

Donath Business & Media  
MR. Think

# Companies hunting in the Czech blogosphere Blogbarometer 2015

Final report of survey



Prague, September 2015

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# A mirror of the Czech blogosphere

Some questions are important to ask even if one cannot find a satisfactory answer; you will delve into the problem, and at least you will be able to tell if someone starts to confabulate self-confidently on the subject. Describing the Czech blogosphere is one such question. Hundreds of new blogs surge every month. But how many disappear, how many are dwindling, how many are active today? Does the Czech blogosphere comprise 50,000 or 100,000 blogs? Hardly anyone can tell so far.

Online dailies began to emerge in 1994. The term "weblog" is thought to have been introduced by Jorn Barger in December 1997, and the words "blog" and "blogging" came some two years later. By then, we had a number of well-established authors in the country, and some of them are still active today. Blogging has become extremely popular worldwide. The U.S. company Technorati, incorporated in 2002, specializes in blog research. It even introduced a respected index of the most important English-language blogs, called the Technorati Top 100. It was estimated in 2009 that there were 112 million blogs worldwide. The world of digital media keeps on changing, and with it the role of blogs. Nevertheless, blogs are still the main vehicle for influencers to publish, and adequate use of social networks can only make their impact stronger.

While we all know our favorite blogs, we know very little about the Czech blogosphere. This has to do with the technical difficulty of blog identification, as well as the reluctance of some blogging platform providers to share basic demographic data. Thus we base our notion on the most visible bloggers, who are moreover active enough that they join our surveys. The Czech blogosphere is shy, which is why we are so glad we managed to get 20 percent more respondents in our survey than last year.

We believe the Blogbarometer 2015 will provide interesting feedback to bloggers, and offer valuable information to students of the current issues of digital communication.

Michal Donath

Managing Director  
Donath Business & Media

## About the survey

The survey was conducted as part of the larger project IPREX BLOGBAROMETER™ 2015, which has been running since last year in several European countries within the international network of PR agencies IPREX Global Communication. Current data from the European survey is not available at the moment, which is why we do not present them for all indicators, unlike last year.

The Donath Business & Media PR agency conducted the survey online in the Czech Republic between June 17 and 30, 2015, in cooperation with the MR Think consultancy. The purpose was to map out the Czech blogosphere, identify trends over years and focus more on bloggers' plans.

A total of 482 respondents participated in the survey, of which 403 responded to the invitation sent to 1,331 bloggers (30.3% of those addressed). Another 79 respondents answered the call on Facebook and the iDnes<sup>1</sup> news portal, which has supported our survey again this year. The absence of a description of the blogging population from which we could select is a significant methodological hurdle. This is why we decided last year to address a maximum number of bloggers, and we checked from the demographic parameters whether we captured all the intuitively expected main groups of bloggers by their age, domicile and age of the blog. This year, we employed the same database of bloggers as last year and added 398 newly identified blogs registered during the past year.

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<sup>1</sup> iDnes has approximately 8,300 active bloggers today. It registers 150 to 170 new candidates every month. The bloggers publish on average 110 new articles per day. Visitor rate of the blogs tends to grow; figures for June 2015 indicate 9.2 million PV.

# Key findings

## **Bloggers go professional, and firms take them as partners**

Unlike last year, bloggers make much greater use of social networks to advertise their blogs. Facebook is used most of all, attaining 71.8% and getting close to the European level of IPREX BLOGBAROMETER™ 2014. Similarly the use of Instagram, having grown twofold to 49.7%, approached last year's European level. Twitter (21.8%), YouTube (19.3%) and Pinterest (16.8%) share the third rank on the imaginary popularity scale of social networks among our respondents. Only 7.3% of respondents stated no advertising of their blogs on social networks.

