

## WHY SHOULD AGRICULTURE PRODUCERS HAVE A BLOG?

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It's a new age. One where more people obtain their news from social media than traditional types of media such as newspapers, magazines, and radio stations. One where folks socialize with friends, family and professional contacts via blogs, Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. Social media hasn't replaced the business lunches, happy hours, and golf outings – it has added another dimension to information proliferation, networking and self-expression. Though blogs are not “new,” they are the classic backbone of modern social media. It is important that agriculture producers have a voice in the blogosphere.

There are six major reasons why agriculture producers should start a blog:

1. **Share Information.** More people obtain news on current events and policy on blogs than with traditional newspapers. These blogs oftentimes link to relevant articles on the Internet to help direct readers to important information so that readers can more quickly ascertain news on a specific subject. Blogs allow the writer to share the news through his or her lens to add perspective.
2. **Be Part of the Discussion.** There are discussions happening online everyday about the issues that affect the agriculture industry. Shouldn't agriculture producers have a voice in that conversation? Great blogs provide an excellent forum to discuss the issues that are important to the agriculture business to help magnify important issues. Real change happens by trying to understand the concerns of others.
3. **Market Your Business.** Blogs are a powerful way to market your agribusiness. Blogs inherently add Search Engine Optimization (“SEO”). The majority of the population will use Google or Bing before heading to the Yellow Pages. Blogs are not just for fun-- they can play a roll in generating business. Blogs also play a key role in branding and allow people to “get to know you” before they decide to do business with you.
4. **Network with Readers and Bloggers.** Blogs, like other social media platforms, allow participants to cultivate relationships. Blogs naturally open up a line of communication between the writer and reader.
5. **Showcase Your Passion.** We all have God-instilled passions. Your passion may be photography, cooking, livestock nutrition, organic vegetable production, urban agriculture, western fashion, graphic design, computer technology, or fuzzy show steers. Blogs are an ideal way to showcase your passion--no matter what it is.

6. **Be an Advocate for the Cattle Industry.** Unlike any other type of social media, blogs allow producers to inform consumers and elected officials about the agriculture industry. If agriculture producers do not tell their own story then who will? Not only will a blog help correct misinformation about the livestock industry, but blogs also allow the general public to better understand the breadth of the agriculture industry.

So what are you waiting for? Start a blog and give it a try. I think you will be glad you did.

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