

**PROJECT DISSERTATION**  
**ON**  
**STUDY ON USE OF TRAVEL BLOG AS A**  
**MARKETING TOOL**

**Submitted By:**  
**Chetan Bhandari**  
**2k14/MBA/16**

**Under the Guidance of**  
**Dr. Rajan Yadav**  
**Associate Professor**



**DELHI SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT**

**Delhi Technological University**

**Bawana Road**

**Delhi 110042**

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## **CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that the Dissertation Report titled **Study on Use of Travel Blog as a Marketing Tool** is a bonafide work carried out by **Mr. Chetan Bhandari** of MBA 2014-16 and submitted to Delhi School of Management, Delhi Technological University, Bawana Road, Delhi- 42 in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the Degree of Masters of Business Administration.

Signature of Guide

Dr. Rajan Yadav

Signature of Head, DSM

Anurag Tiruwa

Place:

Date:

## DECLARATION

I, **Chetan Bhandari**, student of MBA 2014-16 at Delhi School of Management, Delhi Technological University, Bawana Road, Delhi- 42 declare that the Dissertation Report titled **Study on Use of Travel Blog as a Marketing Tool** submitted in partial fulfillment of Degree of Masters of Business Administration is the original work conducted by me.

The information and data given in the report is authentic to the best of my knowledge. This Report is not being submitted to any other University for award of any other Degree, Diploma and Fellowship.

Chetan Bhandari

Place:

Date:

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## **ABSTRACT**

Blogs With rapid development of world of Internet marketing and social media, blogs have emerged and are establishing themselves as an effective publishing tool.

Blogs have become an important part of the internet world. Blogs now are not only considered as a digital publishing tool. They have achieved popularity in businesses and in individuals alike. Blogs are now considered as a strong digital marketing tool and a means of communication to reach out the audience.

The study aims to give an overview of the blog and its usage as a marketing tool. The study will also look into the features that make a blog successful be it the content features and technical features. These will be explained with the help of three examples from the travel blog world. These three blogs belong to different category of travel blogs- individual blog, collaborative blog and corporate blog. A comparative analysis is made between the three travel blogs according to the given features.

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### INTRODUCTION

In this era of Information Technology, internet has become an important part of our life. Internet has developed remarkably during the past years. People have become dependent on internet whether it be entertainment, communication, study or even more.

Internet has been acting as a source of information since its introduction to general public during 1990s with the help of various source of information, for example web pages, social sites, communities, blogs etc. It has developed tremendously during the past few years.

As indicated by the statistics, the population of internet is increasing tremendously and at present has reached more than 3 billion in 2015. Facebook, considered as the most popular social networking site has over 1.5 billion active monthly users. The number of blogs on internet will soon reach the number of 170 million. (internet world stats, 2015)

These numbers demonstrate that as of now these days the Internet, and especially online networking, is a capable instrument in the data hunt and trade. It made new routes for customers to share their encounters and whereby impact the choices and decision of other individuals. If used in a proper way, social media seems to become a powerful marketing tool.

#### 1.1. Social Media

Social Media as per different authors is defines as follows: *“Social media, simply, is text, words, pictures, video and the like created with intention of sharing. In the context of a marketplace, it is the thoughts and experiences of participants – for example, consumers – that relate to their experiences with brands, products, or services”* (Evans, 2012).

*“Social media essentially is a category of online media where people are talking, participating, sharing, networking, and bookmarking online. Most social media services encourage discussion, feedback, voting, comments, and sharing of*

*information. It's more of two-way conversation, rather than a one-way broadcast like traditional media.”(Jones, 2009).*

Social networking gives a powerful approach to speak with the proper target group; it requires less cash spending than the customary advertising tool. Social networking stages are partitioned into individual systems and business systems. Organizations and clients can utilize both systems for their own motivation.

Social media tools can be divided into following categories. (Reed, 2013).

#### **1.1.1. Social Networking Sites**

**Social Networking Sites** are sites that permit staying in contact with companions, associates. Sharing of pictures, data and video is done today mainly by the social networking sites. These sites usually contain the brief description about the users. Social networking sites can be used as an advertising platform by companies and advertisers based on the target user.

1. Facebook is the quickest developing social networking site. Facebook associates individuals everywhere throughout the world. It has 1.5 billion active monthly users. The networking site has its own particular advertising program that achieves the right clients. Organizations make most of this site by creating Facebook Groups. Potential audiences freely join the Facebook group. Additionally, Promoted Posts are also offered by Facebook. (Clapperton , 2009).
2. LinkedIn is considered as the social networking site for the professional workers. The profiles resemble a portfolio. This networking site connects the business or companies with the working professionals. Its user base generally contains those who wants to present their professional portfolio. Like Facebook it also has its own advertising programs. (Clapperton, 2009).
3. VK is a Russian social networking site with having same features as that of Facebook.

#### **1.1.2 Blogs or micro blogs**

**Blogs or micro blogs** are termed as the web journals. The main difference between blogs and micro blogs is that micro blogs's content is small. Twitter is the common

and popular micro blog site, which is basically a kind of social networking site where people can share posts having a word limit of 140 characters.

### **1.1.3 Image Sharing**

**Image Sharing** is basically a sharing medium of a picture in the internet world. Images can be distributed to public present in the web. Also, there is an option to send images to selected person.

1. Instagram is a picture and video sharing platform. It contains more than 300 million active users. Companies have entered Instagram and made profiles for the purpose of sharing images of different products.
2. Pinterest is basically a photo-sharing platform.

### **1.1.4 Video Sharing**

**Video Sharing** has become a prevalent activity in the internet. Videos are being uploaded and shared through the internet.

1. YouTube is one of the video-sharing platforms and is also the largest one. A user does not require to create a profile to use YouTube. Profile can be made to either upload the videos or to subscribe to different channels. YouTube is considered as one of the best online advertising platforms. YouTube has its own advertising program. (Clapperton, 2009).

## **1.2 Use of blogging in travel business**

Blog programming is greatly simple to utilize. Organizations have a decision – they can develop a corporate web journal into their site, which requires some time and effort to deal with, or they can likewise construct a stage for the clients who will essentially do all the work for them, and the organization will simply need to bolster them and need to create some rules.

Despite the fact that there are unmistakably noticeable qualities in blogging, (for example, being a good marketing medium, simplicity of executing, inventiveness, getting consistent activity and publishing ideas to masses), we ought not overlook that blogging likewise has certain shortcoming. Individuals will never trust web journals 100%, on the grounds that they comprehend the likelihood of one-sided

perspectives of any blogger. Also, blogs can't be composed by any individual. Certain aptitudes are required with a specific end goal to compose a fascinating, alluring story. The same runs with keeping up a steady interest – there ought to be new points and ideas raised, better approaches for sharing information presented, so that the audience won't get exhausted. Being a blogger is a calling which includes enthusiasm, time and persistence. In any case, if blogging is utilized as a part of a correct way, it offers a considerable measure of chances to the organization: organizing, following the most recent examples, plausibility to speak with potential clients in an informal environment, unpretentious publicizing, and so on. It is essential to see that there may be sure dangers of blogging, for example, spamming, use of inappropriate words, copy content (so that significant data is lost in many immaterial one). Also, lot of time is required for blogging, which is not generally enough, and because of the way that these days the vast majority of the organizations begin to comprehend the significance of web journals, executing online journals into authority sites is an exceedingly focused corner these days. It appears like soon as opposed to being an advantage it will end up being an absolute necessity.

### **1.3 Focus of the Study**

The study focus on how travel blogs are being used as an effective and successful marketing medium by companies and individuals alike. Study will explore whether the features of a successful blog are the common factor among the different types of travel blogs to gain success. Additionally some successful examples of travel blogs will be studied based on the features and findings will be made according to the features.

