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The weblog

Home | UK | Business | Online | World dispatch | The Wrap | Weblog | Talk | Search
 The Guardian | World | News guide | Arts | Special reports | Columnists | Audio | Help | Quiz

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Top blog

Come across a weblog you'd like us to feature? Want to promote your brilliant new blog? Drop an email to weblog@guardianunlimited.co.uk. Owing to the number of emails received we can't promise to reply to them all, but we will let you know if your blog is featured.

Moore publicity

Blog pick: A surprise from American film-maker and professional lefty Michael Moore: he launched a weblog yesterday (on the 4th of July - very patriotic). The surprise being that the master self-publicist hadn't done this ages ago.

In his opening salvo, Moore deconstructs a CNN appearance by a "knucklehead from the Washington Post who's been raggin' on me since 'Roger & Me'". It was a rather dry diary entry, really, but this is his first attempt at a blog, and I think these efforts deserve encouragement. So blog on, Mike, and we'll hope you blog better once you get going.

· **Sarah Left**

Jane Perrone at Blogtalk 2.0**The World as a Blog**

July 5, 6.30pm: The coolest idea of the afternoon has to be Mikel Maron, who explained how his [The World as a Blog](#) map works. The idea is that bloggers add a latitude and longitude code to their blog indicating their physical location, and then every time they post something, their location and a portion of their post will flash up on Maron's world map. Moblogger? no problem - individual posts can be geocoded.

Maron told the audience "You feel a real immediacy with the entire world" - I take his point, but the reality is that one can feel immediacy with the 13% of bloggers of who geocoded their blogs.

Nevertheless, Maron has built on the idea of The World as a Blog to create an application called that has a great deal of potential. [WorldKit](#) is a mapping toolkit that allows users to create their own variation on the theme of The World as a Blog: for example, Phil Wilson's [UK blogger map](#). Another instance is a guide to the [best spots in Chesapeake Bay to kayak](#) by a kayaker called Woody.

That's it for today. I am up first tomorrow, so I'll let you know how my talk went tomorrow morning.

· **Jane Perrone**

Blogtalk unplugged

July 5, 3pm: Torill Elvira Mortensen, thisafternoon's keynote speaker, has committed the heresy of asking attendees to disconnect from the wireless internet connection set up for the conference so that she can demonstrate various websites and blogs during her talk. I've politely disconnected but I wonder how many of those around me have done the same: part of the white noise of tech events such as these is the tap of keyboards and the exchange of virtual ironic asides via email, internet messenger or their own blogs. As a speaker, it's a comfort knowing that if your talk proves to be boring then people can always talk silently amongst themselves.

· **Jane Perrone**

Talk talk

July 5, 4.30pm: If you want to get detailed notes of the talks, [Headshift](#) has some very detailed commentary; you can also try the streaming Quicktime which is linked from the front of the [site](#).

Awkward ring to it

July 5, 12.30 GMT: Oops. My mobile went off while I was on the other side of the room, taking advantage of the power supply to top up my laptop. I was convinced that my mobile was switched off, and sat there smugly until it dawned on me that it was actually my phone ringing. That only happened when the man sitting next to my bag, which contained my phone, starting rooting around in it.

[Lisbeth Klastrup](#) is comparing reality TV - specifically Big Brother - to frequently updated, diary-style weblogs and 'liveblogging' (from conferences such as BlogTalk, for instance). It's an interesting comparison: don't expect any attention-grabbing, Big Brother-style tactics from me, just occasional intrusive mobile phone ringtones.

· **Jane Perrone**

Views of videoblogging

July 5, 11.15 GMT: The most interesting talk so far this morning was given by [Jon Hoem](#), from the [Norwegian University of Science and Technology](#), speaking on videoblogging.

It wasn't helped, however, by the microphone cutting out halfway through the talk, and the problems in getting the laptop to communicate with the projector. I should be fine when I give my talk tomorrow as a) I have a loud voice and b) I don't have a slick Powerpoint presentation to offer the audience.

