

BLOGGER RELATIONS: PUBLIC RELATIONS' NEWEST PRACTICE AREA

*Ron Anderson, Department of Advertising, University of Texas at Austin, 1 University
Station A1200, Austin, TX 78712, 512-471-1989, rba@mail.utexas.edu*

*Joel R. Rushing, Waggener Edstrom Strategic Communications, 225 108th Ave. NE, Suite
700, Bellevue, WA 98004-573, 425-638-7100, joelr@wagged.com*

*Deirdre S. Walsh, National Instruments, 11500 N Mopac Expwy, Austin, TX 78759-3504,
512-683-5931, deirdre.walsh@ni.com*

ABSTRACT

This paper addresses the newest practice area in public relations—blogger relations. It also examines the central role bloggers play in influencing public opinion from a diffusion- of-innovations perspective. Weblogs are reshaping the news media and public relations industries, because they allow news and commentary to flow directly to the consumer, bypassing journalists. Bloggers facilitate the diffusion of information among highly involved consumers. These early adopters, strive to develop personal relationships with organizations, persons, issues, or products. Characteristics of early adopters and attributes of organizational-public relationships are explored as they relate to this new type of Web communication.