alone. However, only three other of the MSAs shown below had a statistically significant change (decrease) from 2001. Three MSAs appeared to show INCREASES in carpooling - Salt Lake City, San Diego and Tampa Bay MSAs - but those changes also are not statistically significant. An * indicates that the estimate is significantly different (at a 90% confidence level) than the estimate from the most current year. The bottom line is that communities should use care when examining these changes from one year to the next. Long term trends may be more revealing.

MSA	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000
Salt Lake City-Ogden, UT MSA	13.0%	12.6%	12.1%	12.8%	12.7%
Los Angeles-Riverside-Orange County, CA CMSA	11.4%	13.0% *	13.0% *	14.0% *	14.3% *
Fresno, CA MSA	11.3%	13.6%	18.9% *	16.2% *	14.9% *
Atlanta, GA MSA	10.7%	11.1%	10.3%	11.3%	11.5%
Dallas-Fort Worth, TX CMSA	10.7%	12.0% *	12.4% *	12.7% *	12.8% *
San Diego, CA MSA	10.5%	10.4%	10.0%	10.3%	11.2%
San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose, CA CMSA	10.4%	11.3% *	11.2%	11.0%	13.0% *
Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, FL MSA	10.3%	10.1%	9.0%	9.8%	9.7%
Miami-Fort Lauderdale, FL CMSA	10.0%	10.6%	11.4% *	12.4% *	13.3% *
Orlando, FL MSA	9.5%	10.0%	10.2%	9.2%	11.5% *
Detroit-Ann Arbor-Flint, MI CMSA	8.0%	8.0%	8.1%	8.7%	8.8%
Boston-Worcester-Lawrence, MA-NH-ME-CT CMSA	7.3%	8.0% *	8.2% *	8.0% *	8.8% *
West Palm Beach-Boca Raton, FL MSA	6.7%	8.3%	9.7% *	11.7% *	11.0% *

It would be interesting to compare changes in travel behavior based on the investments made in those options. But that's a topic for another post.

posted by Phil Winters @ 1:16 PM

[0 comments](#)

Sunday, January 08, 2006

GMC Pad - a response to long commutes and high housing prices

Blog Sample – Urban Transport Asia

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Urban Transport Issues Asia

Thoughts, comment, news, ideas, links on urban transport policy issues in Asia (or anywhere really, especially in the 'developing world')

17 JANUARY 2006

➤ Challenges for Singapore's public transport?

I was invited to speculate on scenarios for Singapore's urban transport future for a seminar last week. Here is one aspect of what I said.

In the period from the 1970s to 2000 or so Singapore's urban transport policies have been remarkably successful in slowing the growth of vehicle ownership, restraining private car usage, improving the bus system, building a Metro (the MRT), and create transit oriented land-use patterns (eg see some effusive praise for the Singapore model [here](#)).

The Government [already plans](#) a gradual shift of demand management away from using high fixed costs (especially the Additional Registration Fee, ARF, and the Vehicle Quota Scheme, with its Certificates of Entitlement or COEs) towards a greater reliance on usage charging, especially with a revamped, more comprehensive version of Electronic Road Pricing - ERP Mark II. Car-like services that are primarily charged on a usage basis are significant too and have growth potential. Taxis account for over 10% of daily trips, and car-sharing is still small but growing fast.

In many ways, this shift towards usage-based pricing is a good thing and most transport policy makers would support it. **But it is also likely to pose some unanticipated challenges to public transport.**

One unfortunate side-effect of the focus (so far) on controlling ownership of private vehicles is that public transport operators *seem* (I am sticking my neck out a little here) to behave as if they are making the following assumptions:

Blog Sample - UMTRI



The screenshot shows the UMTRI website with a navigation bar at the top containing links for CONTACT US, SITE INDEX, SEARCH, HOME, ABOUT UMTRI, PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES, RESEARCH DIVISIONS, PUBLICATIONS & SERVICES, and NEWS & EVENTS. The main header features the University of Michigan logo and the UMTRI Transportation Research Institute name. A sidebar on the left includes links for Recent Press Releases, UMTRI in the News, UMTRI Research Review, and Events. The main content area is titled "UMTRI in the News" and includes an RSS Feed Information link and a link to UMTRI News | Science of Driving with an XML icon. The news items are dated and include headlines and brief descriptions of articles.

