

From: Krewson, Chris
Sent: Wednesday, August 06, 2008 5:44 PM
To: Inquirer
Cc: Philly.com - Producers
Subject: Philly.com's blog traffic explodes

Hi folks.

It's been quite a year for folks who blog for Philly.com. We've moved the majority of our blogs off Movable Type and Blogspot, and into Clickability. This allowed us to unify the look of all the blogging on the site, keeping the blogs inside the philly.com design and not seeing our users click off to other sites from inside our blogs. It also allowed us to break more news, and use blog posts more flexibly throughout the site. In addition, we've curtailed most low-audience blogs, and focused on starting new ones where we see more traffic potential (such as the Eagles, Penn State football, politics in Harrisburg and Trenton, and more).

And we're happy to report that we're on the right track.

Here's a list of Philly.com's top blogs last July, in terms of pageviews:

The Zo Zone (Todd Zolecki on the Phillies):

Downashore (philly.com producers and Inquirer reporters):

phillyinc (Biz staff):

Eye on the Eagles:

Flickgrrl (Carrie Rickey on movies):

Scene on the Road (Tom Gralish photos):

Jim Spiri in Iraq (freelance photos):

In the Mix (Dan Deluca, music):

Philly Road Warrior (Tom Belden):

Deep Sixer:

The total traffic to all philly.com blogs last July was xxx,xxx pageviews.

Now, here's the list of the top 10 blogs in July 2008:

The Phillies Zone (Zolecki):

PhillyGossip (Dan Gross, DN):

Eagletarian (DN):

High Cheese (DN Phillies):

Attytood (Will Bunch, DN):

American Debate (Dick Polman):

Birds' Eye View (Inq Eagles):

PhillyClout (DN City Hall):

PhillyDeals (Joe DiStefano):

PhillyInc:

The total traffic to all philly.com blogs in July 2008 was x,xxx,xxx pageviews.

That's a 762.7 percent increase.

What's different? As you can see from last month, Todd Zolecki's numbers rose because he was breaking Phillies trade news. The Daily News has begun several high-potential, high-audience blogs -- their Eagles blog, Eagletarian, has been running since the NFL Draft. Also, their Phillies blog is new this past year, as is Dan Gross's PhillyGossip. Our

own Eagles blog, Birds' Eye View, drew (tens of thousands of) views despite its launch on the first day of training camp.

In addition, for the first time, we're able to track traffic to Dick Polman's American Debate; previously, it existed on Google's Blogspot.com, which we can't track and more importantly, can't advertise against. (Any blog on our site with a blogspot.com address falls into this same category.) Our business blogs are gaining traction. Similarly, we see big potential in politics: In the month of April, our Pennsylvania Primary blog had xxx,xxx views on the strength of the once-in-a-lifetime Presidential primary election. Larry Eichel and Tom Fitzgerald (who blogged almost daily during March and April) will blog the run-up to the November election, and we're hoping for more traction there as well.

Those 1.1 million or so pageviews helped Philly.com exceed xx million pageviews in July, just shy of a site record -- which is no small feat during the summer doldrums.

This is the kind of effort we need to sustain. Blogs offer us a great way to keep people coming back to the great work produced by The Inquirer throughout their day. There's no quicker way to break news than on a blog, and no better way for us to leverage our staffing advantage over other local media. In addition, beat reporters with blogs say the process has helped them cultivate and nurture sources.

Beyond that, by exponentially growing our online audience like this, we allow our online sales force to charge higher rates to advertise along side those newly popular items. That's something that will help ensure the future of The Inquirer.

And now, a public service announcement: We'll be holding blog training / best practices sessions in the next few weeks in the newsroom, and giving folks who've had success in Clickability blogs the chance to share what they know. Anyone who's already blogging is welcome to drop in and swap stories and tips.

Thanks again for the great efforts,

Mike Leary and Chris Krewson

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