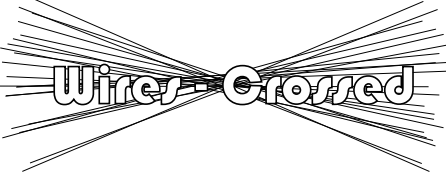


Slide 1



**Developing Community Media to Mitigate
the Impact of Fake News**

**Module 3 How to
write an
engaging blog or
a micro-blog**

Slide 2



HELLO!

Topics

- What is a blog and a micro-blog
- Why to blog
- How to write a blog
- Where to blog

The topics that are going to be covered during this 5-hour workshop are:

- What is a blog and a micro-blog
- Why to blog
- How to write a blog
- Where to blog

ACTIVITY Nr. 1

My favourite blogs



The trainer asks the participants to tell their favorite blogs, bloggers or areas of their interest they follow on the Internet. Then, the participants with the help of the trainer find one example of blog on the Internet and discuss what they like and what could be done better.

ACTIVITY Nr. 2



What is a blog and a micro-blog?

The participants are divided into small groups and the facilitator asks them to come up with their own definition of a blog and a micro-blog and guess, what are the differences between them.

After 10 minutes the groups present their definitions and a discussion takes place in order to find differences and similarities among the various definitions presented.

The facilitator writes the key words on the flipchart.

Blog

'Blog' is a contraction of the term **'web log'** meaning an online journal or log. It contains personal experiences and opinions with posts listed most-recent first.

The traditional blog post has 500-800 words and contains thoughts, photos, videos and links to other web sites and forms.

Blog is a contraction of the term **'web log'** meaning an online journal or log. It contains personal experiences and opinions with posts listed most-recent first. The traditional blog post has 500-800 words and contains thoughts, photos, videos and links to other web sites and forms

Micro-blog

'Micro-blog' is a short blog post with less content (under 300 words) that can have images, GIFs, links, infographics, videos, and audio clips. It is published on social media such as Twitter, Pinterest, Tumblr, Instagram, Facebook and others.

'Micro-blog' is a short blog post with less content (under 300 words) that can have images, GIFs, links, infographics, videos, and audio clips. It is published on social media such as Twitter, Pinterest, Tumblr, Instagram, Facebook and others.

ACTIVITY Nr. 3

**Advantages and disadvantages
of a blog and a microblog**



The participants are divided into two groups. One group holds a discussion about advantages and disadvantages of a blog and the other group of a micro- blog. After 10 minutes the facilitator asks the groups to present their ideas.

Why to blog?

Blogging enables you to:

- reach a huge number of people
- tell your story, express your point of view
- meet new people
- promote special events
- organize your thoughts and learn
- build rapport and engagement

The main reasons for blogging are:

Blogging enables you to:

- reach a huge number of people
- tell your story, express your point of view
- meet new people
- promote special events
- organize your thoughts and learn
- build rapport and engagement

Why to micro-blog?

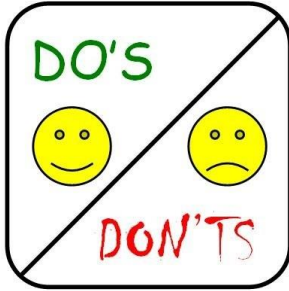
- it takes minutes to write up and post so you can post frequently and get better engagement of the audience
- it can broadcast news more efficiently than a lengthy post
- it is more suitable for mobile devices
- it can be seen by anyone and commented

The main reasons for micro-blogging are:

- it takes minutes to write up and post so you can post frequently and get better engagement of the audience
- it can broadcast news more efficiently than a lengthy post
- it is more suitable for mobile devices
- it can be seen by anyone and commented

ACTIVITY Nr. 4

The Do's and Don'ts of Writing a Blog



The purpose of this activity is to find out the rules of writing a blog. The facilitator divides the participants into small groups and asks them to use the activity handout AH 3.1. Their task is to fill in the table and write an appropriate phrase into the right column. Then a representative of each group presents their ideas. After having all the groups present their work the facilitator hands out the table with correct answers.

How to write an engaging blog or a micro-blog?



The basic steps in order to create a successful blog post are:



Follow these steps:

- Step 1: **Plan** your blog
- Step 2: Craft a **headline**
- Step 3: **Write** your post
- Step 4: Use **images**
- Step 5: Edit your blog post.