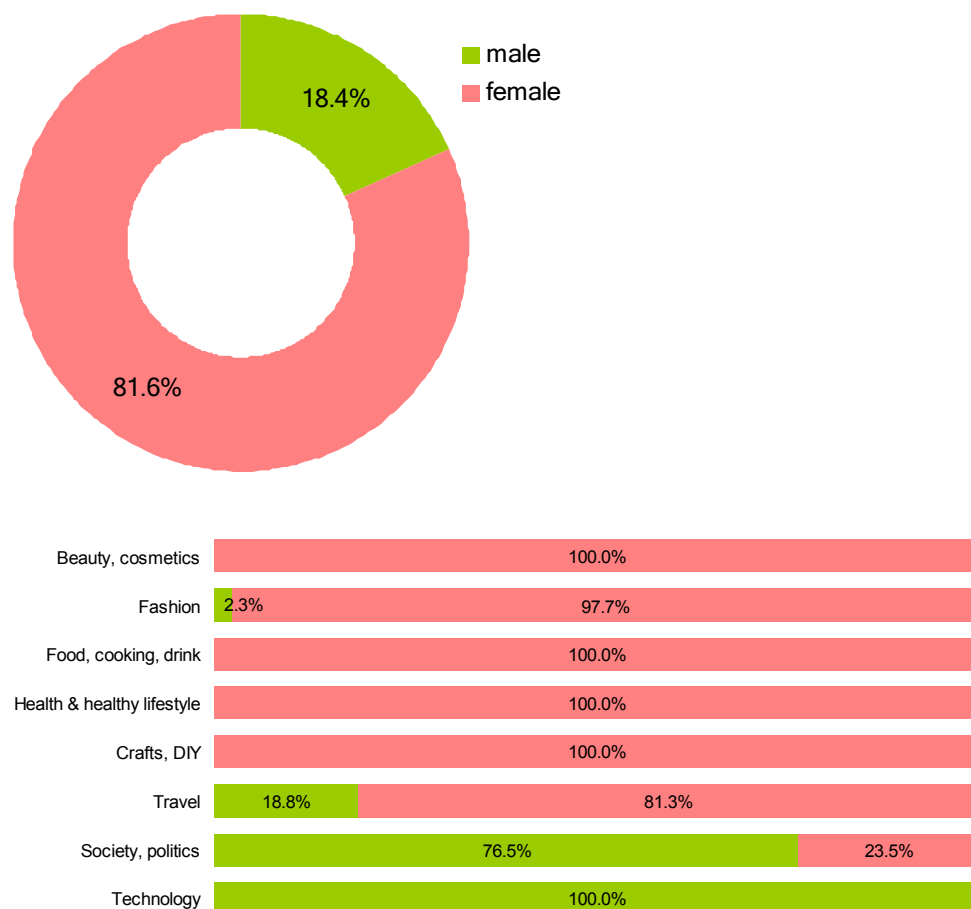
More than one-fifth (22.3%) of bloggers taking part in the survey plan to promote their blogs on other social networks. 12.7% of the respondents want to publicize their blogs by cooperation with print media or well-established websites, 4.9% will advertise the blogs by an exchange of links, and 3.4% will commission a campaign.

Firms contacted bloggers one-third more often than last year. This year's survey suggests they addressed almost a half of the bloggers (45.2%). Most often they propose cooperation (85.1%), offer samples and products (78.2%) and extend invitations to events (63.2%); they also organize special events for bloggers (63.8%).

Similarly to last year, it shows that women are more active as bloggers, though this depends on the subject as well as their age. Women dominate such fields as cosmetics, fashion, cooking and drinks, health and healthy lifestyle, or DIY, while men prevail in technology, society and politics.

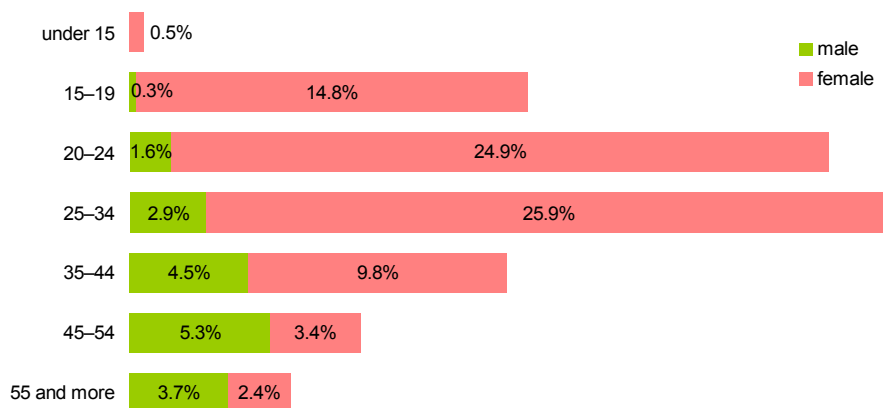
Unlike last year, the number of everyday contributors dropped by approximately a half (to 6.6%). 39.1% of the respondents blog several times a week, 31.9% several times a month, and 15.2% less frequently.

