



## Examples of law enforcement blogs

- Los Angeles, California, Police Department
- Houston, Texas, Police Department
- Boston, Massachusetts, Police Department
- Dalton, Georgia, Police Department

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# BLOG FACT SHEET

## What is a blog?

A Web log, commonly known as a blog, is a type of Web site that consists of commentary and other content (such as pictures, video, and links) that the user posts periodically. Blogs are typically in a reverse-chronological, journal-type format. You can update a blog as often as you choose and most blogging sites are simple to navigate and update.

## How can law enforcement use blogs?

**Recruitment:** Blogs highlighting a day in the life of a law enforcement officer or a recruit are great ways to reach out to potential new officers. A blog can provide personal insight to a career in law enforcement that an individual may not receive anywhere else.

**Community Relations:** Reach out to your community in a whole new way. Community members of all ages may be more likely to visit a blog than a traditional Web site. Communicating through a blog also makes officers seem more real and approachable, enhancing community relations.

**Crime Prevention:** Getting crime prevention information to the community is an integral part of community policing, but finding an appropriate time and audience is not always easy. Blogs allow you to post educational information in the form of text, pictures, or video on the latest crime prevention issues. This information is then available for your community members to view at their convenience.

**Crime Solvers:** Post pictures, video, and your crime solver tip-line information and give the public the opportunity to provide valuable information. Putting the information online for the public to view means more eyes and ears working on your case and allows the community to know what is going on in their neighborhood.

**Chief's Message:** A blog can be a great way for chiefs and sheriffs to have their own space, making them more accessible to the population they serve. It can be the perfect place to send messages of all sizes and importance to community members.

## How do you start a blog?

Creating a blog can be part of your agency's social media policy and strategy. Consult the legal and communications office for your agency or municipality to determine the most effective approach. It may also be helpful to browse other agencies' blogs to see how they are currently using the format.

After you have a strategy in place, choose a blogging platform. Most blogging sites are free and easy to use. Make sure to let the community know about your new blog through press releases or advertising. Also, publish the link to your blog on your existing department Web site.

## Questions to consider when developing your blogging strategy

- What is the purpose of your blog? What type of messages are you planning to publish?
- Who will be in charge of maintaining the blog?
- How often will the blog be updated?
- Will you allow the public to post comments on your blog? If so, will you have a policy for removing offensive comments?

These questions can also be addressed in your agency's social media policy.