Step 1: Plan your blog post by choosing a topic, creating an outline, conducting research, and checking facts.

Step 2: Craft a headline that is both informative and will capture readers' attentions.

Step 3: Write your post, either writing a draft in a single session or gradually word on parts of it.

Step 4: Use images to enhance your post, improve its flow, add humor, and explain complex topics.

Step 5: Edit your blog post. Make sure to avoid repetition, read your post aloud to check its flow, have someone else read it and provide feedback, keep sentences and paragraphs short, don't be a perfectionist, don't be afraid to cut out text or adapt your writing last minute.

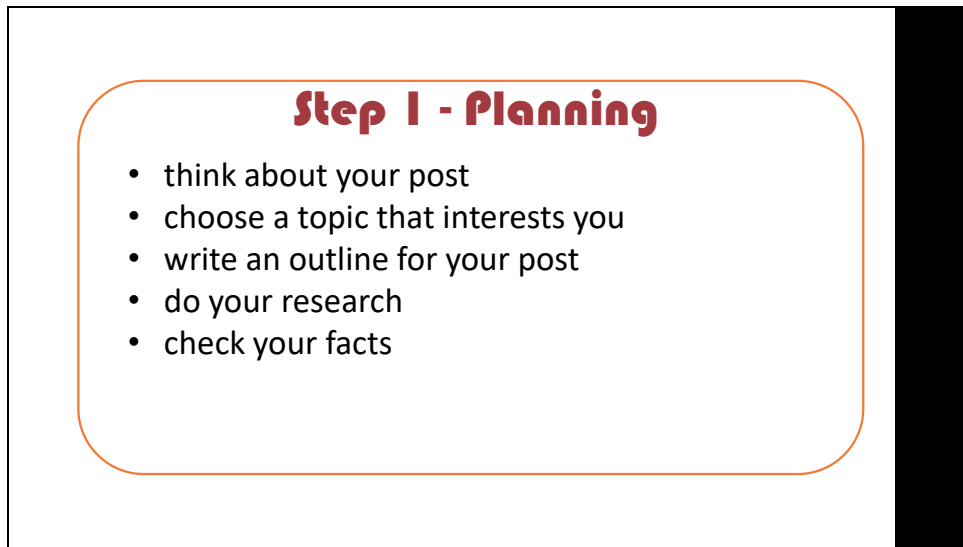
ACTIVITY Nr. 5

Defining steps



The facilitator divides the participants into 5 groups according to the 5 steps that are needed to be followed in order a successful blog post to be created. The brainwriting method is used for implementing this activity. The participants of each group one after another write down ideas for a given topic on a piece of paper. They follow the instruction: Write down everything you currently know about the subject. Write down what you need or want to know about the subject, but you don't currently know. Each piece of paper is then passed on to someone else, who reads it silently and adds their own ideas to the page. This process is repeated until everyone adds his/her ideas on the paper..

After finishing writing the group leader passes the paper again and the participants read all the notes to see if they can find answers for their questions to this topic.



Step I - Planning

- think about your post
- choose a topic that interests you
- write an outline for your post
- do your research
- check your facts

Planning – thinking about your post

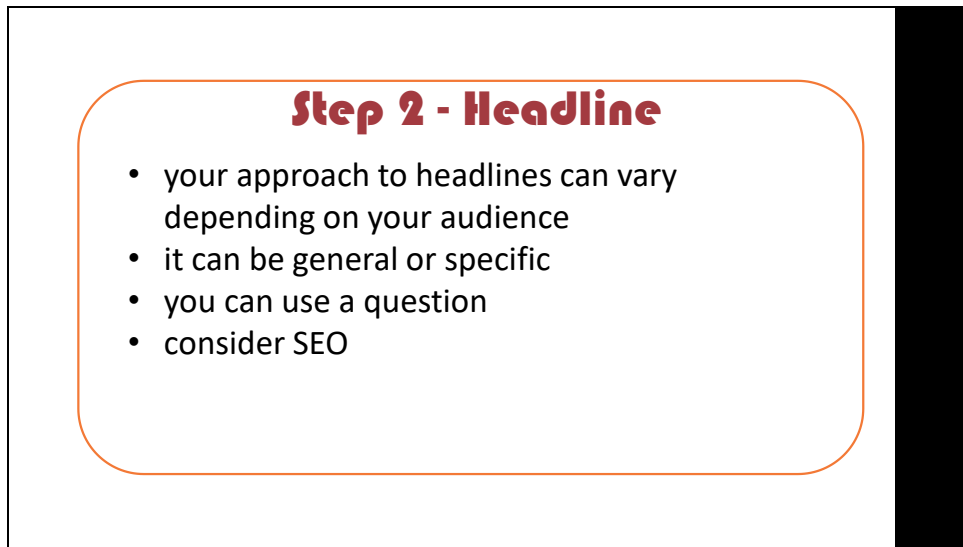
From the seed of the idea to finally hitting “Publish,” you might spend several days or maybe even a week “writing” a blog post, but it’s important to spend those vital hours planning your post and even thinking about your post.