## Who dominates the Czech blogosphere



Like last year, the survey suggests women are more active in blogging than men, though their leadership is related to the subjects they write about, as well as their age. The share of women has grown several percentage points over last year. The structure of the group by the size of respondents' domicile corresponds to last year's returns, when almost a half lived in cities with populations larger than 100,000. The share of bloggers with only primary education shrank slightly, while the cohort of graduates grew to 43%. Related to this shift is also a small shift in bloggers' age, with more than a half of them being in the 20-34 category. Women dominate in such subjects as cosmetics, fashion, food and drink, cooking, health and healthy lifestyle, and DIY, while men prevail in technology, society and politics.

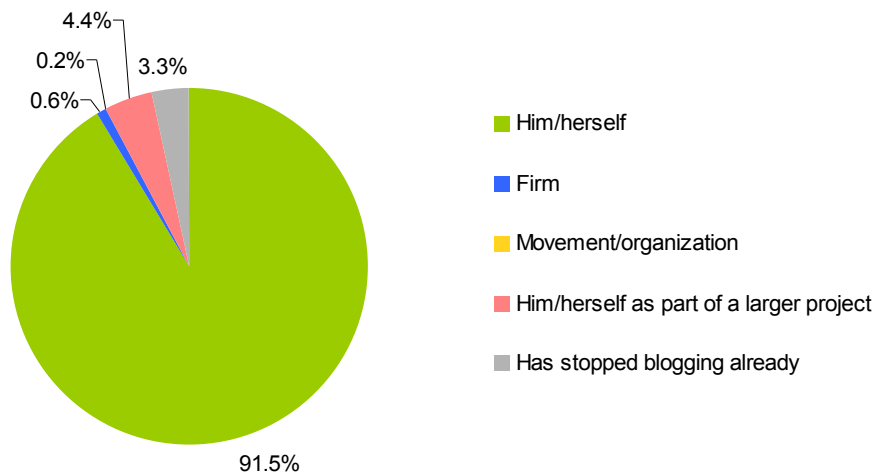
## Bloggers' age



Interestingly, in this regard, the share of blogging men grows with age, opposite to the women's share. While most female bloggers fall into the 25-34 age group, most men are in the 45-54 group.

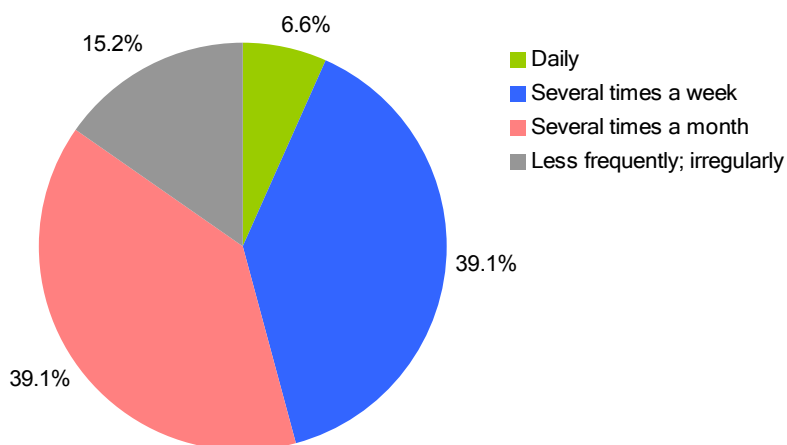
# How often they blog

## For whom they blog



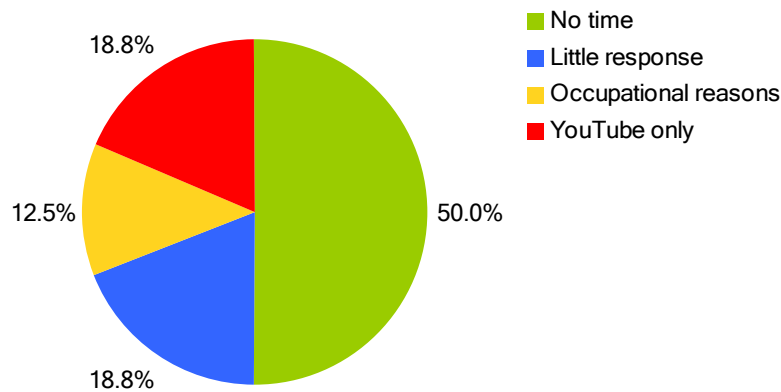
More than three-fourths (77.5%) of bloggers surveyed contribute to a single blog. 14.5% of respondents contribute to two, 4.8% to three and 1.5% to four. The vast majority of the subjects surveyed write in Czech (97.5%), 10.7% in English and 2.6% in other languages. The total adds up to more than 100% because some writers contribute to multilingual blogs. Compared to last year, the number of everyday contributors dropped almost by half (to 6.6%). 39.1% of respondents blog several times a week, 31.9% several times a month and 15.2% less frequently.

