

**A Study of Blogs as Marketing Communication Tool in context of Anti Corruption Movement****Dr. Anshu Bhati ,**Assistant Professor, International Institute of Professional Studies,  
Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya, Indore,**Abstract**

*No doubt, blogs have emerged as news sources of increasing significance and there have been occasions when they can be influential in setting news agendas. In today's cutthroat competitive era, blogs have become one of the key communication tools for brands and people. The aim of the present research is to study the importance of the blogs as marketing communication tool in context of Anti Corruption Movement 2011. Blogs were analyzed on the basis of factors like Audience targeted, Purpose, Content, Language, Style and Tone. It was concluded that Blogs played important role in Anti Corruption Movement 2011 in spreading the awareness amongst the masses. Blogs were also a reason that made people to take action.*

**Key Words: Blogs, Marketing Communication, Anti Corruption Movement 2011**

**Introduction**

Communication has remained one of the basic needs of human beings. Need of communication has led to many innovations and continuous technological improvements. Social Media came in existence, for the fulfillment of networking need. Alongside came many tools on social media which brought people closer. One such tool is Blog, where one can present his/her views publicly. Blogs are a highly controlled media that enable an individual or group of individuals (bloggers) to publish information in a diary or journal style. Bloggers control the information that they publish, and moderate comments that views (non-authors) add to the blog. On average, 1.4 blogs are created every second, and 1.5 million blog posts are made every day (Sigfry, 2007). Half of all US Internet users read blogs ("State of live blogosphere," 2008a). Nearly three-quarters of all Internet users have read a blog (Young, 2009).

There is no doubt that blogs have emerged as news sources of increasing significance and there have been occasions when they can be influential in setting news agendas. The essential qualities of credibility and capturing public trust in the news sphere, however, often depends upon the established reputation of known news "brands". A blog can be private, as in most cases, or it can be for business purposes. Blogs used internally to enhance the communication and culture in a corporation or externally for marketing, branding or public relations purposes are called corporate blogs. Perhaps most significantly for public relations professionals, eight in ten bloggers post product or brand reviews, and almost nine in ten bloggers blog about brands they love or hate ("State of blogosphere," 2008b). In addition, consumers place a higher level of trust on third-party blogs, compared to company blogs: Only 16% of online consumers who read corporate blogs say they trust them (Bernoff, 2008). Although some blogs have emerged as reliable information sources in some specialist areas, they have yet generally to assume the key characteristics of mainstream news that drive public trust.

Blog is an online relationship tool used these days extensively by marketers. Integrated marketing communication is the umbrella term which encompasses all promotional tools. It aims to ensure consistency of message and the complementary use of media. Duccan (2002) presents integrated marketing Communication as a strategy in which a company coordinates advertising, sales promotion, personal selling and publicity in order to present a single consistent image for the product and the company. The concept includes online and offline marketing channels. Online marketing channels include any e-marketing campaigns or programs, from Search engine optimization (SEO), pay-per-click, affiliate, email, banner to latest web related channels for webinar, blog, micro-blogging, RSS, podcast, Internet Radio, and Internet TV. Offline marketing channels are traditional print media, mail order, public relations, industry relations, billboard, traditional radio, and television. Integrated marketing communications plans are vital to achieving success.

Anti corruption movement was a movement against corruption, led by Mr. Anna Hazare. He wanted to get pass a Jan Lokpal bill. But Government was not passing it so he went on hunger strike from 5th April 2011. He called off his fast on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2011 after the government agreed to his demand to introduce a more stringent Lokpal Bill to fight corruption. Drafted by Justice Santosh Hegde (former Supreme Court Judge and present Lokayukta of Karnataka), Prashant Bhushan (Supreme Court Lawyer) and Arvind Kejriwal (RTI activist), the draft bill envisages a system where a corrupt person found guilty would go to jail within two years of the complaint being made and his ill-gotten wealth being confiscated. It also seeks power to the Jan Lokpal to prosecute politicians and bureaucrats without Government permission.

**Literature Review**

*Porter et al (2009)* examined the perception and adoption of blogs among public relations practitioners and how blog use relates to roles and status. The authors concluded that while blog use was similar to national audiences, practitioners were maintaining mostly personal blogs and using blogs professionally at low levels. Furthermore, women lagged behind men in the strategic use of blogs. Finally, cluster analysis challenged Porter and Sallot's roles typology, reverting to the previous manager-technician dichotomy. Yan and Jin (2010) opined that practitioners and academics are buzzing about the impact of the blogosphere on public relations practices. Emerging evidence indicates that strategically managing blog-mediated public relations may be especially critical for crisis managers. In their study they proposed a new conceptual model to help public relations professionals navigate the evolving blogosphere: the blogmediated crisis communication model. This model helps crisis managers monitor the blogosphere and respond, when appropriate, to influential bloggers. Chen and Wei (2012) introduced the microblog and video blog's origin and development, and analyzed the process of internet public opinion's spread. Then, combine with the microblog and video blog's special characteristics, analyze their advantages in public opinion's spread, and the influence on internet public opinion. Finally, this paper also did a guidance of internet public opinion for the probably negative influence caused by the new blogs.