Before you do any of the following steps, be sure to pick a topic that actually interests you. Nothing will kill a blog post more effectively than a lack of enthusiasm from the writer.

An outline doesn’t need to be lengthy, or even detailed – it’s just a rough guide to make sure you don’t ramble on and on about something tangential to your topic. Outlines keep you honest. They stop you from indulging in poorly thought-out metaphors about driving and keep you focused on the overall structure of your post. Remember – an outline is a guide, not an immutable series of commandments. If something doesn’t work, whether it be a sentence, a paragraph, or even a whole section, don’t hesitate to make the cut. Be ruthless with your work. Do not always stick to your outline.

If you’re relying on third-party information to write your blog post, choose authoritative sources. Official associations, government websites, heavily cited research papers, and preeminent industry experts.

If you’re just starting, your credibility and authority will take a major hit if you publish inaccurate information.



Step 2 - Headline

- your approach to headlines can vary depending on your audience
- it can be general or specific
- you can use a question
- consider SEO

You can decide on your headline before you write the rest of your post or do it after completing the post.

SEO: SEO is an acronym that stands for search engine optimization, which is the process of optimizing your website to get organic, or un-paid, traffic from the search engine results page.

In other words, SEO involves making certain changes to your website design and content that make your site more attractive to a search engine. You do this in hopes that the search engine will display your website as a top result on the search engine results page.

More about SEO in additional learning resources.

Step 3 – Writing the post

- write the post in one session
- writing is a skill → practice
- use the structure
- do not write long text passages

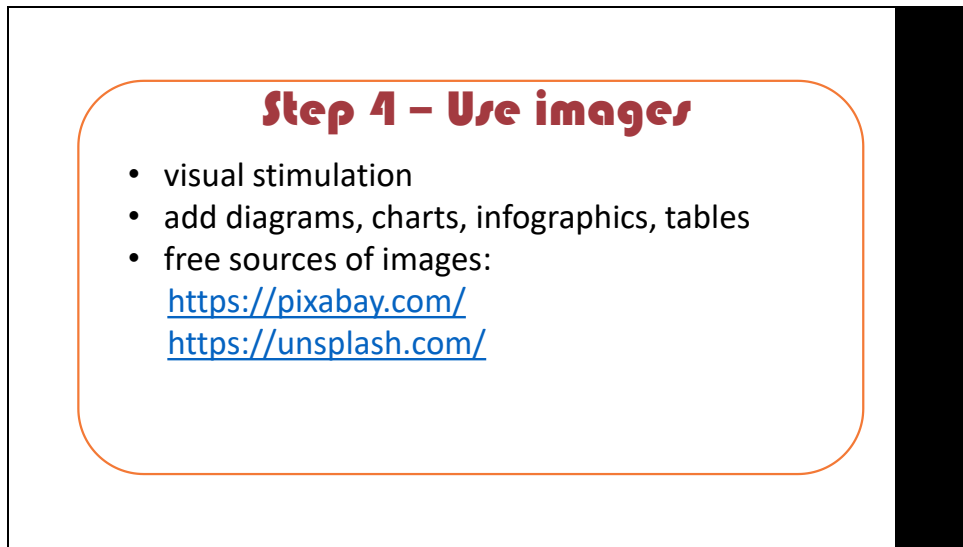
SPECIAL TIP: Write the introduction last!

The more you revisit a draft, the more tempting it is to add a little here, and a little there, and before you know it, you've gone wildly off-topic. Get as much done as you can in a single sitting even if you prefer to draft a blog post over three or four writing sessions.

Writing is a skill. It means it becomes easier and more natural the more you do it.

