

lingua weekly

Vlogs

by Dónal Thompson



In the beginning was the Word. Two words actually. Dear Diary. For centuries people had kept diaries or logs of their adventures, thoughts and feelings. The diaries of famous people were even published. From Mrs Beeton to Anne Frank, diaries created a new kind of literature. And that was the beginning of an industry that was to develop dramatically in the early 21st century.

Web logs or Blogs were the millennium phenomenon as hundred of thousands of computer savvy citizens hung out their lives on line.

Web logs became podcasts as mobile media players like the Apple iPod gave us the opportunity to sound off about ourselves.

And now... it's time for the next step.

And the next step is this. Video Web Logs. Or Vlogs, as the neologists would have it. All you need is a home video camera, a microphone and a computer and you can step into the glamorous world of Vlogging.

But, just as blogs were a technological way of saying "I've got no friends," so Vlogging is victim to the same geeky mediocrity.

You may very well be familiar with 'YouTube' or 'Google Video'. Apart from stolen clips from copyrighted films and TV shows, there is very little good original content. Technology is no substitute for good writing and good journalism. If all we are going to see on Vlogs is people's holidays and how cute their kittens are... then no thanks.

But where Vlogs may have a future is in citizen journalism. Up to now, what is and what isn't news has been decided by Rupert Murdoch and other wealthy media tycoons. That may be coming to an end now.

The Drudge Report in America is an early example of one man taking on and beating the media establishment with nothing more than a basic knowledge of making webpages and a journalist's eye for a story. Ask Bill Clinton! And that's the point. Matt Drudge is a journalist first and a geek second.

Anyone can write a Vlog but not everyone should. Some people should go back to writing old-fashioned diaries. And when they've finished, they should lock the diaries away.

Quality is what we need. Not quantity.

What do you think? Do you keep a diary? Would you publish a blog or appear on a Vlog?

Let us know.

Down there you can leave your comments. We'd love to hear from you.

See you soon. Bye bye.