The brief literature review reveals that various studies focused on technical aspects of blogs, research by chen and wei focused on microblog, videoblog and the influence on public opinion, on the contrary the present work talks about the role of blog as marketing communication tool and in this study the contents of the various blogs are also analyzed.

**Methodology**

The objective of the present research is to analyze the contents of the blogs. The study further aims at studying the importance of the blogs as marketing communication tool in context of Anti Corruption Movement 2011.

Researcher has studied the blogs as Marketing Communications tool in context of Anti Corruption Movement 2011. Four blogs are taken for the analysis purpose which is published between 7th may to 11th may 2011. The blogs are selected randomly. The blogs which are taken for the analysis purpose are from Dainik Jagran (8<sup>th</sup> April 2011), NDTV Khabar (7<sup>th</sup> April 2011), IBN Khabar (11<sup>th</sup> April 2011), ZEE News (7<sup>th</sup> April 2011). Bloggers are free lance-writers or connected to media houses. Bloggers have shared their own views in blogs and they have got response from the public. Commentators include intellectual people, opinion leaders, students, common public i.e. people from all strata of the society.

In section I of the analysis, Blogs are analyzed on the basis of planks like the Audience targeted, Purpose, Content, Language, Style and Tone of the blog. Blogs purposes were categorized as to inform, to persuade, to entertain or to ensure action. Content was analyzed on the basis of criteria that whether the blog is informative or it is emotional. Language of the blog was analyzed on the basis of types of languages – Colloquial, Cliches, Euphemisms, Formal, Informal, Slang or Jargon. Style of the writing of the blog is analyzed on the basis of these criterions – expository writing, descriptive writing, persuasive writing or narrative writing. Tone adopted in the blog was analyzed from following types - sincere, sarcastic, envious, insulting, supportive, provocative, comparative etc.

In section II, based on the analysis of the contents of the blogs, analysis of major comments was done to understand the role blog plays in marketing communication. Commentator's opinions and responses were analyzed objectively and subjectively both.

In the present research an attempt is made to understand bloggers' point of view and how effectively bloggers are able to reach the masses.

## Analysis and Discussions

### Section I

To analyze the content of the blogs, analysis is done on the basis of planks like the Audience targeted, Purpose, Content, Language, Style and Tone of the blog. Table 1 depicts comprehensive analysis of the four blogs on behalf of the planks mentioned above:

Table 1

Media	Purpose	Content	Language	Style	Tone
Dainik Jagran	Action	Emotional	Colloquial	Persuasive	Sarcastic
IBN Khabar	Inform	Combination	Informal	Descriptive	Comparative
NDTV	Inform	Informational	Formal	Descriptive	Supportive + Sincere
ZEE News	Action	Combination	Formal	Persuasive + Descriptive	Supportive + Comparative

**Dainik Jagran's** blogger is supporting the movement. He told that Anna is fighting big battle on Jantar-Mantar. It depends on time that whether his initiative will bring any change. People from all over nation have joined Anna to de-root corruption. The blogger is targeting citizens of India and Government through this blog and motivating public to take action and continue the action against corruption. This blog is emotionally driven blog, no information and no facts are provided in it. The blogger has adopted a language, which has lots of exaggeration and thus it forces to take an action. In an attempt to reach masses effectively, blogger has used colloquial language. The usage of idioms and phrases and exaggeration in the blog, makes it evident that tone of the blog is sarcastic, and the author has used the same tone throughout the blog. Blogger is communicating through sarcastic tone because he is giving a message to the mass that until they don't continue the action against corruption, they can't win (Table 1). The tone of the blogger is very-very direct; he is not beating around the bush, not confusing the reader. It can be said that the style of the blogger is persuasive writing style; by exaggeration and use of sarcastic tone he is persuading people to take an action against corruption.

The blogger of **IBN Khabar** also supported this movement. He appreciated today's generation for its involvement in the movement by comparing present generation to past generation. He told that country's direction is changed in these five days. The blogger is targeting young India i.e. the youth of the country through his blog and informing the reader about the movement. Through the text the blogger is praising the youth for their active participation in action against corruption. As far as, content treatment is concerned, it is a combination blog, as it briefs about the movement, but majorly this is also an emotionally driven text. The author has cited many instances and comparisons to inform the

audience. An informal language is used in the blog to connect to the youth. Blogger has adopted a consistent tone throughout the text and the tone is comparative one. He has compared people's behavior and thought process during this period with other critical or important times in the history. The tone of the blogger is direct; he is talking about the corruption by comparing it with other issues. The style of the blogger is descriptive writing style, by comparing and exaggeration: he has described the action taken by Indian youth during the Anti Corruption Movement (Table 1).