## How often they blog





## Why have I quit blogging?

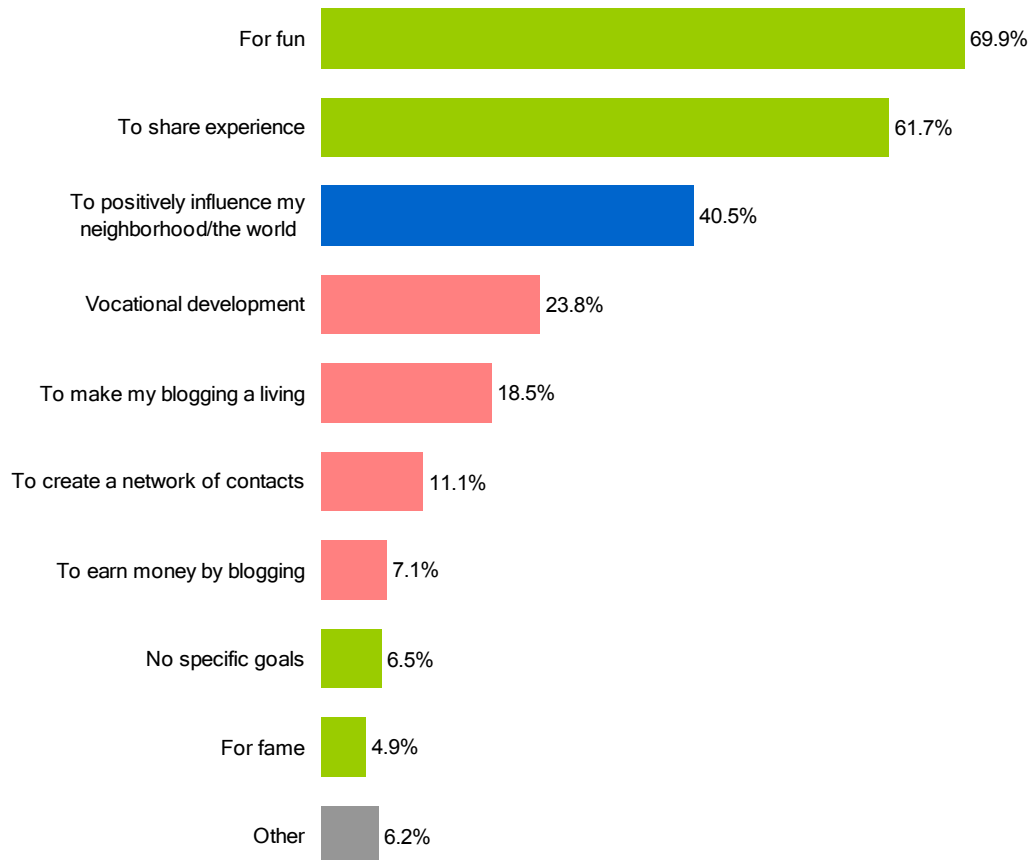


We stated in this year's survey, based on extended last year's blogger database, that those who had quit blogging were also welcome to take part. We collected 16 replies, which constitutes an 8% annual "mortality rate" of those addressed last year. This is mere indicative data, yet it provides an interesting insight into the reasons people stop blogging.

The main reason for quitting blogging is a lack of time (50.0%) and taking occupational reasons into consideration, it is possible to see that bloggers' work obligations were the main reason to quit the blogging hobby. An interesting finding, corroborated in another part of the survey, is the fact that a shift to the YouTube platform is behind almost one-fifth of terminated blogs (18.8%).