The study will focus on travel blogs and their usage for marketing purposes. The theoretical part pays attention solely to the concept of blogs and blogging . It will also focuses on the marketing world of blogging, their uses, weaknesses etc. This all will be supported with the help of examples of three popular travel blogs of different kind. Based on that conclusion will be made as to what makes a travel blog successful and what recommendations are needed for companies and individual alike to start a blog.

#### **1.4. Approach**

The study focuses on the successful travel blogs and the features that make them successful. To study this a case is been done taking the example each from the three types of travel blog- Individual Blog, Collaborative Blog and Corporate Blog.

Be On The Road was taken as an example from Individual Travel Blog , Marriott blog represent the Corporate Travel Blog and TravelBlog taken as an example of Collaborative Travel Blog. Findings are made on studying these three different travel blogs on the basis of the Content related Features and Technical Features which are required together to make a blog successful. Based on these features comparative analysis is done of these three travel blogs. Following these findings limitations and recommendations is made; also a final conclusion is deducted based on the case study done.

## CONCEPT OF BLOGS AND BLOGGING

With rapid development of world of Internet marketing and social media, blogs have emerged and are establishing themselves as an effective publishing tool for everyone with having a point of view over a subject and with a passion to share it with the world.

Though blogs have existed for more than 10 years the concept of blogging is a relatively new phenomenon in many regions. In this short period the blog has evolved from being a personal web logs to one of the fast growing and cost-efficient publishing mechanism. Thus, in a decade blog has emerged as an effective digital marketing medium with growing readership base from just being a hobby. As the world is turning towards electronic media, blogging promises great opportunities. Therefore, today magazines in their articles focuses on importance of blogging as marketing strategy for companies and join the future communication, to have competitive edge.

### 2.1. Understanding Blogging Terms

#### 2.1.1. Blogs, blogging and Blogosphere

A **Blog** can be defined as a site of blog entries, which is composed by the bloggers, sorted in reverse chronological order, so that latest blogs appear on top. Also, generally blogs are organized category wise. Individuals who control the website and also compose blogposts are called Bloggers. Bloggers can be a gathering of creators or a person. Blogosphere is termed as the group of web journals, bloggers and blogpost, where the discussion continues spinning around.. (Wright, 2006.)

#### 2.1.2. Blog Content

*“Content is the raison de’etre (reason to exist) for any website.”*(Introduction to Blogging, 2014). Most importantly, blogging matters since it is equipped for giving audience helpful information, which they would invest energy in reading, or else it has no solid effect with other online networking channels present out there.

### 2.1.3. Blogpost

**Blogpost** substance is formal or casual – relying upon its sort, conversational, instructive, regularly subjective and at times humorous, which is the "human" part of the online journal that continues drawing individuals. Readers comment and/or share the blog post to other social media channel present. (Gehl, 2006). Different types of blogs are there, ranging from personal, collaborative blogs to political, study, science, creative and business blogs. (Types of Blogs, 2011).

### 2.1.4. Archive, Feed

At the point when blogging is concerned, there are some well known and important terms that a blogger should know. The first in the rundown is **archive**, which speaks to an online journal's capacity to compose and display articles; it allows blogger(s) and readers to monitor the blog easily. Archives could be included taking into account dates (month to month, yearly or even every day), category wise, creators or in alphabetical order. Archive provides the blog depth and validity and thus considered as the heart and the history of the blog. (Gunelius, 2014). Next in the rundown is **feed**, a web journal's capacity to keep pace with most recent and newest ideas or contents on blogposts. Feed readers are outlined by a unique software which search for new content and post updates, these updates are called feeds (Introduction to Blogging, 2014).

### 2.1.5. Blogroll, Permalinks

**Blogroll** is basically a list of links of other websites having comparable interest as to the blogpost and are worth mentioning. They are also known as a list of recommendations. All blogposts tend to have Blogroll. Blogroll sometimes contains **permalinks**, attached for various purposes, which stay legitimate for all time. A permalink can be an address to a website containing blog, an address to a blogpost, to a category of blog or different part of a blog.. Much of the time, a permalink is referred to advert to another article if the blogpost is utilizing that article's data, thus acting as a source of providing reference. Additionally, utilizing permalink is the quickest approach for sharing the blog by means of emailing or messages creating on social networking sites. (Introduction to Blogging, 2014).

### **2.1.6. Trackbacks**

*Trackbacks* are regular in the blogosphere and are initially intended to work as notification between sites. Specifically, if a blogger is writing something in his blog which is in relation to another blogpost, the blogger sends the trackback to the blogpost's owner. This will let the referred blogpost's owner notice that someone has used contents of his blog, thus here trackbacks are acting like a reference source.

### **2.1.7. Blogging Platforms**

At present, the three most understood blogging stages are Wordpress, Blogger, Tumblr and another one on an uptrend is Medium (Narayan, 2013). Wordpress is the most understood stage for bloggers which is putting forth them the option of total control of the blogs as well as high customization option over their blogs. The blogs can be accessed by anyone having a Gmail account or address. Dissimilar to Wordpress, Blogger is simple to utilize however of late it has been utilizing for promoting purposes that causes hindrance in reading. Tumblr is of Yahoo! is considered as easy to use as compared to the above two. Medium is established by Twitter and one needs a Twitter record to utilize it, which could be a reason that it is not as famous as others. The exceptional element of Medium is that it is greatly straightforward, or only plain; in this way readers are not be diverted by advertisements; then again bloggers don't really have any control or tweaking control over it and need to acknowledge what it brings to the table (Bachu, 2014).

## **2.2. Evolution of Blogging**

With the developing fame and utilization of the Internet blogs have been through a transformation from straightforward pages for individual use to effective device of communication. They are utilized by people, groups, organizations and governments. Blogs spread points in all fields of life and can be written by an individual, famous personality or company.

Blogs and online networking are interlinks. Blogs are sorted out in exceptional Blog directories (Bloglovin, Technorati, Blogpulse) are connected to sites that interface the reader where reader has an account ( Facebook, Tumbler, Twitter and so forth). Bloggers generally use link to social media platforms Youtube, Tweeter, Facebook and utilize these channels. This shows that blog certainly has a potential to reach the



masses. Thus marketers can profit by using blogs as a capable tool for promotion, communication with the readers and to get the significant replies.

### **2.3. Present Scenario**

Blogs are about helpful substance: data, surveys, feelings, sharing tips. Thus, if we look at present scenario of blogs we will know why they have large audience base. Blogs can be written by anyone, thus one can find blogs on various topics in the internet. This permits them an entrance to valuable data totally for nothing out of pocket. Basically everybody can access blog from anywhere all one require is either an internet and PC, telephone or tablet. Individuals read blogs to get educated for the most recent news in their field of interest or information related to the review about a product or service. Blogs give data from a customer's point of view which regularly shapes a choice regardless of whether to make a buy. Now comes the authenticity of the blogs, which are generally written by professionals, enthusiast, specialist and people having experience in a certain area. Thus making the blog authentic and providing it more valuable opinion to the reader.

Blogs are utilized by people and organizations alike. Most organizations these days incorporate a blog on their site, which is composed by an insider and gives the costumer tips, news, overhauls and data of the organization items and the business when all is said in done. Blog is an important tool for the companies to get the direct feedback from the customers as blog provides an option to comment thus allowing companies to interact with its customers.

Blogging has certain advantages, like, large following base, ease of production etc. Because of those components blogs have turned into a valuable advertising device. Numerous organizations depend on suggestions and replies from prominent bloggers. Bloggers have the believability because of the way that they compose from the point of view of the buyers.