When you first start, you might find that it is difficult for you to write a post, but with practice it becomes more and more easier.

Do not write long passages, it is not clear and discourages readers.



Step 4 – Use images

- visual stimulation
- add diagrams, charts, infographics, tables
- free sources of images:
<https://pixabay.com/>
<https://unsplash.com/>

People simply don't have the time, will, or ability to focus on lengthy blog posts without some visual stimulation.

One of the most important reasons to include images in your blog posts is to break up the text. Many people scan blog posts rather than pore over every word, and interspersing images throughout the copy will make your post seem less intimidating and more visually appealing.

Everyone likes a good laugh, and a well-chosen image can help lighten the tone of your posts and inject some much-needed humour into a piece. This can be particularly effective if you're writing about a dry (or flat-out boring) topic.

Diagrams, charts, infographics, tables, and any other visual assets can help your readers understand abstract or complex topics and grasp the points you're trying to make.

Step 5 – Editing

- check your spelling and grammar
- avoid repetition
- read your post aloud
- identify your crutch word
- do not use claims you cannot prove
- keep sentences and paragraphs short

Once you're done with the first draft of your blog post, read through it and check for words that can be replaced to avoid repeating yourself.

When self-editing, look for words that you tend to overuse.

Every writer has a “crutch” word or phrase. This is a word that, no matter how carefully they might try, the writer simply cannot help themselves from including in their work. Identify what your crutch word is, be vigilant, and make sure it doesn't appear more often than it needs to.

When reading over your writing, be look out for claims that you can't prove or back up with evidence. Just because you've heard something over and over doesn't make it true.

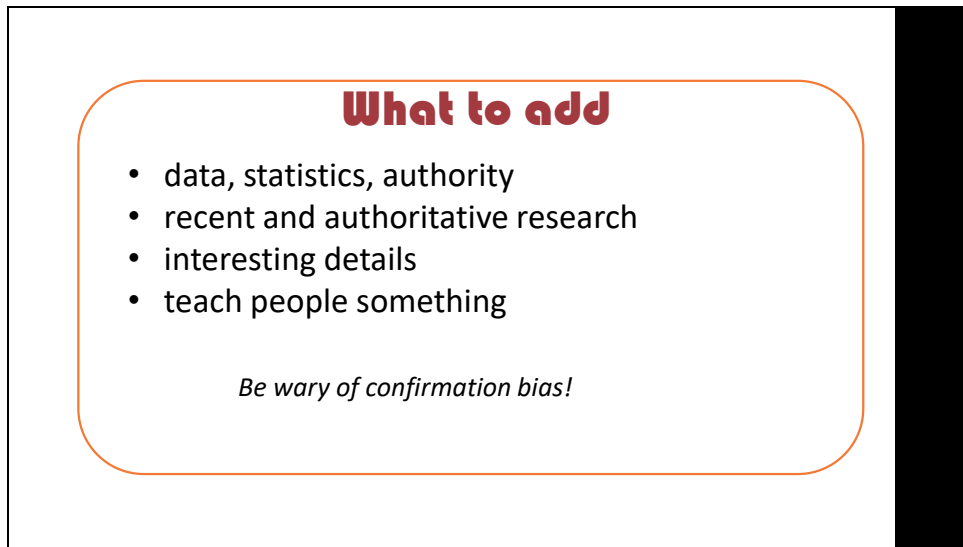
Have someone else read your work.

This is crucial for inexperienced or casual bloggers. Asking a friend or colleague to check your work isn't an admission of weakness or a sign of failure – it's a commitment to making your work as strong as it possibly can be.

Keep sentences and paragraphs short.

Sentences should be as short as possible. They're easier to read, making your audience's job easier. Shorter sentences also reduce the likelihood of going off on tangents.

The shorter the paragraph, the more likely your readers are to keep going. The “rules” of paragraph structure have been bent a little since web-based publishing became the norm but try to keep individual ideas isolated to their own neat, short little paragraph.

A white rectangular box with a thin black border, containing the slide content. To the right of the box is a solid black vertical bar.

