

"Nobody does a better job of showing how to use design to build relationships than Roger C. Parker!"

Jay Conrad Levinson
author, *Guerrilla Marketing*

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Roger C. Parker's Guerrilla Marketing & Design

Customizing your blog

How to create a unique image with a blog created using a free "off the shelf" template

Use color to
organize
and unify
your blog's
contents

Blog sites like www.blogger.com and www.typepad.com provide easy-to-use templates that help you get your blog published online as quickly as possible.

Once published, you can easily customize your blog so that it projects an image consistent with your other marketing communications. Here are some ideas:

Photograph

The *easiest* and *most noticeable* way you can customize your blog is by adding your photograph. A photograph adds personality that "voices" your message and sets it apart from your competition.

Colors

The colors used in your blog should match the colors used in your firm's other online and offline marketing. The key is to choose a [palette](#)—or selection—of colors, that work well together.

Use colors to separate individual posts from other blog elements, such as:

- *Header*, containing the title of your blog and a brief description.

- *Sidebar*, i.e., text and links that always appear next to posts.

You can also use color to unify the different parts of your blog. For example, set headlines for individual posts in the same color used in your blog's header.

Sidebars

You can easily customize *sidebars*—information adjacent to posts—including:

- *Location*: you can place them to the left, right, or on both sides of your posts.

- *Background information*, philosophy statement, and/or e-mail links.

- *Categories*—*access to* previous posts displayed by topic.

- *Archives* of previous posts organized by date.

- *Banners*: advertising and revenue links to URLs for e-books or teleseminar registration, or Google AdSense links.

- *Calendars* can display the days each month when you posted new content.

Your recent
Introduction to Blogs
webinar combined
great oral and visual
materials focused on
truly useful knowledge.

Brad Denham

Customize the template until your blog reflects your firm's unique identity

Text formatting

You can choose a default typeface, type size, alignment, and colors for headlines and text. You can also emphasize key words and phrases by using style variations like bold, italic, and bold-italics.

When appropriate, you can improve the looks of your posts by using bulleted and numbered lists where appropriate.

If you are publishing a *team blog*, you can format each author's posts in a different text color or type style.

Logos and graphics

When first starting out, many set their blog title and description in the header as text formatted by the template.

Later, however, you can replace the default text header with a graphic created using your firm's typeface and colors.

You can also add your firm's logo as a graphic in the sidebar.

If you publish a newsletter and want to encourage sign-ups, add a picture of it and a sign-up form to the sidebar.

URL

In order to immediately publish your blog, providers create a URL for your blog based on your name and/or blog title in combination with the firm's blog.

These default URLs can be long, hard to remember, and hard to communicate, for example:

- http://rogerparker.typepad.com/upcoming_events/
- http://rogerparker.typepad.com/newsletter_marketing/

Once your blog is up and running, however, you can create a shorter *alias* URL that *redirects* visitors to the original URL. For example, the below URLs redirect visitors to the original URLs (*above*):

- www.rcpevents.info
- www.rcpnewsletters.info

Conclusion

By the time you've finished modifying the template, your blog will reflect your firm's unique identity. Although you may have started with a "packaged solution," your blog will soon reflect an accurate and unique image of your firm or association.

For more information

For assistance identifying your market's information needs, and relating it to your expertise, e-mail [Roger C. Parker](mailto:Roger.C.Parker) or call 603-742-9673. Let me help you *create* a blog and *integrate it* into your firm or association's other marketing tools.



Roger C. Parker
Profit Builder

- **\$32,000,000** author
- 35 books, 37 languages
- 1.6 million copies sold
- NY Times* recommended

- **Speaker, consultant**
 - **Design educator**
- **Training, workshops**
 - **Marketing coach**

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