### ONLINE MARKETING OVERVIEW

The chapter focuses on giving the overview of the internet marketing and discusses in detail about the blog marketing- its strength, weaknesses.

#### 3.1. Marketing in Internet Environment

*“Marketing is a social and managerial function that attempts to create, expand and maintain a collection of customers.”*(Gupta, 2007).

In the present world, advancement in technology and evolvement of internet have completely changed the marketing environment. Now the businesses operate on the internet. The World Wide Web (web) was just a communication tool which is now transformed into a new marketplace (Johnson, 1994).The most important type of internet marketing are (Sherbakova, 2010):

**Internet marketing** – or online marketing is use for the advertising activities happening on the Web. Internet marketing is divided into specialized types such as:

1. Email marketing – marketing done through the email communication with the potential and current customers.
2. Web marketing – marketing done on web sites, which is an online and affiliate advertising.
3. Social media marketing – social media marketing is considered as a subset of online marketing activities which uses social media channels for the promotion of product or service. (Barefoot & Szabo, 2009). Online networking channel is a channel of correspondence that assembles a solid association with the client through the online networking. Online networking sites are Internet based devices that are created for two-ways correspondence and data sharing.

### **3.2. Social Media Marketing**

Social media marketing focuses on building a product or service popular and attractive in front of the buyers and consumers with the help of strategic process. (Korhan, 2013). Thus, social media marketing has same goal as compared to the traditional marketing. The only difference is between them is social media marketing requires social media platform to achieves its goal. It is basically internet based marketing. The required goal of any marketing is customers' attraction. At present time, customers would like to get all information about product before they make the purchasing decision. In the Internet environment content marketing can satisfy this kind of demand. Content marketing appeals to create an informative and attractive content. When a company makes a good content, the next step is engagement.

The social media is building engagement. It means that social media marketing is a combination of accurate content marketing and social media that helps to engage customers. The last step is conversation. As was mentioned earlier, one of the most effective features of social media is straight communication with customers. All together, attraction, engagement and conversation are the principals of successful social media marketing (Korhan, 2013).

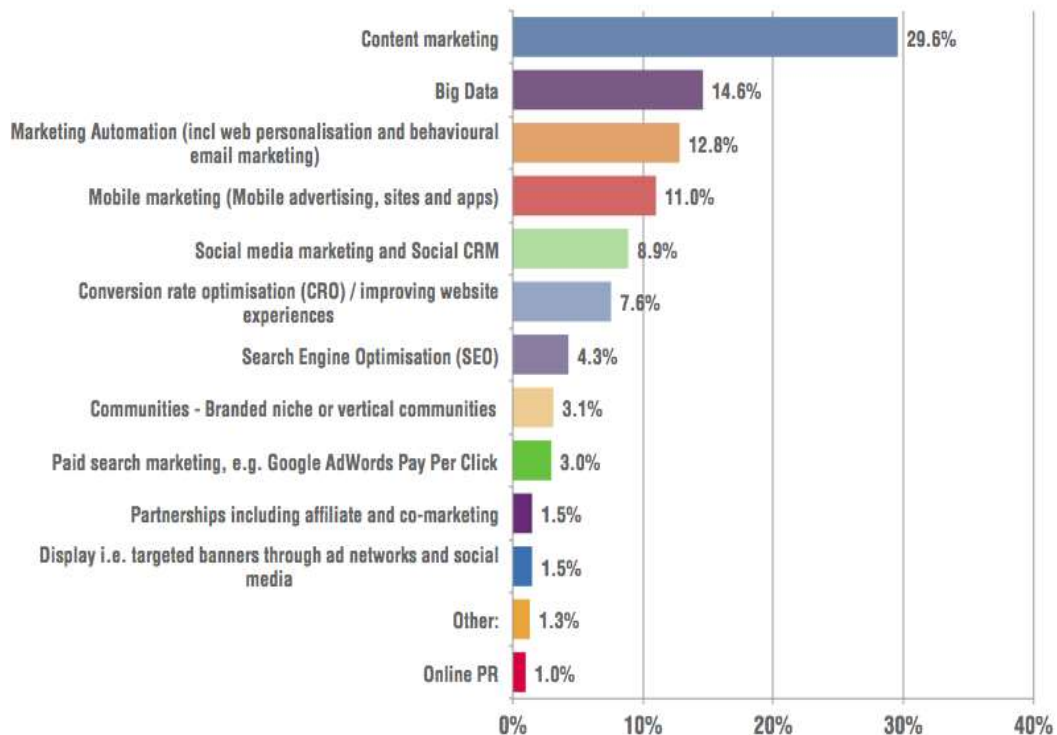
Blog marketing is a core component of social media marketing. Social media is online services that provide two-way communication and information exchange. Social media marketing was currently used for customers' attraction through online social media platforms where they naturally spend time. (Evans & McKee, 2010).

### **3.3. Blog marketing**

*“Blog marketing as any process that publicizes or advertises a website, business, brand or service via the medium of blogs.” (Divecha, 2007).*

As a matter of fact, marketing is shifting online and the digital age revolution is offering conditions for the emergence of *“a more economically dynamic, socially equitable, and politically democratic society”* (Cooper, 2006).

## Most commercially important Digital Marketing Trend for 2015?



**Figure 3.1. : Most Significant Commercial Digital Trends 2015 (Chaffey, 2015)**

As shown in the given figure, of the given most significant digital marketing trends of 2015, content marketing is preferred and comes first on the list with 29.6%, which is followed by big data and marketing automation with 14.6% and 12.8% respectively. The year 2016 and in future it is predicted that many a changes can be seen in the field of content marketing world and the marketers will be focusing in the content marketing more and it will become a crucial part of marketing process for the company's success.

*“The revolution occurred because the audience is now in charge”* (Snow, 2014) and having acknowledged this truth, companies are trying to catch up with the trend by becoming storytellers and publishers themselves to create and deliver valuable content to consumers through social media channels. The figure below illustrates the most common tactics which Business-to-Customer marketers have been using and which are expected to consistently be applied in content marketing for the upcoming years.

### **3.4. Blog Marketing Benefits**

It is worth noting that many people like to spend time in the Internet. They communicate with the outside world through the social media. They shop at the online stores but the most popular action in Internet is reading. Many people replace morning newspapers with Internet news. Also, before making purchases some people search for information through the web. It creates the demand for blog marketing.

Blog marketing contains the following benefits: (I. Sherbakova, 2010).

1. Web is seen as having no geographical limits; it means that blogs can be widely available. As an example world-famed fashion bloggers have an opportunity to present new trends to a wide audience.
2. A blog can be a good way to create awareness among masses and to build company profile. A blog creation and accurate development are generating positive corporate identity. Also, a blog helps with effective promotion of existing products and gives an opportunity to present novelties.
3. Professional bloggers have great abilities to guide readers because readers believe sincerely in information presented by bloggers (Zarrella, 2013).
4. Blog marketing presents many different ways of advertising. It is mutually beneficial for bloggers and companies. A company has for example an opportunity to involve professional bloggers to write posts for its corporate blog. It is article marketing that is always paid by the client's company. Also, companies can pay for exclusive posts on popular blogs with a suitable topic in order to reach the right audience.
5. Social media profiles can show the interests and demand of a user. It gives the opportunity for bloggers to find suitable topics for posts and attract more attention.
6. Blog marketing works 24/7. It means all information that is presented on the blogs is available on a twenty-four-hour basis.
7. A blogger or marketing expert has an opportunity to track the activity of users, to check how much time they spend on your blog/site and what kind of links they

click. Moreover, there are tools for traffic tracking such as Google Analytics, Stat Counter and etc. All these statistic sites are similar. They offer detailed information about the number of unique visitor per day/month/year. They also present the most popular links and keywords.