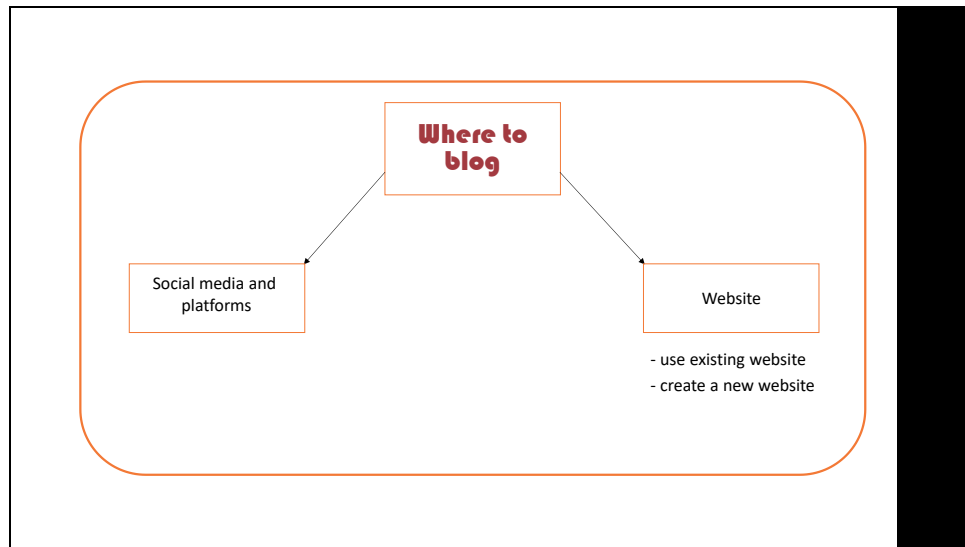
What to add

- data, statistics, authority
- recent and authoritative research
- interesting details
- teach people something

Be wary of confirmation bias!

- Data, statistics, authority (go looking for research and data to back them up.)
- Interesting details (Look for what is unusual, then filter for what is relevant. do not write about obvious things)
- Teach people something (If you want to be a great writer, make sure you are always learning yourself, so you have something to teach people. Read widely, try new things, and share what you learn. This can take the form of: including interesting facts, pointing people to more comprehensive resources to get in-depth knowledge (articles, books, films...))
- Statistics are also great in an introduction to remind people why they should care about whatever you're writing about.
However, if you can't find recent and authoritative research, skip it.

And be aware of confirmation bias – the tendency to seek out sources that confirm what we already believe.



The social media sites that send the most traffic to blogs in general are:

Facebook

Twitter

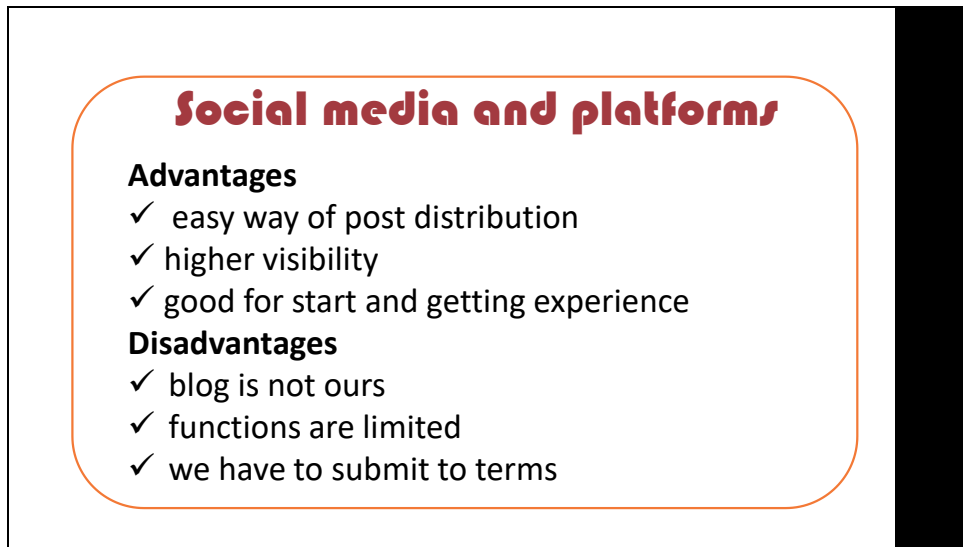
Pinterest

LinkedIn

The results vary depending on your target reader.

Easy and free blogging platform is: Blogger.com and Wordpress.

You can find ideas how to use Instagram for micro-blogging in SDLR.



