WKNC 88.1 FM

Student Radio at North Carolina State University

Official Guide to Blogging

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GETTING STARTED

WKNC runs its blog through a microblogging platform and social networking website called Tumblr. Unlike with our old WordPress blog, you do not even need a Tumblr account to contribute. To submit to the WKNC blog, go directly to http://blog.wknc.org/submit or click on the submit icon in the blog header (it looks like a pad of paper and a pencil). Users can submit text, photo or video posts to the WKNC blog.

If you are logged in to your personal Tumblr, please keep in mind that it will be linked back to this post. If you have any privacy concerns, please make a new Tumblr account for your WKNC blog posts or submit a post without being logged in. You will still need to provide a name so can identify you as the post's author.

Tumblr has a simple WYSWIG (what you see is what you get) text editor. Links can be added by selecting the text you want to link and clicking on the icon that looks like a chain. You can unlink by clicking the broken link icon. Before inserting images into your post, please read the "Using Images and Copyright" section of this guide. More advanced users are welcome to edit the actual html of the post. Once you submit your post the blog editor will receive a notification so he or she will know to edit your post and publish it to the WKNC blog.

WHAT TO INCLUDE IN A POST

Headline / Text / Links / Audio / Video

A blog post contains a number of elements. Like a newspaper article, it contains a headline and text. Within the text, you can enrich your message with images, audio, video or other widgets. In crafting the post itself, the first box is for the post's title. The title might be the only thing a person sees about your post, so you want to make it something that intrigues readers enough to click on it. Here are some suggestions for choosing a title for your post.

- Be concise. Google will only show the first 64 characters of a title in any search, so consider that your absolute limit.
- Be specific. Consider these two titles: "Fridays on the Lawn Returns!" and "The Tomahawks, Tender Fruit at N.C. State." The second one provides much more information. The search terms people use most to find the blog are band/artist names, so consider including them in your title (if applicable).

Below the title is the text box for the post. There is no perfect length for a post. Some posts will contain photo slideshows without any accompanying text while others may run past 1,000 words. The post should be long enough to get the point across and interesting enough to keep the reader's attention regardless of the post's length. You are advised to write the post in a document file first and then paste the final draft into the text box. Grammar and spelling count! Every mistake degrades your credibility as an author and the station's credibility as a whole. Presentation counts, too. Make your post easy on the eyes. One big chunk of text is uninviting to the reader. Use shorter paragraphs and lists when possible.

The Internet is a collaborative community, so links are an important element to any post. You should link:

- Musician/band names. Whenever possible, link to the band's official Web site rather than a Facebook, Bandcamp or Reverb Nation site. If you can't find any results after an initial search, try putting "music" or "band" after the name.
- Venues. A blog post doesn't necessarily include all pertinent information about a show, so readers should be directed to the venue's website if they want to know things like performance times, age limits, directions, opening acts or ticket prices. As with bands, always link to their official page instead of a social networking site.
- Sources. If you quote information from somewhere else, include a link. Also remember to include quotation marks around any direct quote from another source. Plagiarism rules apply to blog posts, too.
- Listen! Particularly in pre-show or pre-interview posts, remind listeners exactly when and how they can tune in by linking to our audio stream wknc.org/listen.
- Non-WKNC audio. Some bands make their music readily available for free download or a track is available through an MP3 aggregator like The Hype Machine (http://hypem.com/). You are welcome to provide the link so people can download the audio file from its original location.

BLOG TOPICS/IDEAS

Outside of WKNC's public affairs programming, almost all of our on-air interviews are with artists or bands. Likewise, the WKNC blog is mostly focused on music. Each week, the indie rock, Afterhours, Underground and Chainsaw music directors submit airplay charts to College Music Journal (CMJ). The top 10 from each genre should be compiled into a post. Each week, WKNC hosts the Local Band Local Beer music series at Tir Na nOg Irish Pub and each week there can be a corresponding preview post. There should also be a post each week announcing what tickets we have for on-air giveaways. Sometimes we have special giveaways for big name bands that merit their own blog post. Any time WKNC hosts or sponsors an event, the blog should contain a post about it.