8. World-famed bloggers have a high prestige that means that readers (potential customers) will be interested in products/items presented by them. Usually it works with announcements of must-have products. One of the most popular practices is the bloggers' review. Many people try to find information about a product through the Internet before buying it. The most relevant source of information for them is the blog because they can find an honest and independent opinion.
9. Private advertising is one more benefit of blog marketing. As was mentioned earlier, people can find honest and independent opinions about products on a blog. Nevertheless, this opinion can be written as private advertising.
10. Blogging is absolutely a free marketing tool that does not require cash resources but it takes time. In some cases a blog can be a source of money.
11. Blog gives an opportunity to get feedback and comments. The feedbacks are not always positive but negative feedback might be a stimulus for development. The positive comments help to win the customer's favor.
12. Blogs present values of a company. First of all, a company that has its own blog has an advantage because blogging is not as simple as it sounds. It takes a lot of time, concentration and effort. It means that this company is very interested in attracting new customers and maintaining relationship with existing ones. Thus a corporate blog gives a chance to understand the policy of a company.
13. The prominent aspect of blogging is high traffic. It means that a blog has a marketing power of attracting a big number of visitors. More blog posts – more traffic. Moreover, blogging allows staying social, keeping in touch with existing customers and attracting new ones.

### **3.5. Blog Marketing Weaknesses**

Blog Marketing has following list of weaknesses: (I. Sherbakova, 2010).

1. A nonprofessional blogger or an inexperienced marketing specialist can also do badly for the company reputation. In some cases a blog post can be seen as a spam. Usually spam is irritating and unsolicited advertisement. Sometimes unreasonable posts can antagonize even the regular reader or customer.
2. It is good idea to make a corporative blog, to involve employees in the process of blogging. Nevertheless, it is very difficult to develop a corporate blog and attract employees to join it.
3. There is a big chance to make a blog that will be unpopular and unattractive. Of course private blogs can be a hobby or fun but a corporate blog requires a large amount of time and work.
4. Blogs recede into the background awaiting the advent of new social media platforms. Other social media tools require less time. They are easy to conduct. Companies have no need to go into details and think about design.
5. Regular updates are required for keeping readers but it has no guarantee. As was mentioned earlier a blog needs a lot of time. Most companies have no time to conduct a good blog. As an example it is much easier to take a picture of a product and upload it to the Instagram with a short description.

Few aspects that have to be taken into account to avoid blog marketing weaknesses: (I. Sherbakova, 2010).

1. Good content marketing strategy gives an opportunity to keep the interest of the readers and customers;
2. Blog has to be updated regularly. It helps to attract readers to come back.
3. Blog has to be friendly and open.
4. It is very important to communicate and pay attention to feedback.
5. It is necessary to remember that blogging takes time; one hour a day will be a good investment.

The blog marketing has more beneficial characteristics than unfavorable. It means that blogs have a marketing power and can be used as an effective tool by companies.

### **3.6. Developing a popular and successful blog**

The appealing nature of blogging is that it is either very inexpensive or free, and easy to operate. Moreover, how accessible blog is also explains for its easiness to be promoted via several tools and resources (Gehl, 2006). With viewing the above different examples of travel blog world answer to the typical question “how to develop a popular and successful blog” can be evaluated with the help of given tips by Wright(2006) for companies and individuals which is actually a challenge for many .

1. Be real and do not blog about everything. A blogger should clearly define who he wants to be, his niche content and his target audience. This holds true to the travel blog also which can be explained by the example of Marriott Blog which is targeted to business professionals.
2. Be passionate and enjoy blogging. The key to have an engaging blog profile is to be yourself and have a real interest in what you are writing like what Sankara do on this blog-Be On The Road i.e. conveys his interest, passion about travelling etc. in a passionate way.
3. Write often is not just a good thing to do, it is a must. The main point to for the blog to be contagious is that it should be updated regularly. Readers love fresh content, by updating regularly. This is the reason the blog TravelBlog have so many followers because it contains many bloggers who provide new blogs and contents in it at a short interval in different aspect of travelling.
4. Link lots because there is an inherent value in the action. Linking shows the readers what a blogger is interested in and if the blogs linked to are of high quality, the blogger and his blog shall receive more respect and trust. Furthermore, as the bloggers who are linked to could find the blogger who links, this is a great way to show the world the blogger’s identity and that he exists, especially for new bloggers. Each of the given blogs above have links to various social platforms in their webpage, showing bloggers presence in these platforms



and allowing the readers to follow them there or new readers to locate them easily from the social media platform.

5. Leave comments on other blogs to create a community of same interests so to introduce his blog to the society and encouraging others to find him. Getting involved shall increase his blog's traffic and as a result, build more relationships with other bloggers and their readers as well. Even Bill Marriott, Chairman of Marriott International and running the blog Marriott on the Move himself replies to the comments in his blog.
6. Have fun and try new things. Blog is a mean to convey your message to the world in a beautiful way. Thus, it is a mean to open your imagination and try something new. Like Sankara does in his blog by not only focusing on the places he visited but also the places he wish to visit soon.
7. Push the envelope. Blog content should always be fresh and inviting so that one needs to try something unusual and even if it is "wrong", it shall draw some public attention ultimately. A blogger should not only keep up with new trends, but also create one (or some) by continuously changing and asking questions.
8. Ping. A blogger pings to notice several online services that he has posted something new and they shall visit his blog to check it. Generally, pinging is a way to ensure that the blogosphere stays connected.
9. Use feeds to encourage people to read and follow one's blog as they lower the barriers between bloggers and readers, and provide up-to-date qualified information.
10. Create meaningful titles to enhance the potentiality of search engines finding one's blog and sending it more traffic. A good title should give readers a reason to want to read more. (Wright, 2006.)

**SCOPE- FEATURES OF A SUCCESSFUL BLOG**

Blogs have numerous layers of data inside them. On one hand there are the visual messages that the readers consider through the standpoint and configuration of the blog. Everything from the background picked, arranging data, formatting and meaningfulness of the blog, convey a message. The main part of the blog is the message that its content convey. Each and every aspect of the blog matters- whether it be the content, message delivery, colors chosen, fonts made as well as the presence of the blog site. Thus the content features and technological features complement each other, which are explained below :

**4.1. Content related features**

Word of mouth is considered as an effective way to gain the popularity of a certain product or service. Blog is an important part of the word of mouth communication channel. Different content of the message and delivery part of it make a certain word of mouth more contagious than the other. Through the help of blog one can help not only product but also ideas, message and videos etc. The purpose of every blog is to make the message contagious and thus the mentioned product, service or idea and so on. There are main six features constituting a catchy content described as: (Berger.J, 2013).

**4.1.1. Currency**

Individuals fabricate picture through numerous ways, including interests, distractions and subjects they get a kick out of the chance to talk about. Discussing present and in fashion topic add to the social picture of a man. Including a message with high social money gets the consideration and will probably get shared. Making socially current material can be accomplished following the most recent patterns and advancements and being an expert of certain things. Giving the most recent and most consideration topic and message to the readers would give the readers to share the message we wish to convey.

