

Bloggging to Build Your Flute Career

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Why a blog?

- Potential benefits of blogging
 - The attention of other people who are interested in the same things as you
 - A platform for reaching out to people you admire
 - Take control of your online presence – make sure your voice is the loudest on the topic of yourself
 - In some cases, credibility, or at least the perception of credibility
 - In some cases, income. Note that in most cases, this is really just a trickle: a couple of hundred dollars a year or less, and usually involves placing advertising on your site.
- “Blog” vs. personal website
 - A blog has the promise of future updates
 - A blog (hopefully) offers something back to your visitors beyond your vanity
- Blog vs. social media
 - Your central repository of shared information
 - Trackable: traffic statistics, etc.
 - Publicly shareable without obstacles like registering or having to create a “profile” or something
 - Flexibility with length, formatting, content (text? links? videos? pictures?)
 - Control over monetization
 - No “noise,” just your voice

Setting up

- What platform to use?
 - WordPress.com: free (but upgradeable for a price), easy, customizable.
 - WordPress.org: free, very customizable. You must provide your own hosting, which costs at least a few bucks a year and leaves you responsible for a little more of the technical stuff.
 - Blogger: free, a little customizable.
 - Tumblr: free, easy, a little customizable. Tumblr has more of a culture of content curation, rather than creation, but that isn’t a rule.
 - Not recommended for blogging: social platforms like Facebook notes or Google+ (less accessible to readers and lack many blogging-oriented features), “pages” on a personal website (lack blogging features, particularly syndication features that allow people to “subscribe” in various ways).
- Spend money, or go with a totally free option?
 - Things that can cost money: custom domain names (\$10/year?), [ad-free] hosting (\$5+/month), special services (like e-commerce capabilities, managed backups, security),

professional setup/design/customization

What to write

- Rather than brainstorming “ideas,” become more aware of what is catching your interest while you practice, teach, or perform. Create a system for logging those thoughts for future fleshing-out. Also, what have you already written? School papers, teaching materials, etc.
- Forget about trying to figure out your “audience.” Write what *you* want to read. (How-tos? Reviews? Travelogues? Philosophical musings? Rants? Jokes?) There are people like you who are interested in the same things.
- Limit blogging about your blog (apologies for not writing more, technical behind-the-scenes, instructions on how to use a blog)
- How often? To maintain a readership, your posts should be reasonably “regular.” This could mean every day, every week, every month, etc.

Reaching people

- Share links to your stuff on the social media *you* use.
- Allow and encourage commenting (but moderate thoughtfully).
- Comment on others’ blogs.
- Be sure that you have syndication feeds (RSS, Atom, etc. Blogging platforms generally have these built in).
- Be patient, and trust your content to speak for itself.

Great flute blogs

- Let’s get this one out of the way: <http://brepimentel.com> – All woodwinds, all the time.
- Dr. Cate’s Flute Tips - <https://drcatesflutetips.wordpress.com/> - Thoughtful, down-to-earth pedagogy.
- Tammy Evans Yonce - <http://www.tammyevansyonce.com> – Clear and insightful.
- Jennifer Cluff - <http://jennifercluff.blogspot.com> – In-depth posts on a variety of flute topics.
- Various blogs from Powell Flutes – <http://powellflutes.com/teach-flute> – <http://powellflutes.com/repair-my-flute> - <http://www.powellflutes.com/flute-builder> - These sometimes turn a little bit into advertisements, but lots of good information.
- Helen Bledsoe – <http://helenbledsoe.com> - Repertoire, collaboration with composers, and more.
- Practicing Flutist (Deanna Mathews Kilbourne) - <http://practicingflutist.com/wordpress/> - What else? Ideas for practicing the flute.
- Catherine’s Musings (Catherine LeGrand) - <http://catherinelegrand.blogspot.com/> - Original and curated content on a variety of flute topics.
- The Flute Hoot (Katherine Emeneth) - <http://theflutehoot.blogspot.com> – Tips geared toward beginners.
- Flying Flutistas (Lynne Krayler-Luke and Vanessa Breault Mulvey) – <http://flyingflutistas.com> - Flute, musicians’ health, and, oddly, the trapeze.