Blog Action Day

Today is Blog Action Day (and I would link to the website but it is down) and the topic is water. I found out about it from Daria Steigman's post "Water is Life" and also from a post on Conversation Agent: "Ten Facts About Water."

The idea is to get bloggers to post on a common topic to get the word out. Just yesterday, I wrote about the death of mass communications and in a sense, Blog Action Day is a way to use social media in our extremely segmented world to inform people and get them to act around a common cause.

When I visited Australia in 2008, there was a lot of talk on the media about bottled water. Tap water in Australia is drinkable and yet people were spending money (and at about $3 per 1/2 liter, a lot of money) for bottled water. The problem with bottled water of course is waste. The bottle is not always recycled. Australia is mostly desert, and in the summer, it can get very very dry. Australians tend to be active—always running, walking, swimming, surfing. Since it is necessary to keep hydrated, having access to water is a necessity and bottled water can be very convenient. How do you change people's habits?

Another water habit that I encountered in Australia was a campaign to reduce showering time. In my hotel in Melbourne was a card and a timer inviting me to keep my shower to four minutes. I always wondered why this wasn't done in the US too. Australia was certainly in a drought state. The United States is not there yet, but could be. Again, how do you change people's habits? How do you get people to think about the length of their showers and how this impacts the environment?

Do you think Blog Action Day can help make a difference? What would a mass information campaign look like in our social media age?

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