#### **4.1.2. Associations**

Frequently we need to convey a message as well as mean to remind the readers about our message. Making content that incite the readers can be accomplished through passionate and memory triggers. These triggers can be pictures and thoughts that are effectively associable with each other. Frequently in individuals' memory one article raises relationship of another, discussing one subject could make audience consider something other than what's expected. Individuals have a tendency to examine the things that they have at the top of the priority list, in this way the more individuals remember an item or thought, the more they are liable to discuss it. So as to make content that individuals consider, we require concentrate on making content that brings out emotions. *'We need to design products and ideas that are frequently triggered by the environment and create new triggers by linking our products and ideas to prevalent cues in that environment. Top of mind leads to tip of tongue.'* (Berger, 2013)

#### **4.1.3. Evoking feelings**

Individuals are prone to share content that recalls certain feelings in them, feeling is contagious. The range of feelings that can be utilized is entirely wide-from joy, stunned, care, surprised, and so forth. However the right sort of feeling should be picked. This doesn't mean fundamentally that exclusive positive feelings might be utilized to make buzz, in certain cases negative feelings have their motivation too. The primary concern to remember is the reason for the substance and the kind of feeling we wish to bring out in the reader.

#### **4.1.4. Getting noticed**

A product is required to be seen if it is required to promote it. Individuals devour a great deal of data with their eyes. Making an item that can be found being used or drawing in the client is advantageous. As individuals tend to pick up enthusiasm for things that are viewed as well known, getting introduction of an item builds its odds to wind up more mainstream. With a specific end goal to accomplish this we have to make items that are more available and open. At the point when items are unmistakable they promote themselves as when something is dreary it has a tendency to be recalled.

#### **4.1.5. Functionality**

Making valuable content that fills the purpose to practically help the readers as well as to help other people and consequently spread the news. Concentrating on matter that gives some practical advantage is a good approach to get our message emerges not just with its educational quality piece but with the with its motivation. So as to accomplish this, the concentration should be done on uniqueness of the message, the qualities of the item and its uses and advantages for the readers. Formulation and delivery of the content is also important other than content. All together for the message to be shared it should be conveyed in a simple so that it is easy to spread on.

#### **4.1.6. Message**

To deliver a message to the audience it is required to deliver it in the form of a story. Making a story engaging, conveying information and easy for readers to spread is the utmost requirement. A few stories are effective that they get to be viral. The key to viral the message is to imbed it in the blog in such a way message becomes its important part. (Berger, 2013).

### **4.2. Technical features of a successful blog**

To make a blog successful it is required to have excel in technical features as well with the combination of content related features. Following are the most used technical features: (Dimitrova, 2013).

#### **4.2.1. Easy access to content**

Unlike websites, it is required for a blog to constantly change its features and be in continues development. Blogs are in development process all the time as new contents are added frequently, thus making it difficult to navigate and reducing the ease of access factor. For the readers point of view, a reader should be able to get the information that he is seeking without any hindrance. New readers, having no knowledge about the blog should be able to get to the information needed without taking much time and effort finding the content. Blog content can be organized in various ways:

1. Utilizing pages
2. Tags n(labels)

3. Using widget
4. Search box

Blogger may use all of these features or may utilize some of them depending upon the amount of the content blog contains and the topics that are covered in the blog.

#### **4.2.2. Formatting of the header**

Special consideration is to be made while making the blog's header. It is essential for a blog that its header is arranged effectively as it is the important part of the blog. It shows how a blogger wants to be known and the subject he wants to talk about. In the event that this is an organization blog, it ought to contain organization logo and utilizing the same text styles and hues that the organization site is utilizing. In specialized terms the header ought to have the required estimations and contain sharp pictures. The content shade of the feature ought to complexity to the foundation with the goal that it is coherent and clear for the readers. It is fitting that the textual style of the title essentially bigger size than the body or sub header on the page. The header of a blog is vital as it makes a blog remarkable and conspicuous in the wide blogosphere.

#### **4.2.3. Prominent post image display**

The visual component is critical while making online substance. All the successful blogs requires visual elements. Pictures are utilized to upgrade the content, to give visual clarification of the message written and additionally can be use to separate the long text content. Pictures attract reader more than content does and accordingly are essential to ensure the pictures are put in an equivalent space. It permits the reader to have a halt in between while reading the long blogs. Pictures should be integral to the blog content and of good quality. Ensuring that the photos are in appropriate size for the blogs is extremely fundamental. Mistakenly organized pictures make amateurish impression. A decent blog is one which is easy to read and view. Pictures add It is advisable for bloggers to insert photos as it adds meaning to the blog .

#### **4.2.4. Loading time**

At the point when individuals are searching for data, they need to get it rapidly. With a specific end goal to maintain a strategic distance from circumstances of this sort, the loading time of a blog ought to be tried. Ideal loading time for a page to open is considered to be below two seconds. Pictures or visual element in the blog adds the loading time.

#### **4.2.5. Well-structured sidebar**

Sidebars are the space provided at the side of the blog where visual impacts and functionalities like- latest blog, trends can be included. With the wide decision of gadgets and capacities that can be consolidated, sidebars may turn out to be excessively occupied. This may have the inverse impact and really discover it excessively overpowering, making it impossible to explore a website. Gadgets that are put in a sidebar ought to fill a particular need. Also, the outline of the gadgets ought to relate with the configuration of the online journal as confounding looks may prompt outwardly bustling page. Each blogger can without much of a stress can pic what sorts of gadgets are most helpful for their audience and particularly their blogs. Ensuring that all gadgets are working legitimately is essential. It is advisable to remove the gadgets on sidebars that are not working properly.

#### **4.2.6. Social media buttons**

Blogs can be considered as the part of the social media. Ensuring that all online networking channels that are used by an organization or an individual are vital. This makes consistency as well as empowers readers to get associated with the blogger in all other online networking channels and spread and share the blog's substance. Having online networking catches on a blog is something that each blogger ought to consider. Adding them to an effectively unmistakable spot on the blog is crucial. Readers ought to have the capacity to associate with the blogger on the picked online networking with a single tick and not scrolling and hunt down the links on the page. These days the decision for online networking channels is very wide. For bloggers' benefit widgets are made would show links for all online networking channels that are utilized by a blogger or an organization (Vaughan P., 2012).

**5.1. Classification of travel blogs**

All the blogs that are falling into travel and tourism topic can be classified into three main categories: individual, collaborative and corporate (Thevenot, 2007).

**5.1.1. Individual**

**Individual**, also known as personal, blogs are most often having a form of an online diary. An individual blog usually gives a combination of writers' personal life and a certain subject that they would like to provide information or comments on. Such blogs are thought to have a C2C (consumer to consumer) one-to-many communication style. The number of public travel blog sites is growing all the time. Some of the most well-known nowadays include travelblog.org, travelpod.com, and mytripjournal.com. There is also a space for personal travel blogs on specialized customer review sites (e.g. tripadvisor.com) and other travel related companies' sites (such as travel agencies and travel guides). Nowadays an increasing number of official tourism destination organizations are launching travel blogs on their sites to create a successful communication platform for the readers. An example of this could be blogs provided by the government of Sweden, Austria, Canada and New Zealand.

It was found out that the main topics that are touched in individual travel blogs are quite general, such as climate, cuisine, transport, or regional specific stereotypes. Usually those blogs do not provide very specific information such as service quality or restaurant and accommodation reviews (Thevenot, 2007).

**5.1.1.1. Be on the road**

Be on the Road is a great example of travel blog by an individual blogger. Be on the Road is a travel and photography blog of Sankara, a professional travel blogger. Travel Blog of an Indian Globetrotter who indulges in Adventure Travel, Wildlife Holidays, Unique Cultures, Backpacking, Budget Travel and Vegetarian Food.

Sankara is a traveler at heart who left his white collared corporate IT job to explore the world and make a career in blogging. At first, he never had a clue that one day he

will start his blog, but Sankara got into blog writing due to the influence of his friends and family as they want to know more about his travelling stories. Thus family and friends of Sankara is his inspiration to start his travel blog.