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Read All About It
NEWS
papers · magazines

UMTRI in the News

[RSS Feed Information](#)
[UMTRI News | Science of Driving](#) [XML](#)

January 10, 2006
An UMTRI study is mentioned in **"A New Generation of SUVs"** (Wall Street Journal, Karen Lundegaard)

December 15, 2005
Bruce Belzowski of the Automotive Analysis Division† is quoted in **"GM Drops Matches for 401(k)"** (The Detroit News, Brett Clanton and Bill Vlastic)

December 12, 2005
A new UMTRI study to develop technologies to help drivers avoid crashes is highlighted in **"U-M Researchers to Study Making Vehicles Smarter"** (Ann Arbor News, Mike Ramsey)

December 3-4, 2005
Mike Flannagan of the Human Factors Division is quoted in

- **"New Types of Lamps Can Illuminate Driving"** (Automotive News, Harry Stoffer)
- **"Suppliers Contend that Better Headlights Save Pedestrians' Lives"** (The Kansas City Star)

November 30-December 2, 2005

Blog Sample – SciTech Library

SAE Drops Print Publication of SAE Handbook

Posted by Randy Reichardt at 8:50 on [January 10, 2006](#) in [SAE](#). | 0 Trackbacks |

.. In a move I find shortsighted, the [Society of Automotive Engineers \(SAE\) International](#), has decided to no longer issue the print edition of its very important, three-volume [SAE Handbook](#). The Handbook includes the complete set of J-reports, also known as the [Ground Vehicle Standards \(GVS\)](#). The 2005 edition, released in June 2005, was priced at US\$595. The 2006 edition will be available in CD-ROM only, at the same price, according to our EBSCO Canada representative.

The options left to libraries who need the SAE Handbook in their collections include subscribing to the [SAE Digital Library](#), where the GVS are available for a **US\$7,500** annual subscription price. SAE also issues "JPaks", an online service designed to give access to J-Reports, Recommended Practice, and Information Reports, which comes with a customized subscription plan, based on the number of downloads and the number of users - great for a company with a fixed number of employees, not necessarily good for an educational institution. The [SAE Ground Vehicle Standards on CD-ROM](#) is the only other option I can find, priced at **US\$1,850**, with more than 1,700 documents included. It is not clear to me what the difference is between this CD-ROM, and the SAE Handbook on CD-ROM, which also includes the full set of GVS.

The CD-ROM format is of little to no use to most educational institutions, which are moving or have migrated completely away from offering any and all major reference works in CD-ROM format to their users. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, this format served library users well, even if it did limit them to using one terminal at a time. For over ten years, all our major indexes and abstracts, and now handbook, manuals, encyclopedias, etc., are online, as is the SAE Handbook, via the SAE Digital Library. But for many of us with strained budgets, we cannot afford a **1,260% increase in subscription price** to anything, let alone a major reference tool like the SAE Handbook.

[Continue reading "SAE Drops Print Publication of SAE Handbook"](#)

Publishers' Newsletters

[Librarian Insider](#) - from [IoP LiveWire](#) - [American Chemical Society Ei Update](#)
[What's New @ IEEE Online Archive](#)

Search Engines

[EEVL](#)
[Google Scholar](#)
[Scirus](#)

Articles and Presentations

- [A Brief Guide to Finding Chemical and Petroleum Prices and Other Statistical Information](#) - *SLA Chemistry Division E-Newsletter*, 19(4), Spring 2005, 4-5.
- [Success Story: RSS Moves Into The Mainstream at the University of Alberta Libraries](#) - *Elsevier Library Connect*, 3(2), June 2005, 12-13.
- [Blogging & RSS: Applications and Technology - Examples from an Academic Library](#) - presentation at [CLA 2005](#).
- [Weblogs: Their Use and Application In Science and Technology Libraries](#) - *Science & Technology Libraries*, 25(3), 2005, p 105-116
- [RSS: Moving Into The Mainstream](#) - column in [Ei Update v3 n1 March/April 2005](#)
- [Throw Another Blog on the Wire](#) - article in *Feliciter*, 2003, #2
- [Weblogging on Campus and Beyond \(p13\)](#)
- [eduBlogging: Growing Weblogs and Online Communities](#)
- May 2003
- [Blogging 101: Blogging Basics for Health Sciences Librarians](#) - presentation to [NAHLA](#), February 2004
- [Throw Another Blog On the Wire: Weblogs in the Library World](#) - *ALC*. April 2004.