Social media and platforms

Advantages

- ✓ easy way of post distribution
- ✓ higher visibility
- ✓ good for start and getting experience

Disadvantages

- ✓ blog is not ours
- ✓ functions are limited
- ✓ we have to submit to terms

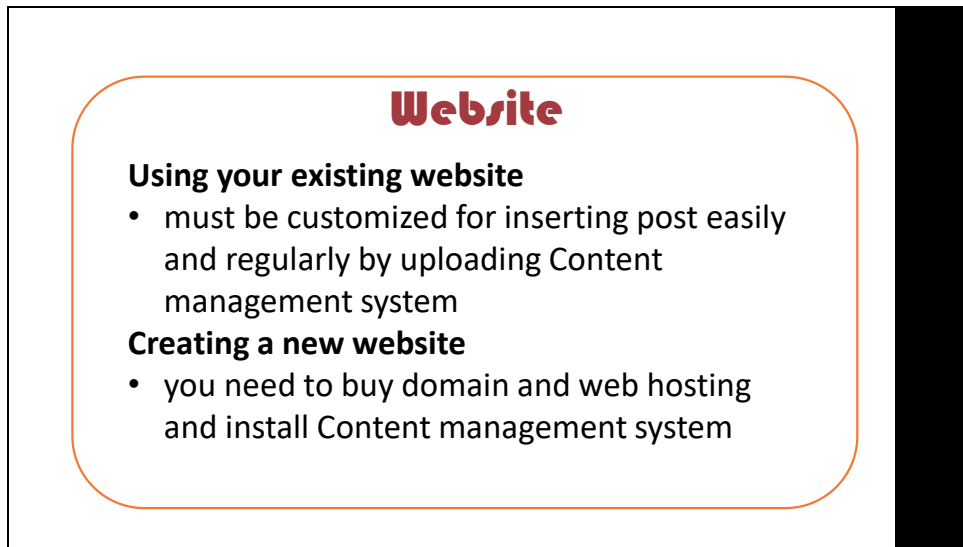
The advantages and disadvantages of Social media and platforms are:

Advantages

- easy way of post distribution
- higher visibility
- good for start and getting experience

Disadvantages

- blog is not ours
- functions are limited
- we have to submit to terms



Website

Using your existing website

- must be customized for inserting post easily and regularly by uploading Content management system

Creating a new website

- you need to buy domain and web hosting and install Content management system

By using an established website or by developing a new one you can also publish your blog posts. As a Content Management system you can use WordPress which is free.

Using your existing website

- must be customized for inserting post easily and regularly by uploading Content management system

Creating a new website

- you need to buy domain and web hosting and install Content management system

How to create a website

- Register a domain
- Get a web hosting
- Set up your website (installing Content management system for blogging e.g. WordPress)
- Design your website
- Upload the content

In order to create a website the follow the steps:

Register a domain – getting your url address

Get a web hosting - storage where your site is stored

Set up your website (installing Content management system e.g. WordPress)

Design your website – installing template to your Content management system, how does the website look, it can be free or paid

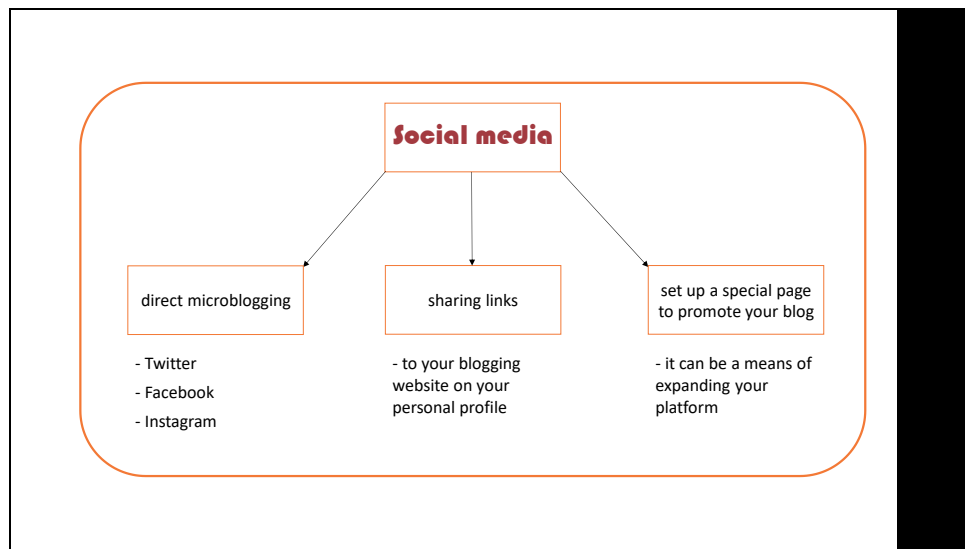
Upload the content

WordPress is free, easy to use and it is possible to adapt it to your needs.