Sankara is considered as one of the top Indian travel bloggers. And he is not just any type of travel blogger; he is a biking blogger who has been featured in many top media outlets. Specialized in adventure travels, Sankara has the talent to show the beauty of the world in both words and pictures. On BE ON THE ROAD, he also blogs about vegetarian cuisine, wildlife holidays, unique cultures and visas for Indians. This is a valuable blog for those looking to travel cheaply and efficiently, and especially for those wishing to explore India.

The blog is written giving the personal travel information of Sankara. It talks about Travel Tips, Travel and Vegetarian Food, Travel and Fashion, Travel and Technology, Travel Gear, Travel and Finance, Travel and Visas, Travel in India, Experiential Travel Stories, Rich Global Travel Photos and much more.

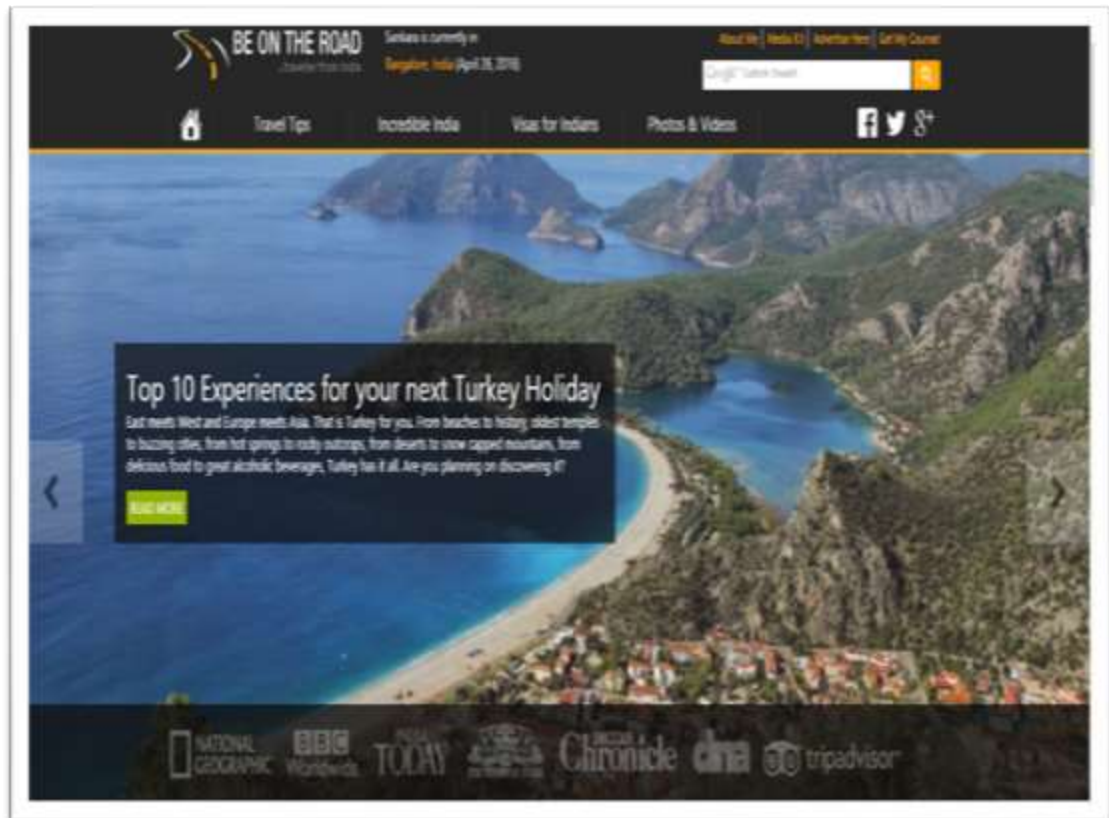
The blog not only provide information related to travel destinations in India but also provide a section of travel tips and have a galore of photos and videos, thus making it more attractive.

Author tends to keep himself busy by providing new blogs to his audience related to the latest trends of the travel industry be it- related to the travel packing essentials according to the travel place, providing visas information to the Indians travelling abroad or some insights about new culture around the world and particularly India .

Sankara in his blogs evoke a right blend of feelings while describing a place or a trip. Thus, conveying the message so strongly that convincing the reader to why the so called place mentioned in the blog is the one he or she should visit.

Now, the important part of the blog to connect to its audience is to have a good technological features, which the blog Be On The Road excel in.





**Figure 5.1. Be On The Road Blog**

The style of the blog corresponds well with the content. The header is often updated and changed using personally created header images that are relevant for each season. The visual elements of the blog are used to enhance the content. The color scheme has been kept in accordance with the travel destinations being shown.

The header gives nice information about the current location of the author. It provides the links to different pages of the blog site in a very organized way. Header also contains the small widgets allowing the readers to connect to the blogger with different social platforms the author is present in. For advertising on the blog page, an advertising link is provided on the header itself. Header also shows a glimpse of the number of publications in which the blogger has been mentioned.

The blog contains high quality images and videos, which makes it overall visually appealing. While the front provides the latest travel blog post of the author, it contains a sidebar containing-

1. latest blogs
2. Author's travel experience blogs in area wise.

3. Social media widget
4. location wise photo gallery

Scroll down the page and one will get links to different pages of weblog in a nice way.

1. Travel Tips
2. Visas for Indians
3. Adventure Travel
4. Vegetarian food
5. Wildlife
6. Unique cultures

Sidebar of each post is embedded with

1. A widget that allows sharing the post in various social media. This helps the content to spread throughout the blogosphere and gather wider audience. Blog archive in chronological manner.
2. Latest tweets in author's page.
3. Currently tending blogs

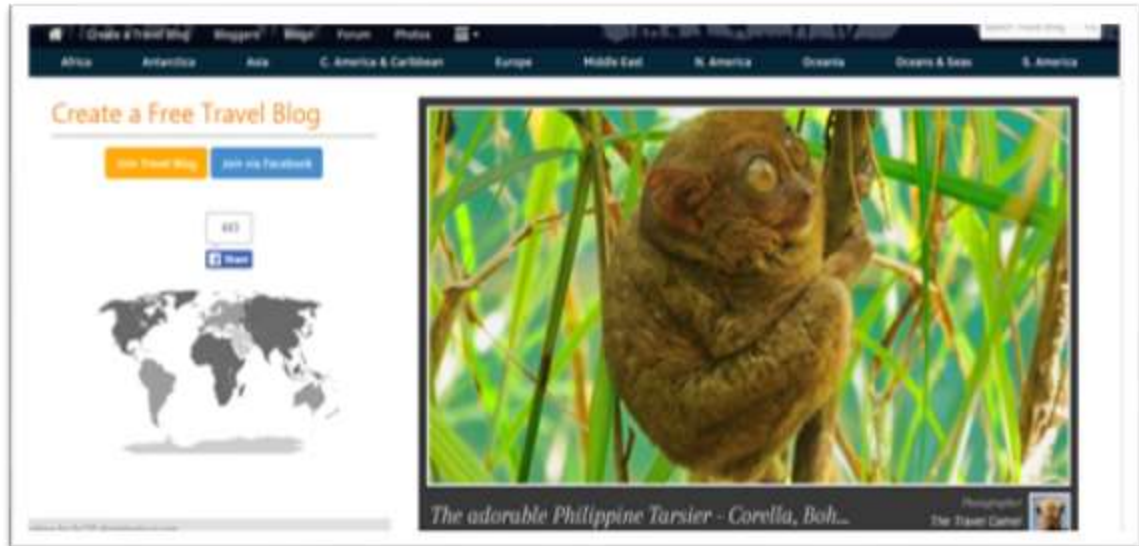
The communication with the readers is promoted by regular commenting and responding to the readers' comments. This engages the reader and creates a blogger-reader connection as well as readers' interaction

### **5.1.2. Collaborative**

**Collaborative** blogs differ from individual ones in the way that posts are written by more than one author. This makes those blogs more regularly updated, having wider range of information and whereby they are seen as being more relevant for the reader. While in personal blog the author can choose any topic he wants for the next post – first writing about himself, then about his trip to Asia, then about his university studies - collaborative blog has a specific topic which has to be followed. This makes such kind of blogs more organized. These blogs can follow C2C, B2C or even B2B communication style, but the main point is that instead of being one-to-many, they turn into being many-to-many (Thraenhart, 2007). One example of collaborative travel blog is [travelblog.com](http://travelblog.com), where professional travel writers are

sharing information about different destinations, reviews, new trends, recent news, etc.

