The Seven Blogging Virtues for building a Global Microbrand

Notes from the SXSWi 2007 Global Microbrand panel
Disclaimer

This is not about how you should blog.

It’s about one possible path to getting more readers when you’re trying to build a Global Microbrand.

You should always blog for yourself, but if you want more readers, you should also blog for them.

“Global Microbrand” is a concept of Hugh MacLeod. To learn more, visit his site: gapingvoid.com
The 7 Virtues

- Be Grateful
- Be Humble
- Be Patient
- Be Generous
- Show Respect
- Be Motivating
- Be Brave
Be Grateful
Our readers’ time and attention is a gift. Out of all the possible things that our readers could be doing (or reading), the fact that anyone comes to our blog at all is incredible. We must be grateful and try to give something of value in return.
Be Humble
Be Humble

Unless you’re one of the rare “cult personalities” on the internet, people aren’t reading your blog because of you... they’re reading it because of what it can do for them.

An All About Me blog is fine, but not if you want more readers. What we do and think isn’t nearly as interesting to potential readers as it is to us.

A little name-dropping is OK, but is knowing that you just had dinner with [insert web celeb] worth your readers’ time?
Which would you rather hear in a user’s product review?

A. They talk about your PRODUCT

B. They talk about your COMPANY
Our job is to help make the reader brilliant, not to get readers to think we’re brilliant.
Be Patient
It’s not going to happen overnight.

Don’t be in a hurry for big numbers...it’s better if people discover your blog after you’ve already made a lot of useful, helpful posts. That way, when new readers DO come, they’ll see that there’s a reason to come back... that you’re more than just a one-hit wonder.
Be Generous

creativecommons
Be Generous

Give away whatever knowledge you can. Teach people to do what you do. Don’t hoard your “secret sauce.”

Remember, they’re giving you a very precious gift of their scarce attention—it’s up to you to give something of value in return.
Give them superpowers
Show Respect

Show that you appreciate the value of their time.

Don’t post for quantity, post for quality. If you don’t have something that you believe is worth the reader’s time, think twice about posting.

One example of showing respect: I use graphics in my posts so that readers don’t have to take the time to read the whole post... they can get 90% from the graphic.
Be Motivating

Sometimes people just want to hear someone else say what they’ve been thinking (or trying to tell people). A reader might want to use one of your posts to help make a point with others. (“Outside Expert Syndrome”)

Inspiration and motivation are a gift you can give your readers.

Help light a fire in their brain.
Talk to their BRAIN not just their mind.
It's all about the neurons
Be Brave
Writing for your readers is not the same thing as writing only what readers want to hear.

If everyone loves everything you write, it’s probably mediocre.

The more readers you get, the more critics you’ll get. Some will have valid points. Others will be frustrated or jealous a**holes with too much time on their hands.
Death by risk aversion

Fantastic idea

fear occurs here

Actual post
Bottom line:
Don’t blog the cat
It’s not about YOU.
The good news is... you can do this without a big (or any) marketing budget.

Out-spend or Out-teach