

BLOGGING FOR DOLLARS

Denton to pay bloggers based on traffic



Gawker Media dark overlord Nick Denton (pictured) has launched a new pay system for all Gawker Media blogs, after testing it at

BY PAUL BOUTIN

JAN 1, 2008 3:02 AM

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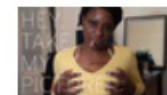


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WRITING

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EGYPT

188

U.S. Delays Award to Egyptian Activist After Finding Her Anti-Semitic Tweets



HOMELESSNESS

991

Gawker Media dark overlord Nick Denton (pictured) has launched a new pay system for all Gawker Media blogs, after testing it at four of his leading sites. Denton's goal is to discourage "self indulgent" posts and "mind-numbing frequency" in favor of "linkworthy material, by which I mean a secret memo, a spy photo, a chart, a well-argued rant, a list, an exclusive piece of news, a well-packaged find." Where does a self-indulgent secret memo fit on that axis? I guess we'll find out after the jump.



From: Noah Robischon

Subject: Editor Newsletter - 2008 Preview Edition

Date: December 31, 2007 11:42:12 AM PST

In January, as you've no doubt heard, Gawker editorial is introducing a new bonus system. While your base monthly pay remains the same, the chance of a bonus will depend on your individual performance. More specifically: it will depend on the popularity of your posts that month. Below, an explanation of the background to the move; why now; and how the new system works.

1. BACKGROUND

It's only on the internet that a writer's contributions can be measured. At newspapers, a reporter's reputation depends on the opinion of their editors, which can be fickle. Some



U.S. Delays Award to Egyptian Activist After Finding Her Anti-Semitic Tweets



HOMELESSNESS 991 
Bloomberg Blames NYC's Homeless Problem on Jet Setting Playboy Millionaires



GEORGE W. BUSH PAIN... 5,925 
George W. Bush's Art Teacher Says He's Painted 50 Dogs




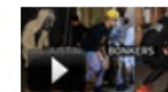
EVERYDAY SUPERHERO 7,750 
Fat Dancing Speedo Man Is the Hero We Both Need and Deserve



COMPILATION 15,506 
Bad Morning: Watch a Bunch of Cruel Jerks Wake People Up in the Shittiest Ways Imaginable



BOOBS 10,587 
'A Couple of Boobs': The Tabloid Epic and the Headline That Could Not Be Contained



JUSTIN BIEBER 3,926 
Gas Masks, Angel Wings and Fainting Spells: The Week We Lost Justin Bieber

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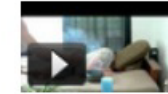
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1. BACKGROUND

It's only on the internet that a writer's contributions can be measured. At newspapers, a reporter's reputation depends on the opinion of their editors, which can be fickle. Some people get on because they play the office politics well. Or simply because they're more aggressive in lobbying for more prominent jobs, or pay increases.

Advertising people say that the internet is special, because the audience's engagement is so much more measurable than that of newspaper readers, or television viewers. Which makes it so bizarre that most writers, on the internet as in print, are paid for the sheer brute quantity of their output.

Gawker has been equally backward. Sure, we pioneered the pageview bonus system, which rewards all writers for a site's performance. But, let's be honest: those bonuses have been allocated subjectively. And, in the large, writers have been rewarded, at \$12 a post, for mind-numbing frequency. When we've paid a higher rate (the \$200 "feature" rate) we've often not been rewarding better pieces; merely encouraging the padding of perfectly good, short items.



COMPILATION

15,506

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JUSTIN BIEBER

3,926

Gas Masks, Angel Wings and Fainting Spells: The Week We Lost Justin Bieber



MODERN TIMES

21,010

Oversharing Dude Gets Vibrating Dildo Stuck Up His Ass, Livetweets Trip to ER [UPDATED with X-Ray]



LOUIS C.K.

3,064

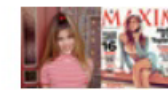
Oh My God: The First Promo for Louis C.K.'s HBO Special Is the Greatest



BEEES

267

Bees Attack Over 40 Young Children in South Africa



DANIELLE FISHEL

8,521

Boy Meets World Star Danielle

good, short items.

In short, we have repeated the bad habits of traditional media organizations: leaving remuneration to the arbitrary will of upper management; and, by treating words as if they were Soviet steel output targets, encouraging quantity over quality.

2. WHY NOW

Early on in the commercial blog era, frequency was the key to the success of a site: Engadget took a lead because it churned out 24 posts a day while Gizmodo, fearful of overwhelming its audience, stuck to a dainty dozen items. We learnt that lesson, and vowed never to be out-produced again. But we now really are reaching the limits of sheer volume. Readers can't take any more. And the proliferation of blogs, and social news services such as Digg, has changed the rules.

Where there was a shortage of attitude and commentary, there's now a surfeit. And what's in heavy demand, and short supply, is linkworthy material, by which I mean a secret memo, a spy photo, a chart, a well-argued rant, a list, an exclusive piece of news, a well-packaged find. Gina showed on Lifehacker, with the style of feature she pioneered a couple of years ago, that it was possible to grow a site's audience without endlessly increasing the number of posts.

Second, our objective is not merely to provide gratification for a writer, or amusement for their pals, but to appeal to the wider readership of a site, and to new readers who might discover it through Digg or Google or some other link. It's fine to pen the occasional self-indulgent or self-referential item. But we're not going to waste the editorial budget on them, when we're investing so heavily in the sites. We need a more efficient form of bonus compensation — and one that's fair to the writers who care most about their readers.



DANIELLE FISHEL

8,521

Boy Meets World Star Danielle Fishel Sheds Childhood Innocence, Clothes for Latest Issue of *Maxim*



HOLLY MADISON

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Holly Madison's Daughter Sounds Like a Very Bright Pasta



DRONES

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Air Force Stops Reporting Drone Strikes in Afghanistan



CHRISTINE TEIGEN

15,540

Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Model Celebrates Twitter Milestone by Violating Instagram TOS with Fully Nude Pic (NSFW)



BAD IDEAS

806

Neptune Puts the Kibosh on Couple's Saccharine Seaside Proposal

These amazing pictures show a side of Iran that *Argo* didn't.



ADAM CAROLLA

5,886

Adam Carolla: 'What's Wrong with Blacks and Latinos?'



DOMINO'S

5,695