**NDTV** blog presented Anna as a challenge for government. It includes Anna's sentence that he will not withdraw and will be on fast until body's breakdown. The blogger has supported Anti Corruption Movement in his blog. NDTV blog is targeting people of India and the purpose of the blog is to inform people about Anna's actions and movements. Unlike the earlier two blogs, which were emotionally driven content-wise, this is an informational blog. It conveyed audience information regarding happenings of the movement. A formal language is used in the blog to reach the reader and inform them about the movement. Comparing with the other two blogs, there is a shift in tone, in NDTV blog, the blogger started with a supportive tone and then moved to a sincere tone (Table 1). The rationale for the supportive tone is to attract the attention of the reader and then the blogger continued with sincere tone as the main motto of the blog is to inform. There is no exaggeration in this blog, no playing with the words, it is a direct blog. Blogger adopted descriptive writing style as the main objective is to spread awareness about the action.

**ZEE News** blogger supported the campaign and opined this is the time to rally behind this modern mahatma and secure our coming generation's future. He compared Jan Lokpal bill and Government Lokpal bill in his blog. Again the ZEE News blog is targeted to all Indians and the motive of the blog is to ensure an action from the reader by creating an in-depth understanding of the bill. Content wise it is a combination blog, the blog starts with an emotional background that how Anna has moved people and later blog gives brief information about the two Lokpal bills (Table 1). A formal and simple language is being used by the author. Although the language is formal but hyperboles are there to stress on certain issues and hence it can be observed that the blogger didn't adopt consistent tone throughout the text, he started with supportive tone, shifted to comparative and again had a supportive tone in the last part. The supportive tone of the blog involves reader; on the contrary, the comparative tone fulfils his need of information. Writing style used by the blogger is a mix of persuasive and descriptive.

## Section II

To know the importance of the blogs, analysis of major comments was done. Commentator's responses were categorized as supportive, not supportive and neutral to study the importance of blogs as marketing communication tool (Table 2)

Table 2

MEDIA	SUPPORTIVE	NOT SUPPORTIVE	NEUTRAL
Dainik Jagran	87.5%	-	12.75%
IBN Khabar	88.2 %	5.88%	5.88%
ND TV	82.8 %	-	17.2%
Zee News	96 %	-	4%

**87.5 %** people supported Dainik Jagran's blog (Table 2), rest 12.75% people are neutral, it can be said that a large number of readers are supporting this blog. One reader said "it is the time of battle for common people and this battle is beneficial for all". Another opinion in the blog was "common public

should support this movement where they are, and choose their own method to support this movement". Some opinions were in the directions that "we should support the movement, as we are responsible for corruption". Comments on this blog, makes it apparent that it ignited a fire in public and forced them to take an action.

**88.2 % of IBN Khabar's** blog readers supported it. The major difference between this blog and the other three is readers praised the blogger too. Some opinions were in the line that there are many other issues in our country like corruption which need to be attended (Table 2). Readers said "youth plays an important role in taking country forward, thanks for focusing this in media, role of media will always remain crucial". This blog made readers to think in different direction, it compelled specially the youth to understand its role in nation building.

**Around 83% people supported NDTV blog (Table 2). Comments on this blogs were very brief and in most of the comments people were encouraging Anna for the movement. Also some wrote, "those who are not with Anna, are also corrupt". It is evident from the analysis of comments that this blog could inform people about the movement and motivate them.**

**96%** of the readers of ZEE News blog supported it (Table 2). Readers opined "Anna is Modern Gandhi and every city, every state, every district needs people like Anna". Many readers of this blog particularly criticized Government and said they do not want Jan Lokpal bill to come in action. Some even opined that revolution has begun in India. From this analysis of comments and huge readers supporting the blog, it is evident that the blog not only successfully informed people about the movement but enforced an action.

The analysis of contents and comments clearly depicts that the blogs published during and after the Anti Corruption Movement 2011, created awareness amongst general public and played important role in communication. The communication theorists say that communication is effective only when the receiver receives it, as the sender has meant it. In case of Anti Corruption Movement the objective of blogs is fulfilled, as they could inform, motivate and/or move people. The bloggers generated many emotions and forced people to come out of the relaxing setting of the drawing rooms to take part in the action against corruption. These blogs not only informed people about the suffering they are going through for years in form of corruption, but also propelled them to take an action. The resultant was the movement attracted attention of general public from the whole nation. People contributed in the movement by various ways – some participated actively, others were indirectly involved. The movement got huge response from the whole nation.

### **Conclusion**

Blogs if utilized objectively can be an important part of marketing communication program. They can not only communicate effectively with the target public but can also improve the efficiency of other marketing communication tools. In future research can be undertaken to analyze the effectiveness of various social media tools.

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