Specialty or Regular Program Previews

DJs are invited to provide a show preview post any time they have something special planned. This applies to specialty show hosts as well as those who DJ within one of the four formats.

Pre-Interviews and Post-Interviews

Every time an interview is scheduled (with permission of the program director, of course), the interviewer is invited to promote it ahead of time via the blog. He or she is also encouraged to ask the interviewees to electronically sign WKNC's podcast release form (http://wknc.org/contact/podcast.php). Completing the release grants WKNC permission to use audio from the interview (talk and any music performed) on the blog and in the WKNC Interviews podcast. DJs can download audio from the skimmer and edit it on their own, or request assistance from the production staff. Either way, a DJ should plan to have the audio from the interview available within a week of its original broadcast.

Album Reviews

Album reviews are perfect for the WKNC blog and anyone is invited to review an album and submit it for the blog.

Concert/Event Reviews

Concert/event reviews are also a staple of the WKNC blog. If you are lucky enough to snag an awesome DJ pass that requires a blog post, the concert review should be posted within two days of the event. Failure to do so will result in your DJ pass privileges being suspended. You are encouraged to review others shows as well, whether you used a DJ pass or not. The review does not need to be a play-by-play recap of the concert, but does need details from the show. Take some time to research the performers before you go so you will be able to better identify individual musicians and song titles. Remember to bring a pen and paper so you can take notes. While you are there to enjoy the show, you are also there to recreate the experience for our blog readers. If you are writing the post with another DJ, be sure to talk beforehand about how you want to divide tasks.

Music News

The blog is a great place to share music news. This can include album release or tour dates, band personnel changes, or really anything that relates WKNC programming and our blog readers would find interesting.

TAGS

Tumblr uses tags to help readers find a specific topic on your blog. You don't need to (and shouldn't) tag everything in your post. Ask yourself what is important in your post that readers would want to remember. You should also think about how a reader would search for your post.

Artist/band names are certainly appropriate tags. For charts, use only the top three to five artist/band names. For major music festivals, use only the headliners/major performers. The name of the venue is a good tag for concert/event previews and reviews. Other good tags are the names of our formats and specialty shows.

Under the search bar on the blog, WKNC has five links: Local, Podcast, Charts, Reviews and Giveaways. Clicking on these links will show you all the posts with these tags, so make sure if your post belongs to one of these groups you tag it as such. Our WKNC podcasts also have specific tags (#EOT Podcast, #WKNC Interviews Podcast).

WRITING TIPS

- Proofread your work. You can catch many of your own simple mistakes just by re-reading through your post before you submit it (ex: "Around the glob" v. "Around the globe"). Use spell check.
- Don't be too informal. We are a student-run radio station, but we want to sound legitimate. Shortening words ("'cause" or "check 'em out") or using too much slang does not look good for the station.
  - Use language that allows you to connect with your reader.
  - Remember that not all listeners are students.
- Make your post easy to read. It is much harder to read a huge block of text, especially on a computer. Break up long paragraphs, but in places that make sense.
- Use links, pictures, videos, music, etc. Show your readers extra stuff that they might be interested in. Make sure your links actually work. With pictures, you need to take them yourself and upload them or make sure they're not copyrighted (see "Using Images and Copyrights)
- Format days/dates correctly. ALWAYS use dates, and NEVER use "yesterday/today/ tomorrow." Someone can read your post later and get confused.
  - Ex: On Thursday, Oct. 2, something happened. (Or, On Oct. 2 something happened).
  - Ex: During the month of October, something happened.

- o Ex: The band was formed in October 2009.
- o Short months (March-July) aren't abbreviated.
- Format times correctly. It's always the same: 4 p.m., 4:30 p.m. (with periods). Noon and midnight are spelled out like that (no figures).
- Write your posts in Microsoft Word first, then copy and paste to Tumblr. This will help reduce the number of typos in your posts.