### 5.1.2.1 TravelBlog



**Figure 5.2. Travelblog**

TravelBlog is considered as an online travel diary for the travel bloggers, readers etc. around the world. It works from internet cafes and computers worldwide, to allow you to update an online travel diary, it is free to join and takes just minutes to setup, and all you need is a working email address. **TravelBlog.org** is one of the most popular travel related web 2.0 sites on the internet.

TravelBlog.org has over 200,000 members and grows at around 100 new members a day. TravelBlog.org hosts over 7 million photos

Travel blog is a collection of tools so that travelers can write down a journal; send the address to family and friends, set up automatic mailing lists so that every time you add a new entry to your list your friends get an automatic email. Also the theme is travel, the tools are designed to cope with you moving around, maps and flags are linked from each journal. Photos can be added to the blog if you have a digital camera. Photoblog encourage its members to link to useful sites about areas, to help site's future travelers.

Write reviews, guides, journals, add photos.

Travelblog is an advertising supported service. There is a trade between the users of the site and the operator, travelblog hosts and promotes their stories in return for being allowed to publish adverts alongside their stories. Unlike (some) competing sites we don't then exploit our users with spam, popup, promotions and charge them for the privilege, additionally - we have a clear and fair copyright policy - the copyright of each journal and photo belongs to the author, we just publish it on the web.

Company makes every reader a contributor and a brand ambassador. The blog is used in a very well thought-out manner and focuses on conveying the message of the bloggers to the mass audience. It does not put the spotlight on the company but on the clients. The blog idea is born in 2005 when the company is looking for ways to communicate with the people who used their products on a daily basis. With organized campaigns for the search of creative brand ambassadors among handcrafting professional, TravelBlog is run by a small collection of individuals working as administrators and moderators.

Through the years the blog has flourished and established as a platform for ideas, experience and communication by various travel bloggers. With this innovative idea TravelBlog has managed not only to create a unique community but also to boost the interest in the travelling and blogging but also provided a place for advertisers to connect with the audience by placing their ads beside a blogger's blog. The content of the blog is entirely dedicated to the readers and engages them through practical content, easy to follow tutorials and tips as well as captivating images.

The blog highlights the contents in the following way-

Header of the blog contains the links to

1. Bloggers Details
2. Blogs
3. Create a new free blog link
4. Social media follow link
5. Search for a particular blog or place
6. Blogs categorized on the basis of continents
7. travel photos gallery

#### 8. forum page

While the main page also contains

1. Trending blogs
2. Newest blogs
3. Bloggers of the week
4. Few latest blogs brief

While having a single sidebar broadcasting the discussions on the basis of featured, trending and latest. The site also gives an option to leave a comment below a particular blog with your details.

#### 5.1.3. Corporate

**Corporate** blogs are published by a certain organization. They can be either internal or external. Internal blogs are reached through the organization's intranet and are meant for the employees. They are successfully used in business instead of meeting or e-mails. External blogs are publicly available weblogs (Thraenhart, 2007).

Corporate blogs can be either B2C (business to consumer) and G2C (government to consumer) or B2B (business to business) and G2B (government to business).

B2B travel blogs are also known as “expert blogs” and are used for networking purposes between tourism professionals, businesses and tourism organizations. They discuss latest industry trends, study findings, technological developments, marketing tips, etc. (Thraenhart, 2007).

B2C blogs' role is to announce a new product or service, explain policies or react to criticism. The benefit of corporate blog compared to traditional press releases is that although it is also biased, it is usually seen as being less informal and whereby more credible and appealing for the reader, because it allows to communicate with the reader in a more personal manner. G2C blogs have got almost the same role as B2C blogs; they hire experienced and professional bloggers as “opinion leaders”. Sometimes they engage local people to provide information. This raises the trustworthiness of the source. Moreover, some of the organizations use paid or sponsored bloggers (Akehurst, 2009).

The first part is designed to support the previously presented theoretical framework and will include five examples of blogs which have become successful in their fields of expertise. This part of the re-search will take a closer look at the blogs individually and examine their technical, functional, visual and content related features. Special attention will be paid in the technical features of the blogs and their linkage to the theory. The blogs will be studied in a manner that looks into each case as an entity and describes the features that are unique to each blog. The aim is to present blogs that differ in their field of work, structure and audience base and look into their similarities and features that contribute to their success.

### 5.1.3.1. Marriott

Marriott International, Inc. is a global leading lodging company with more than 4,400 properties in 87 countries and territories. Founded by J. Willard and Alice Marriott and guided by Marriott family leadership for nearly 90 years, the company is headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland, USA. Marriott International has got its own corporate blog. One of the blog is by Bill Marriott, and this blog is considered as one of the popular and visited corporate blogs on the Internet. The blog give information and touch the topics, such as about opening of new hotels, launching loyalty programs, competitive advantage, receiving awards, etc. Now the company has another blog by its current CEO Arne Sorenson. But the blog by Bill Marriott, the Executive Chairman and Chairman of the Board of Marriott International is still considered as one of the interesting blogs in corporate world. Bill Marriott himself replies to the comments posted by the visitors.



Figure 5.3. Marriott On The Move Blog

The blog of Marriott hotels is considered as a great example of a corporate blog written directly by the president of the company. This has enabled the blog to become the voice of the business and be more personable to the readers and partners. There has been measured a direct sales growth after the launch of the blog (12most.com)

The blog is written from the personal perspective of Bill Marriott and has his touch throughout the content. In the 'About me' section the readers have the chance to learn more about the author. Mr. Marriot shares that he does not have good technical skills with blogging and would often write his posts by hand or have them dictated to his technical personnel. Facts like this add personal value to the blog. It creates closer connection between the company and the clients and partners. The author himself mentions that blogging has been a great learning experience for him (Marriot blog)

The visual presentation of the blog is very clean-cut and professional, with an old-school edge and has an aura of credibility. This is a suitable presentation for the personal blog of a well-established lodging company. The sections are clearly distinguishable and the reader can read more by clicking on each of them. The color scheme is simple and neutral. The structure includes one sidebar, which contain:

1. RSS feeds
2. Email alert function
3. Link to Bill Marriott's book
4. Popular posts widget
5. Tag cloud
6. Biography of the author
7. Link to author's YouTube channel

The blog includes a search bar for faster browsing of content and added convenience for the readers. There is also a 'Find a hotel' link which transfers the reader to Marriott's reservations page where hotel reservations can be made. The footer contains a link to the company's main page. The blog posts are published every week. This is the average frequency for most corporate blogs and keeps the readers interested in the regularly updated content.

Marriott's blog has a classic look and structure of a corporate blog. It incorporates simplicity and functionality. The main purpose of the blog is to bring the clients and partners closer to the brand and be the voice of Marriot. The personalized writing style and simple formatting of the content is in line of the image the blog portrays. The blog is a great addition to the otherwise modern and dynamic view of Marriott's company website.



