

Blog advertising**A**

With the rapid upsurge in digital advertising across the Asia-Pacific region, it is hardly a surprise that blog advertising has taken off. Bloggers form a community that can reach new customers in the competitive global marketplace, offering both businesses and consumers something different to run-of-the-mill marketing media. Here, three bloggers tell us what they write about, why they believe they appeal to their readers, and how they have built up successful, profitable relationships with companies.

B**Ricky in Bangkok**

Street food stalls are my favorite places to eat in Bangkok, and I blog about my best finds all over the city. I also write about my own attempts to cook the dishes I discover using fresh, local ingredients, and I think this is one of the main reasons people keep returning to my site. As well as finding out where to get the most authentic Thai food, many are keen to recreate it at home. I get a lot of questions and comments, and I love this interactive aspect of blogging. It was my readers who encouraged me to write a book about Thai street food based on my blog, which will be available online next month. If it sells well, it will be a nice little earner on top of the money I already make through the blog from advertising. Currently, I sell ad space for food-related products and services, such as cooking utensils and Thai cookery courses.

C**Cora in Seoul**

As a self-taught make-up artist, I have all sorts of easy-to-follow beauty tips up my sleeve. Friends encouraged me to start blogging about them and now I'm a full-time K-beauty blogger, testing, reviewing, and rating products. My readers aren't just in South Korea, but overseas too due to the increasing prevalence of South Korean beauty products in places like America and the UK. Social media has really helped me to reach these readers, with more and more people sharing the content I post. Many write in to tell me about new K-beauty stockists in their home towns, and this has enabled me to create shopping maps for different cities. I put a lot of time and effort into making my blog look professional, and product and brand placements on my blog generate an income – every time a reader clicks on a link, I receive a small payment.

D

Bella in Osaka

I think the real attraction of blogs is that they tell a unique story. I blog about my experiences teaching English in Japan, and I try to be as honest as possible with my readers. Of course, I write about the practical aspects such as renting an apartment, using public transport, or setting up a bank account, but mostly I focus on more personal things – my ongoing battle to learn how to eat with chopsticks; the fascinating conversations I have with people I meet on trains or in restaurants; the things that make me laugh. After all, my aim is to inform others who are thinking about teaching abroad what it's really like to live and work in a foreign country. My blog isn't my primary source of income, but I make some money from it by publishing reviews of products and services related to teaching English abroad.

1 Match the words with their synonyms from the text.

- a** money-making (paragraph A) _____
- b** increase (paragraph A) _____
- c** ordinary (paragraph A) _____
- d** popularity (paragraph C) _____
- e** main (paragraph D) _____

2 Which aspect of blog advertising do you think appeals most to companies? Put the following in order of importance from 1 to 4.

- _____ access to target customers
- _____ endorsements/recommendations
- _____ low cost
- _____ international reach

Can you think of any other advantages of blog advertising? Talk to a partner.

3 If you wanted to find out about a product or service related to one of the topics mentioned in the text, how likely would you be to use a blog as your starting point? Why? Talk to a partner.