ETHICS AND CORRECTIONS

Make no mistake, the blog is a publication of WKNC and thus of N.C. State Student Media. Besides following the *Technician* styleguide, the blog must also follow the Student Media Code of Ethics (http://ncsu.edu/sma/policies/ethics/). According to the Code, "All information from sources, including official documents, books, letters and emails, other articles and Web sites, should be attributed."

In regards to profanity, the Code allows for use of "crap," "hell" and "damn" in direct quotations. Other such words should appear as "f---," "s---," etc. Artist/band names and song/album titles will be presented unedited (such as Shithorse or Starfucker), but lyrics will follow the format of the first letter of the word followed by dashes. Use of racial slurs or other language meant to discriminate based on a person's race, color, religion, creed, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, or sexual orientation will not be tolerated.

WKNC is also obligated by the NCSU Student Media Code of Ethics to correct any factual error found in the blog. Even if the information was true when initially posted, it should be corrected if later proved to be false. In her book *The Weblog Handbook: Practical Advice on Creating and Maintaining Your Blog*, Rebecca Blood advises to "Write each entry as if it could not be changed; add to, but do not rewrite or delete, any entry." Corrections should be made by striking the incorrect text. To do so, use the strikethrough button. Feel free to explain the reason for the change. Sometimes the correction is major enough that it merits a new blog post. Otherwise, just a simple strike-through and correction will suffice.

USING IMAGES AND COPYRIGHT

"IF YOU DIDN'T CREATE IT, IT ISN'T YOURS."

An image can greatly enhance the visual presentation of a post. However, using someone else's images also opens WKNC up to liability for potential copyright violations. To understand how to use images appropriately, it is important to first clear up some common misunderstandings about copyright. These rules apply to photographs as well as drawings, graphic designs, illustrations and other such works.

Common Misconceptions of Copyright Law:
- *If someone put it online, then it's okay for me to use it*. That image belongs to someone else. Uploading a photo to the Internet, including on such sites as Facebook, MySpace and Flickr, does not make it free for anyone to use in any manner.
- *If I credit the photographer, then it's okay for me to use it*. You should always credit the photographer/creator, but doing so doesn't automatically keep you from violating that person's copyright.
- *If it doesn't have a copyright notice, it's okay for me to use it*. Copyright covers both published and unpublished works and applies from the moment a work is fixed in a tangible form, including being posted online. It does not matter if the work has been formally copyrighted.
- *Since we aren't making any money off it, it's okay for me to use it.* Whether you are making money off an image is often irrelevant.
- *Since we're non-profit/educational, it's okay for me to use it.* Nope. There is no special exception for non-profit organizations that exempts them from following copyright law.

The most basic division of images is between those you created and those you didn't. The Student Media Copyright Policy states, "Works created under the auspices of the Student Media are immediately copyrighted by the NCSU Student Media" with the following conditions constituting a work-for-hire (regardless of whether you are paid for the work):

- Actively taking an assignment from an editor, writer, reporter or other staff member for the Student Media;
- Verbally (or otherwise) agreeing to take an assignment for the Student Media; or
- Creating material while representing Student Media by using Student Media equipment, obtaining a press credential using the name of a N.C. State Student Media or otherwise identifying yourself as a member of the Student Media (http://studentmedia.ncsu.edu/web/policies/Copyright.pdf/).

This means that if you take a DJ pass that requires you to write a concert/event review and you choose to take photographs as part of that assignment, those photos belong to NCSU Student Media. That means they should be edited and captioned, giving yourself credit as the photographer. This will also help protect you from having someone use the photo without

permission. Only the student media advisers can grant permission for someone to use material copyrighted by NCSU Student Media.

If you didn't create something, you may only use it on the WKNC blog if

- You have permission and are using it in a manner consistent with that permission.
- The work is in the public domain.
- The manner in which you are using the content falls under the fair use exception.