**FINDINGS**

The given blogs chosen as examples represent the three different types of travel blog, i.e. Individual, Collaborative and Corporate blog. While the blogs written by the individuals, be it an individual travel blog or collaborative one, they focus on the individual while the corporate blogs focus on individuals as well as the stock holders.

According to study, following are the findings inferred:

1. The three blogs though belong to the travel blog world but they all differ from each other in the structure of the blog and its presentation.
2. The blogs are different in technical feature also
3. The visual content of the Be On The Road and TravelBlog were having some similarity, while it was completely different in the case of Marriott Blog.
4. Be On The Road and Marriott blogs have single an individual as an author while TravelBlog contains several people as the contributing authors.
5. Due to this fact, the frequency of blogging the new post varies in all three. Bill Marriott, author of Marriott blog post once a week while in TravelBlog posting is done daily, sometimes more than that. In case of Be On The Road blog, posting is done usually once in a week but now the author has increased this frequency.
6. Having an individual author adds few of the advantages to the given two blogs, such as maintaining consistency to the language and non-manipulative writing while advantages of having multiple authors for TravelBlog is that it has varieties of topics under its belt and have a huge base of professional bloggers, thus adding more reader base.
7. Now, coming to the content features, Be On The Road author Sankara focuses on the travels that he made and converted them into a beautiful story. Also, it focuses on the places that he admires and pictures them beautifully in words so that the audience feels that why this place is one that the writer has mentioned or one should visit.
8. Sankara makes use of the photos in between the blogs to keep the interest of the readers while reading.

9. TravelBlog contains a good number of bloggers and a huge number of reader base, thus in it all the blogs are written by different bloggers, mostly conveying their travel story and usually with the help of lots of photos.
10. Marriott on the Move blog is written by Bill Marriott writing usually once a week focusing on the hospitality topic and the self business stories.

<b>Content Related Features</b>	<b>Individual Blog (Be On The Road)</b>	<b>Collaborative Blog (Travel Blog)</b>	<b>Corporate Blog (Marriott on the Move)</b>
1. Currency	Providing knowledge about Travel aspects	Focusing mainly on travelling done	Focusing on varied categories
2. Associations	Personal Experience	Travel Experience	Personal and business life
3. Functionality	Creating knowledge about travelling	A destination description from various bloggers	Leadership Commentary
4. Message	Personal diary	Depends upon the blogger writing the blog	Engaging, providing business opinion
5. Evoking Feelings	Inspiration to travel	Depends upon the blogger writing the blog	Inspirational
6. Getting Noticed	Description of place or culture with personal touch and photos	Use of different bloggers story and their experience	Use of story personal business in the blog

**Table 6.1. Content Related Features**

10. The audience of these blogs also differs, while TravelBlog and Be On The Road aims at individuals, travel enthusiast, etc. Marriott blog has mainly professional audience.
11. The writing style of these three blogs is also one factor of comparison, while the blogs of Be On The Road and TravelBlog are written mostly in story form

and with giving a personal touch to it for evoking right amount of feelings from the readers, Marriott Blog in its blog have a classic look and feel.

12. While the similarity between the three blogs is that these three gives an expert, knowledgeable and professional view on the relevant and current topics related to their field.

<b>Technological Features</b>	<b>Individual Blog (Be On The Road)</b>	<b>Collaborative Blog ( Travel Blog)</b>	<b>Corporate Blog (Marriott on the Move)</b>
1. Easy Access To Content	Use of Blog Tags(Destination wise), latest blog posts and other travel links	Use of links to-bloggers, blogs, forums, widgets to-featured , newest blogs	Use of search blog option and side bar for blogs organizes in category wise
2. Formatting of the header	Depiction about the blog and links to its pages	Some stats related to the blog site, login details	Representation of Marriott and Bill Marriott
3. Image Display	Use it to good extent in an organized way	Use it to great extent	Minimal use of photos
4. Loading Time	Well maintained page	Well maintained page	Well maintained page
5. Side Bar	Multiple sidebars for use of Links to blogs	Use for discussion forum, blogs links	Use for-rss feed, subscription, blogs links
6. Social-Media Button	Facebook, twitter, google+	Facebook, twitter, google+	RSS feed, myYahoo, Google+

**Table 6.2. Technological Features**

13. Coming to the technical features, what is common in them is that all these blogs have provided a link to the social networking sites in their blog page.

Thus, it means they understand the power of interlinking of the blogs and networking sites.

14. In these three blogs one can easily navigate from one blog to another and search for the required topic as the blogs and contents are organized in a good way, but different from each other.
15. Other technical feature are different from each other, while Be On The Road and TravelBlog focuses on more photos and using widgets and side bars for current travel blogs and discussion. Marriott blog having a professional audience keeps it formal, with the use of less number of photos and minimal side bar.
16. It is seen that these blogs though focusing on travel and hospitality, differ from each other in a great way but what connects them is that they all have a huge readers base and enjoy the popularity they have achieved in the travel blog as well as in the internet.
17. This is due to the fact that these blogs have understood their audience and accordingly have provided the right content in their blogs and connected with the reader beautifully.
18. Also, keeping a good blend of technical as well as content related feature have helped these blogs to reach this position and form a huge readership base.

**LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**7.1 Limitations**

1. This study is limiting only to travel blogs. This study can be extended to other blogs of different categories.
2. One example of each category of travel blog was taken into consideration. But, in fact there are many travel blogs present on internet based on different countries which on consideration may show different results.
3. Moreover, this study is theoretical in nature and is performed on the personal observation of an individual.
4. Time limit for conducting this study was also a constraint.

**7.2 Recommendations**

From the study it is observed that a successful blog have an importance for a company as well as individual alike. Based on the study following are the recommendations one should adhere:

1. One should have a good knowledge about the subject in which one is writing a blog.
2. Blogs being personal in the nature adds trust in the mind of the reader.
3. A blog is a great way to spread you knowledge to the world.
4. Writing blog is a tedious process as it requires a creative way to present your idea to the audience and it should be in a way that it is enjoyable to read.
5. It is required of the blogger to have a clear understanding as to who is blogger's audience and for whom the blogger is writing the blog.
6. It is also necessary to organize the blog in a convenient way so that it is easy accessible to the new person visiting the site.
7. For the blog to be contagious it is required to provide link of various social websites in the blog and presence of the blogger in these websites.
8. Presence of visual element in the blog enhances the text and makes the blog interesting to read as well as help to connect with the audience.
9. For the blog to be successful for an individual and corporate as well it is required to evoke feelings in reader, which may be positive or negative.

### CONCLUSIONS

The core focus of the study is on the use of blogging as a marketing tool with the help of travel blogs. For this purpose, three travel blogs, namely- Be On The Road, TravelBlog and Marriott were taken into consideration. These blogs were taken as an example of three different categories of travel blogs – Individual travel blogs, Collaborative travel blog and Corporate Travel blog.

The key question was features of a successful blog. From the study it is concluded that for a blog to be successful it should follow the content related features as well as give same importance to the technological features also. The three blogs given vary from each other but the thing common to them was they were able to attract readers and maintain a good follower base.

Advantage of using blog is that it has no boundaries and have a large leadership, are low cost in production and have expert opinions. Blog are considered as one of the useful marketing tool due to these features. As per study it is observed that a good blog once made create an interest among the readers and affecting their opinion. Thus, companies should consider blog as a marketing tool because word of mouth of any product or service is a great way to generate interest among public and blog is an important medium for spreading information among masses in this Internet age.

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