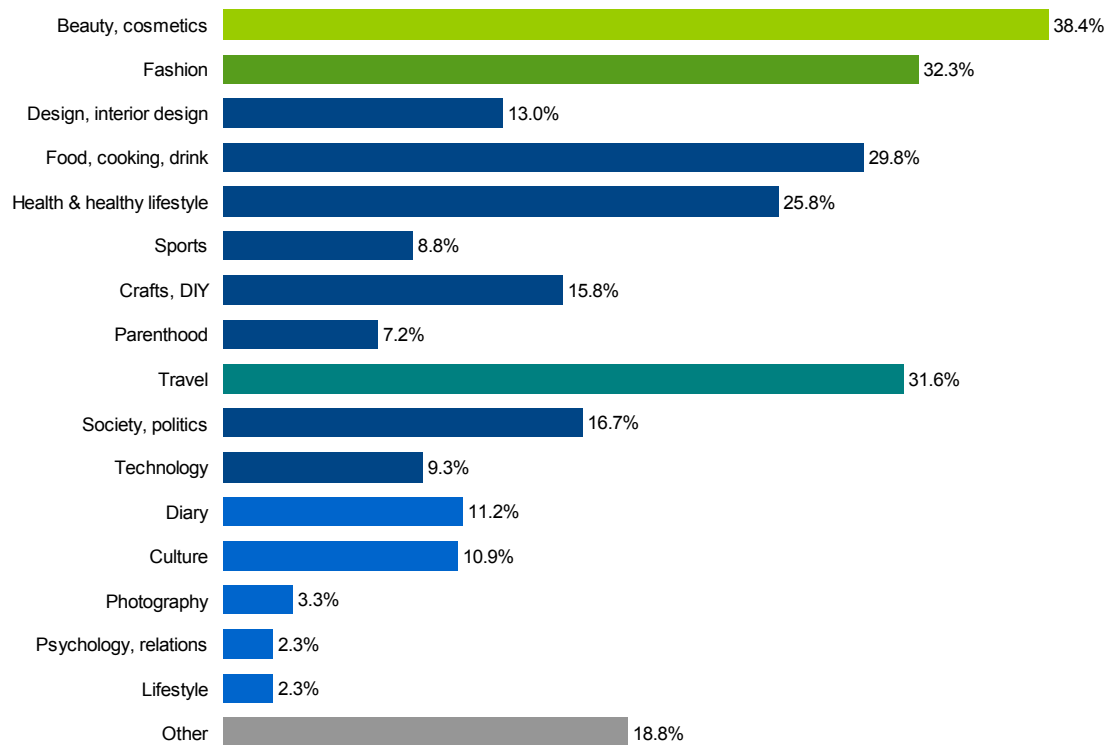
# Motivation for blogging

Why they blog (up to three main reasons could be selected)



Fun is the most common reason to blog (69.9%), followed by a desire to share experience (61.1%); these two often go hand in hand. 40.5% of bloggers want to emanate a positive influence on life around them; vocational development is important for one-fifth (23.8%). 7.1% of respondents cite the potential of earning money by blogging as their main reason. Compared with last year, fun has become slightly less important, while the chance to influence others positively and vocational development have grown stronger as motivations.