You have permission and are using it in a manner consistent with that permission

You've probably seen the copyright notice © followed by the phrase "all rights reserved" or "Not to be reproduced or published without prior permission." To use an image you did not create, you will need expressed written permission from the copyright holder. Anything less is a clear copyright violation. Some works may be available with a Creative Commons license. Think of this as "some rights reserved." There are several forms of Creative Commons licenses, with the least restrictive including only the attribution condition that requires you to credit the work to its original author. Other licenses specify whether you can use the work to create something new (the no derivative works condition), whether that new work needs to also be licensed under Creative Commons (the share alike condition), and/or whether you can sell the work or otherwise use it for commercial purposes (the noncommercial condition). Only use an image as the license permits you; that means don't alter any image with the no derivative works condition or don't use an image on a T-shirt if you plan on selling it and the image has the noncommercial condition.

If the work has anything but a creative commons license, contact its creator and ask for permission. When doing so, explain who you are and exactly what you want to use and how you plan to use it. Make sure you get permission in writing (email is fine) and adhere to any usage restrictions specified by the copyright holder.
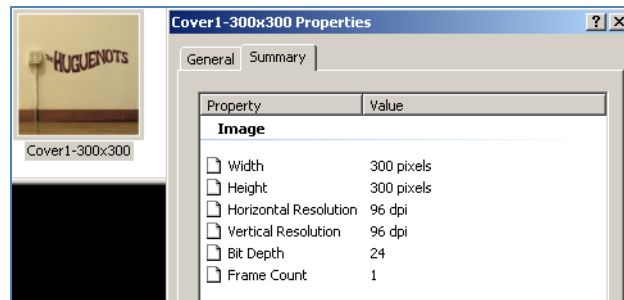
The work is in the public domain

Works in the public domain are not covered by copyright. All images created before 1923, facts, short phrases and works of the federal government are in the public domain and can literally be used in any way you want. You also don't need to credit the original creator. Remember that just because something doesn't have a copyright notice doesn't mean it is in the public domain. Always assume something is fully copyrighted unless it is clearly labeled otherwise.

The manner in which you are using the content falls under the fair use exception

Fair use allows limited use of copyrighted works without permission in situations such as criticism, comment and news reporting. With this in mind, it is considered acceptable to use album cover art in an album review post, provided the image used is of "low resolution." A good guideline is to not use an image with greater than 96dpi (dots per inch). To determine an image's dpi, right click on the file and select "Properties" and then the "Summary" tab. Album

art should be at least 150x150 pixels, but no more than 300x300 pixels. Concert fliers/posters can be used in concert/event previews and reviews, again following the 96dpi guideline.

Artist/band photos make up by far the greatest percentage of WKNC blog images. Keeping in mind that if you didn't create it, it isn't yours, there are still a number of ways to find and use photos. You can go to the band's official website and see if they have press photos explicitly labeled for media use. Sub Pop Records, as one example, has a "promo material" section on each band's page with images available to download for promotional use. Anything labeled as a press kit is also intended for promotional use. Be sure to use any photo credits, if applicable. If a photo is not labeled for reuse, don't use it.

Another way to find artist/band photos is to do an advanced Google image search. Select the "advanced search" option under the search button. Google's advanced image search provides an option for to search by "usage rights." You want to search images "labeled for reuse."

When you find an image you want to use, you will need to verify it indeed is labeled for reuse. Select "Website for this image." You may need to scroll down to find the reuse information. Many of the "labeled for reuse" searches will take you to Flickr, a photo-sharing service. The great thing about Flickr is that each image's page indicates the type of license associated with it. Clicking on license will give you additional information about exactly how you may use it.

Unless the image is self-explanatory (like an album cover, company/ organization logo or event flier), provide a caption. If you are using a Creative Commons image, this is where you will fulfill the attribution requirement. The caption should be no more than two lines; the exact size will vary based on the width of the photo.

Since you went to all the trouble of finding an image you can legally use, be sure to say so. There are a few different ways to indicate you are using an image that isn't yours, but are doing so legally. If the image is a press photo or from a press kit, "Steep Canyon Rangers press photo" or "Future Islands (Thrill Jockey Press Photo)" are appropriate captions. For Creative Commons licensed photos, just saying "courtesy of" or "photo by" is not sufficient. "Photo courtesy of Oliver Lopena, under Creative Commons" is appropriate attribution. Link back to the author when possible.