

Don't Call Me a Blogger

Walter De Marco (July 17, 2008)



The word "blogger" usually refers to an obscure and untrained writer, and besides, it has a hideous sound



I remember quite vividly the day that I became a blogger, the main reason being that it was just the other day. The idea that I would undertake such an activity had never crossed my mind until an editor at i-Italy proposed that I start my blog on this website. As much as I love writing and reporting, I had always dismissed the possibility of writing in a blog, because I did not have much regard for this form of writing.

Whoever used the word "blogger" for the first time should be eternally condemned for giving a potentially benign and creative activity such a horribly sounding name. The other reason why I did not fancy becoming a blogger is that it requires no particular skills. Anyone who knows how to set up an email account also knows how to start a blog, so a blogger can hardly be compared to a writer in a traditional sense.

A writer had to go through the loops and hurdles of finding a publisher or editor who would read their work, evaluate it on the basis of the organization's standards, compare it with the work of other aspiring writers or journalists, and eventually print and publish their work at the organization's expense.

On the other hand, a blogger can rant, rave, moan or bore about anything they want with no need for anyone else's review or approval. A blogger might be an unsuccessful writer or journalist for whom the Internet is an accessible substitute for a traditional publication.

They may also be highly opinionated outcasts who can't resist the urge to vent their grievances at the entire world. At best, they are well-meaning activists who use this tool to propagate their ideas and gather support for their philanthropic projects.

My other concern is, who reads all these blogs, anyway? Do people really care to know what an obscure blogger thinks of tongue piercing or Mariah Carey's latest video? If you are a movie or pop-music celebrity it's a different story, of course. And in this case having a blog can just add to your popularity and glamour.

If you're a Tom Cruise or a Jessica Simpson, for instance, then everybody wants to know how often you brush your teeth, and what color your bedsheets are. But for the rest of us, our writings are doomed to remain unnoticed in the infinite world of cyber communications.

Having said that, I wish to explain how I wound up as a blogger. I had written an article on the Italian brain drain and submitted it to a number of publications. A couple of weeks after sending the piece to i-Italy, I received an email from one of the editors who said that they were interested in publishing it. When he saw that I had published other articles in the traditional form (i.e., in print), this editor asked me if I wanted to start writing for i-Italy's blog.

In other circumstances I would have paid no attention to this invite, but after seeing who is behind this website, my hesitations quickly vanished. i-Italy's administrative and editorial team is comprised of established journalists and college professors from the United States and Italy. For an Italian



journalist educated in Canada and the US, it couldn't get much better than that.

So here I am, twenty years after publishing my first article back home in Italy, and eleven years after my first article in English, marching towards the blind future of journalism along with a small brigade of Italian and Italian-American journalists. And please, don't call me a blogger, I took my first steps as a journalist before Google and Yahoo! were even conceived.

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