I forgot to mention earlier that Mark Bernstein estimated the average weblog user spends 1,000 euros (£670) a year on their blog. Can that be right? It sounds like a lot to me, especially if you include in that average people who start blogging - say, taking up Typepad's 30-day free trial and giving it up before they have to start paying.

Mental note: must ask Mena and Ben Trott, of [Sixapart](#), the company behind Typepad, whether they have a figure for the churn rate for their blogs: in other words, how many people start blogs then give them up within a month or so.

· **Jane Perrone**

BlogTalk 2.0

July 5, 10.30 GMT: [Blogtalk 2.0](#) is now officially under way following a press conference this morning in Vienna. Unfortunately, much this was in German, meaning that I can only give you an account of the English part. [Mark Bernstein](#), who is also this morning's keynote speaker, talked about how weblog culture is returning to "the ethos of the coffee house".

He also explained how his software firm, Eastgate Systems, used to look at computer magazines to gauge how customers were responding to software, but now look at weblogs instead. It's an interesting point, and one an increasing number of firms are taking note of (I have even been known to glance at [Technorati](#) myself.)

Perhaps it was the sweaty conditions of the cafe in which the press conference was held, but I couldn't help but be distracted by the fact that Mr Bernstein looks a little like Harry Enfield and talks like Troy McClure from the Simpsons. More insightful posts as they happen ...?

· **Jane Perrone**

The best links from around the web**Spamfest**

July 2: If you're in the vicinity of Austin, Minnesota this weekend (unlikely, I suspect), what better entertainment could you have than a visit to the [SpamTown USA](#) festival. On second thoughts, don't answer that question. But consider this: where else can you pack in a Spam fishing contest, a log rolling show, a Spam recipe contest **and** the Spam inline skate challenge?

Austin is the home of [Spam](#), the food product whose name became synonymous with every useless, badly-spelled unsolicited email you're ever received ([this page](#) explains why). There's so much more to Spam, though, as Austin's [Spam Museum](#) will attest. Top Spam fact to impress your friends (via the Museum website's [trivia section](#))? Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev credited Spam for saving his army during the second world war. Vegetarian? Try [this](#).

· **Jane Perrone**

Alien encounter

July 2: Even if the idea of the Spam Festival leaves you cold, what about the [Roswell UFO Festival](#)? [Merle Haggard](#) is on the bill at the event, which marks the anniversary of the now infamous Roswell UFO crash. I'd love to hear from anyone who spends their weekend either at the Spam Festival or the UFO Festival, or, even better shuttling between the two.

· **Jane Perrone**

At BlogTalk

July 2: I am going to be at [BlogTalk 2.0](#) in Vienna on Monday and Tuesday next week, presenting a [paper](#) on blogging and Tuesday morning, and blogging as I go (technology permitting). I've just added myself to the [Wiki](#) listing attendees: do [drop me an email](#) if you're planning to be at BlogTalk. Later today I'll write a little more about the talks I am looking forward to hearing, and give you a teensy sneak preview of what I am going to be talking about, so stay tuned.

· **Jane Perrone**

Domain debate

July 1: The fate of Iraq's internet domain name may rank lower down the importance scale than today's [appearance](#) of Saddam Hussein in court, but nevertheless, this piece in the [Register](#) uses the story of the .iq domain to provide an insightful over of the wider wrangle over who controls the realm of internet country domains.

· **Jane Perrone**

Archive

June 2004 | May 2004 | April 2004 | March 2004 | February 2004 | January 2004 | December 2003 | November 2003 | October 2003 | June 2003 | September 2003 | August 2003 | July 2003 | 2003 | May 2003 | April 2003 | March 2003 | February 2003 | January 2003 | December 2002 | November 2002 | October 2002 | September 2002 | August 2002 | July 2002 | June 2002 | May 2002 | April 2002 | March 2002 | February 2002 | January 2002 | December 2001 | November 2001 | October 2001 | September 2001 | August 2001 | July 2001