Blog Considerations

- Have something to say
- Be careful what you say
 - Current and future employers, other current and future relationships - once blogged its out there and can propagate...
- Think about:
 - Audience(s) – micro and macro
 - Usability – archiving time period, multiple blogs, RSS, podcasts, and design issues
 - Comments – any, moderated or none
 - Links – are you part of a larger community?
 - Members/Contributors – at your invitation
- Intranet vs. Internet

Blog Considerations (con't.)

- Server Installed Software
 - Are you on good terms with your ITS Dept?
 - Moveable Type, Nucleus, others
 - Side-by-Side Comparison Chart
<http://www.asymptomatic.net/blogbreakdown.htm>
- Web-hosted
 - Blogger.com, LiveJournal.com, BlogStream.com, others
 - Easy templates and step-by-step instructions
 - Helps to have some basic familiarity with html, but not absolutely necessary

Getting Started with a Blog

- My Test in Progress:
<http://losangelestranportation.blogspot.com>
 - Requested my OPAC vendor incorporate RSS into future updates for the library catalog's "view recent arrivals" feature.
 - Working with our Communications dept. to look at including blogs as part of community outreach efforts on Metro projects (with links to the library).
- Recommend using a free webhosted service first to test blogging process and interest level.
- Can be set up in 5 minutes for free with <http://www.blogger.com> no limit to number of blogs or number of posts.

http://LosAngelesTransportation.blogspot.com



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Los Angeles Transportation Headlines

A daily journal of transit, transportation, and urban planning information collected from local and national sources, published by the Dorothy Peyton Gray Transportation Library and Archive at the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA) or "Metro".

About Me



Name: Metro Librarian

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Chair Elect of the Special Library Association's Transportation Division, Member of the Transportation Research Board's Library and Information Science and Information Services Committees

[View my complete profile](#)

Links

[Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority Library and Archive](#)

[Transportation Research Information Service \(TRIS\)](#)

[National Transportation Library \(NTL\)](#)

[Transportation Research Board \(TRB\)](#)

[Transportation Libraries Catalog TLCat](#)

[University of California Transportation Research Center](#)

[USC/CSULB/METRANS Transportation Research Center](#)

1/22/2006

Transportation Headlines for Sunday January 22, 2006

1 year after Metrolink crash, family mourns: Father, coach was always willing to lend a hand

http://dailynews.com/news/ci_3425394

Daily News

Arnold's budget: dull, centrist ... and responsible. Jill Stewart, Guest Columnist

http://www.dailynews.com/opinions/ci_3424802

Los Angeles Daily News

Californians plan exit strategies: Some take the money and run; some just can't afford to stay

http://www.pe.com/localnews/inland/stories/PE_News_Local_D_exodus22.379a47b.html

Riverside Press Enterprise

County officials consider new ways to tackle traffic

http://www.pe.com/localnews/inland/stories/PE_News_Local_D_interstate22.379a4b8.html

Riverside Press Enterprise

Crowded LA revives dream of building 'subway to sea'

<http://www.azcentral.com/news/articles/0122lasubway22.html>

AZ Central

Further Reading/Resources

- Cohen, Steven. "Corporate Library Blogs." b/ITe, 21(6), Nov/Dec 2004.
<http://www.sla.org/division/dite/bite/NovDec2004/bite200406d.pdf>
- Hammond, Tony and Hannay, Timo and Lund, Ben. "The Role of RSS in Science Publishing: Syndication and Annotation on the Web." D-Lib Magazine, 10(12), December 2005.
<http://delib.org/dlib/december04/hammond/12hammond.html>
- Reichardt, Randy and Geoffrey Harder. "Weblogs: Their Use and Application In Science and Technology Libraries." Science & Technology Libraries, 25(3), 2005, p 105-116.
<http://stlq.info/archives/blogstl.pdf>
- Ari Paparo Dot Com List of Blog Search Engines –
<http://www.aripaparo.com/archive/ooo632.html>
- Blogwithoutalibrary.net Bibliography and List of Blogging Libraries –
<http://www.blogwithoutalibrary.net>
- Special Library Association's Blogging and RSS Bibliography-
<http://www.sla.org/content/resources/infoportals/blog.cfm>
- Wikipedia – <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blog>