You can find step by step instruction how to create a website in SDLR section.



The participants take turns and talk about their experiences with social media in connection with blogging and micro-blogging. Together they try to find out the suitability of individual media for blogging and micro-blogging.



Social media and blogs influence each other. If your blog is interesting, people will follow you on social media, and if your social media pages are interesting, people will read your blog.

Include links to your social media accounts leading to your blog so that people can easily follow you. You can also use social media sharing tools, such as Flare, on your website. It allows you to combine sharing options via Twitter, Facebook, email, and social bookmarking sites.

Re-posting blog content allows you to get a full life out of your content. As you develop the blog, you'll build up a great collection of articles, but they won't all be hits right away. You can give these great articles new life by continuing to promote them on social media and through other channels.



How to use social media for blogging

1. Focus on one or two social media sites
2. Find the best social media site for you
3. Build your brand
4. Be engaged with your readers

How to use Social Media for blogging:

ad 1: Being on all social media sites will take you a lot of time that you could spend by writing your blog. Instead of focusing on all social media sites just focus on one or two.

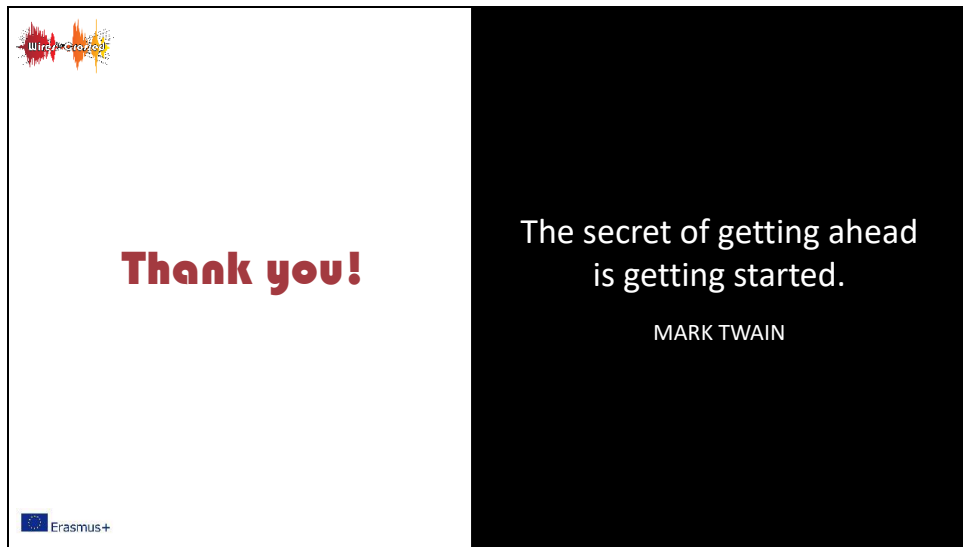
ad 2: Think about which social media site your target audiences use most.

ad 3: Be consistent with using one username on different social media. If you want to use any social media sites in the future, it'll help you to represent your blog branding.

ad 4: If your readers ask something, reply them. If someone follows you, give them a thank.



The trainer wraps up the topics of workshop of Module 3 and asks participants to list 3 key steps or instructions they will apply when writing a blog.



Be positive. Don't let to be overwhelmed by the fear that your blog must be perfect. Practice makes perfect. Writing makes perfect. Remember: "Never compare your beginning to someone else's middle." - Jon Acuff



Wires - Crossed



dante
ISTITUTO ADULT EDUCATION
CORSI



ALK



Speha Fresia
SOCIETÀ COOPERATIVA



JUGEND- & KULTURPROJEKT EV.



The Rural Hub



CARDET
CENTRE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF RESEARCH
& DEVELOPMENT IN EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY



ACUMEN TRAINING



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. 2019-1-DE02-KA204-006115