

Using Technology Effectively

Sometimes getting traffic can be as much about technology as it is about content (but don't tell your blogger that!). I probably don't need to point out that sites that don't display correctly in the browser, contain broken links or nonfunctional tools, or that aren't reliably available don't get read or bookmarked. Your technology sends a message about your competence just as much as the quality of your posts. This concept is especially true for a business blog, which can't look as amateurish as ones written by, well, amateurs.

You can use some technological tools to ensure your readers find you. Follow these suggestions:

✔ **Create an RSS/Atom feed.** Make sure you have an RSS and/or Atom feed available on your blog. Some blogging software generates these feeds automatically, or you may have to generate your own feed. I cover RSS in depth in Chapter 13.

✔ **Syndicate your site.** Make sure you're registered with Web sites that syndicate or aggregate blog content. These sites are clearinghouses for people and search engines looking for the latest blog postings, so letting them know when you post or registering your RSS feed with them can greatly increase your traffic.

Many blogging software solutions allow you to *ping*, or notify, blog indexes automatically at the time that you publish your post, as shown in Figure 11-1. Those that don't may permit you to add HTML or JavaScript to your templates that do the pinging for you. For help, start with the support documentation of the blogging solution you are using. Then move on to weblogs.com, blo.gs, blogrolling.com, and blogshares.com for more information about registering your blog or adding ping technology to your blog.

✔ **Get help from your blogging software.** Some blogging software companies display a list of recently updated blogs that use their software somewhere on their Web site, often on the home page. If yours is one of these, check to see whether you are included automatically or if you need to request that your blog be displayed. Movable Type, for example, has a prominent list of recently updated blogs on the right side of its home page, as shown in Figure 11-2.

If you are using any third-party software plug-ins or tools, they too may have a recently updated list that you can take advantage of. In cases where you are using a popular blogging tool, the traffic to a Web site is probably substantial, and you may be able to benefit.

✔ **Add permalinks.** Sites that use permalinks generally get better traffic, thanks to better search engine indexing and site usability. *Permalinks* are pages that contain a single post, plus any comments associated