5 mistakes to avoid on your blog

When you read as many blogs as I do, you see a lot of really great blogs. Great blogs have interesting and relevant content and they are easy to read. But just as there are great blogs, there are many more mediocre blogs.

Forehead Slap by Terry Robinson on Flickr

What separates a great blog from a mediocre one? Avoiding these five mistakes:

1. **Being hard to understand.** Perhaps it's the excessive use of jargon, or the spelling and grammatical mistakes, but mediocre blogs make it hard for a reader to get the point.

2. **Not being scannable.** Web reading is different than print reading. We tend to favor shorter sentences and the ability to move down the page quickly. In short, web writing should be scannable, that is providing readers with with lots of headings, lists, bullets and short sentences.

3. **No dateline.** I have heard the argument than by not having a dateline on your blog posts the content seems evergreen. Perhaps. But evergreen content is always evergreen—the date shouldn't matter. In my opinion, blogs are a way of establishing timeliness and currency. If you don't have

datelines, readers can't tell when you last updated your blog (which of course is your intention). If they can't tell whether your last post is from last week or last year, you are basically making it very hard to judge if you are still blogging or not.

4. **No author information or about page.** Have you ever gone to a blog and tried to figure out who the author is? Well, you shouldn't have to channel your inner Sherlock Holmes in order to find out. There should be an about page or an author biography somewhere that is easy to find. People want to know who is writing the stuff they are reading. Even on corporate blogs you could have an author biography for blog contributors (you can use great plugins like the one I use, Biographia) plus a corporate/organizational "about us" page.

5. **No sharing capability (or with limited sharing capability).** It seems unbelievable that in 2014, when it seems all brands are begging you to follow them on Facebook and Twitter, there are blogs that lack sharing capabilities. It's a plugin and it's free! What's the problem? I also can't stand blogs that only allow you to share to only one social network, especially when that network is Pinterest.

What mistakes do you see on blogs? Please share in the comments. I am sure there are more out there!

Avoid these mistakes! Come learn how to blog with me on April 1 in Washington, D.C. You will learn what makes for an effective blog, how to come up with blog post ideas and how to connect with your audience. Details and registration here.