

## EXPLORING BLOGGERS' MOTIVATION AND BEHAVIOR IN THAILAND

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### ABSTRACT

*Blogs have evolved exponentially as a global phenomenon where scholars have attempted to answer why and how people use blogs. An active weblog requires a long-term commitment and much effort from a host to frequently update the contents as well as from users to regularly interact with the weblog. Thus, an investigation on what motivate people to blog interactively may help us develop and promote blog usage to fulfill various needs of the users better. This study serves two purposes: (a) to discover the reasons why people blog and (b) to investigate the relationships of how motives influenced blog usage. Different from previous research, this study used both qualitative and quantitative approaches to explore blog motivations directly from users. The findings revealed five blog motives: new friendship, relationship maintenance, passing time, social influence, and self-expression. Relationship maintenance, new friendship, and passing time were significant predictors of length and duration of blogging. Gender differences were significant in relationship maintenance motive and time spent on blogs.*

Keywords: Blogs, Motivation, Blogging behavior, Gender differences, Thailand

### INTRODUCTION

Weblogs, also known as blogs, have evolved dramatically as tools of online social networking. A blog refers to a website that is maintained by an individual with regular provision of comments, descriptions of events, information on specific interests, and other materials such as graphics, photos, videos, movies, and music (Huang, Chou, & Lin, 2008; Technorati, 2008). According to Technorati (2008), a blog search engine, 77% of active Internet users read blogs. It is estimated that there are 133 million blogs in the Blogosphere with 900,000 blog postings in 24 hours (Technorati, 2008).

The remarkable growth of blogs turns blogging into a global phenomenon where scholars have raised questions of why people maintain blogs, what they communicate on blogs, and how they use blogs in comparison with the mainstream media (Hsu & Lin, 2008; Johnson & Kaye, 2004; Kim, 2008; Williams & Merten, 2008; Yang, 2007). The early bloggers may use blogs as their personal homepage or online diary (Jung, Youn, & McClung, 2007). However, blogs are surfaced through Internet that allows interactivity and social networking among users around the world. When a personal blog begins to serve as a mass medium, the line is less clear between characteristics of the personal blog and those of the mainstream web sites (Technorati, 2008). Several organizations started their own blogs for information and social networking purposes such as CEO blogs and newspaper blogs. These corporate blogs serve as a two-way communication tool to interact with, establish agenda, and shape opinions of customers and employees (Marken, 2005).