

# Technology tips to get started with business blogging and more – the FOSS WAY

**H**ow does one introduce someone who was on the Internet before the term World Wide Web was even conceived? Someone who has participated in the net scene when the total Internet population in the country was not in millions, but in dozens – ok, let's make that a few hundred? When search was still about gophers?

Delighted to have Kishore Bhargava - the original geek; FOSS exponent, the guru behind Gadget Guru; I could go on...

It was in one of Kishore's talks, about two and half years ago, that Blogworks really took seed. I have never believed in coincidences, so I don't think it was one that I attended that talk. Since then, a dear friend, Kishore has been around to counsel and guide.

Today, on Blog the Talk, Kishore helps us understand some of the pertinent technology related issues that we need addressing when we think about business blogging. Technology issues in a language that's friendly and English you and I understand.

I must point out that keeping with, not just the Blog the Talk tradition of conducting these talks over IM, which we did, this conversation was actually conducted in true Bhargava family style, over IM, but sitting face-to-face. Discussing 'way forward' across the table, but actually punching the Questions and the Answers over an IM. Fun it was...

Enjoy!

**Kishore Bhargava**, CEO, Linkaxis Technologies (www.Linkaxis.com) has assisted large global corporations, as well as non-governmental organisations, define their technology roadmap installing world-class solutions for their operations in India and elsewhere in the world – all of this using free and open source technologies.

Kishore is presently based in New Delhi.

**Rajesh Lalwani**, Blogworks™, is a communication professional and his new offering Blogworks aims to deliver strategic solutions and know-how to brands & corporates for using 'conversational communication and marketing' effectively.

Rajesh is presently based in New Delhi.

*All thoughts expressed by participants are personal opinion of respective speakers and do not represent the views of Blogworks or any other company/ organization.*

**Rajesh, Blogworks:** Kishore, thanks for being on Blog the Talk.

Among the most crucial aspects that need consideration following an organization or a brand's decision to go forward with a blogging or a similar initiative is: Which blogging engine to use? Which technology platform? What are your thoughts?

**Kishore, Linkaxis:** Thanks Rajesh. That's a loaded question – it will need a long answer.

1) First of all, the important question to ask is why do I need to blog? If there is a compelling reason, coupled with a well thought out strategy, then setting up the technology behind it is actually quite trivial.

2) There are many options to choose from. You have a plethora of free sites which offer templates, plugins and all the stuff you need to get you started or you the have the choice of setting up/ creating your own.



Excerpts: Log on to <http://blogworks.in/blog> for the entire script and join the conversation.

Blogworks - Blog the Talk discussion series was conceived to feature the best of learning from the 'live web' through panel discussions, talks and one-on-ones, mostly conducted online.

Blog the Talk series is presented by HP India, Personal Systems Group- Commercial in association with IMPACT.



Rajesh Lalwani



Kishore Bhargava

**Rajesh:** I hope you are not saying set it up on a free blog site, but that there are several free options available in terms of engines; management systems; templates that one can play with on YOUR server, right?

**Kishore:** Yes, that's the point; if you are serious about it, then you really need to setup a blog on hosted/dedicated server and certainly not on the free servers and free services available.

If you just want a quick and dirty job, then go to Blogger or any of the other free ones but if you want a real blog for your organisation, then set it up on the server, ideally where your corporate website is hosted, as [blogs.mycompany.com](http://blogs.mycompany.com) or [mycompany.com/blog](http://mycompany.com/blog). The idea is to never lose focus of your brand.

By hosting on a free server, you may still be able to do some amount of branding, but the real impact is when all the stuff resides on your site. Of course, there are tons of other advantages, which we will discuss as we go along.

But just to give you an idea, there would even be issues in legal position if the blog is not your property?

But coming back to the original question.

**Rajesh:** Please do elaborate on the legal bit before we move on...

**Kishore:** Ok take a simple example, if I have a blog on a free engine and I place a company advertisement on it. If the provider in this case service provider says that you can't have advertisements on the site, then they can actually just turn around and shut the blog down.

This is known to have happened in the past.

Content on a free site will be difficult to copyright and protect. Disclaimers, Privacy Policy etc are all under your own control, if hosted on your server, rather than being the ones that the provider enforces.

There is also the issue of the total service offering on a free site, one will never be able to get access to the RAW logs of traffic, and therefore, never have accurate web analytics.

**Rajesh:** To me the most important part has always been just the message that we are sending out to the world on the seriousness of the initiative - the perception of a free blog site is so non-business like.

**Kishore:** True. Ok so coming back to the question of which platform does the corporate use for a blog?

The answer is they host their own blog on their own server. In order to do this a corporate will need a blogging engine or platform. There are many options to choose from there.

This is where I tend to favour the Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) and community. There are commercial engines available, but the real innovation is happening in the FOSS world.

Take for example what would today be the most commonly used blog platform on the Internet – Wordpress (WP). Wordpress has tons of features, fantastic templates, and a vibrant community of developers and users supporting it

**Rajesh:** You mean 'free' software?

**Kishore:** No free and open source. I mean, that which costs