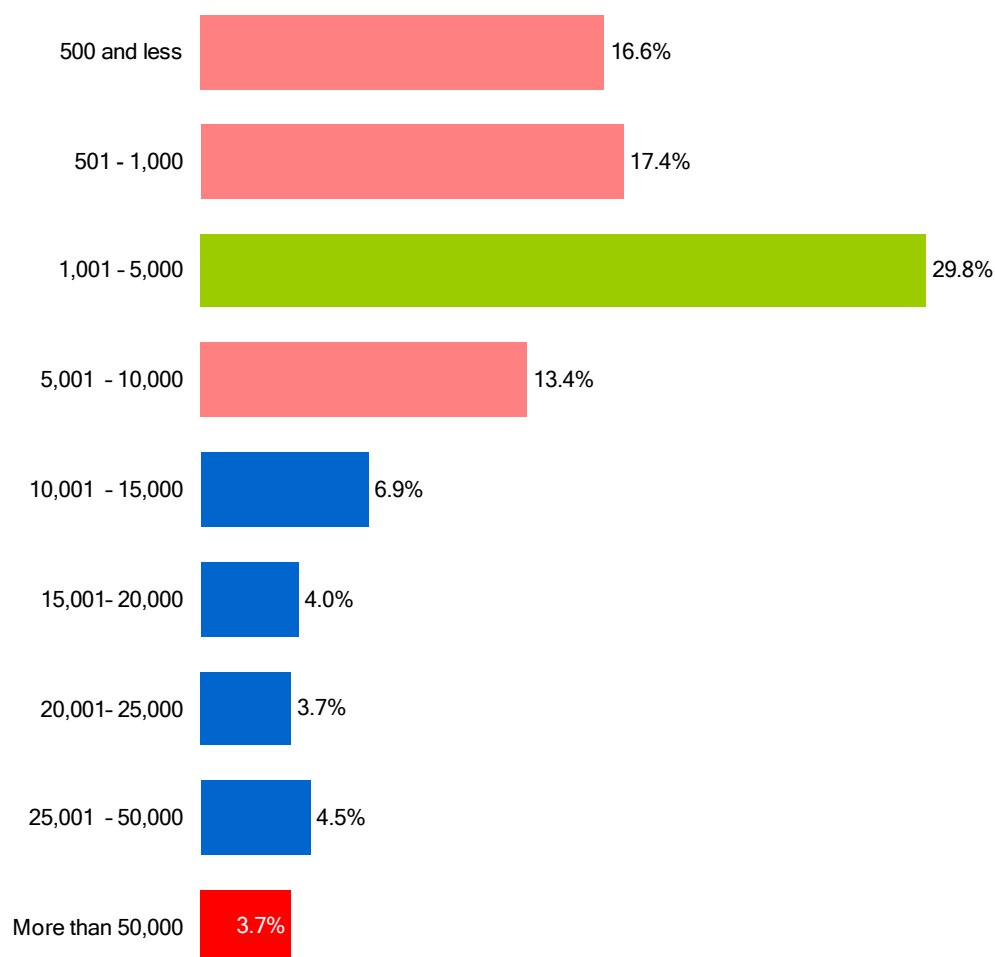
## Most common subjects



Beauty and cosmetics comprise the most popular topic for blogging (38.4%), closely trailed by fashion, style and attire (32.3%), travel (31.6%) and cooking (29.8%).

# How many people read blogs?

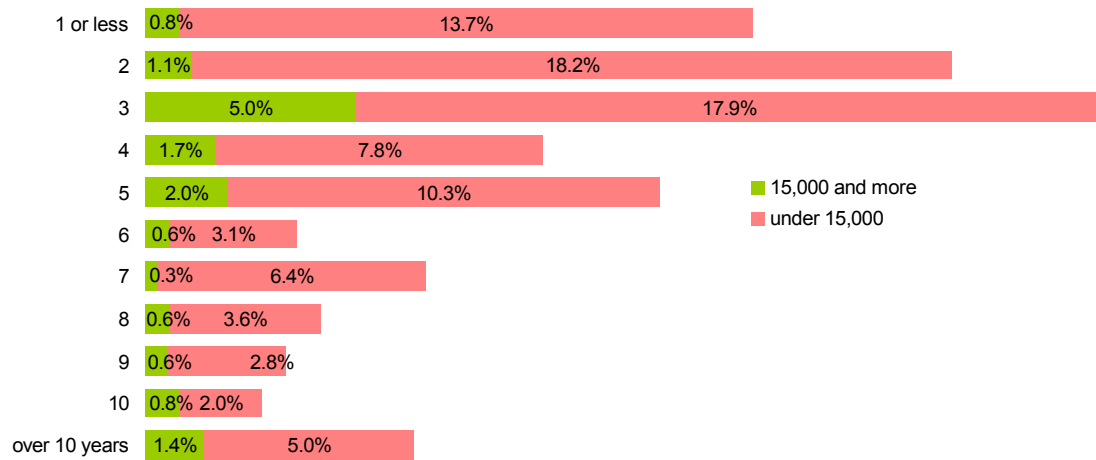
Numbers of unique visitors per month



The breakdown of blogs by unique visitor rate corresponds to last year's findings. The most common group (29.8%) is again that with 1,001 to 5,000 unique visitors per month. Nearly two-thirds (63.8%) of respondents do not have more than 5,000 unique visitors per month.

Like last year, we were interested in the relation between the visitor rate and the age of the blog. The following diagram *How many years I have been blogging* shows in green ink the share of writers who attract more than 15,000 unique visitors per month in specific years of their blogging career. All together they comprise 15.9% of our respondents. Our sample shows that third-year bloggers again make up the largest number of widest-read writers. Last year's most common blog age of two years has progressed to three (22.9%).

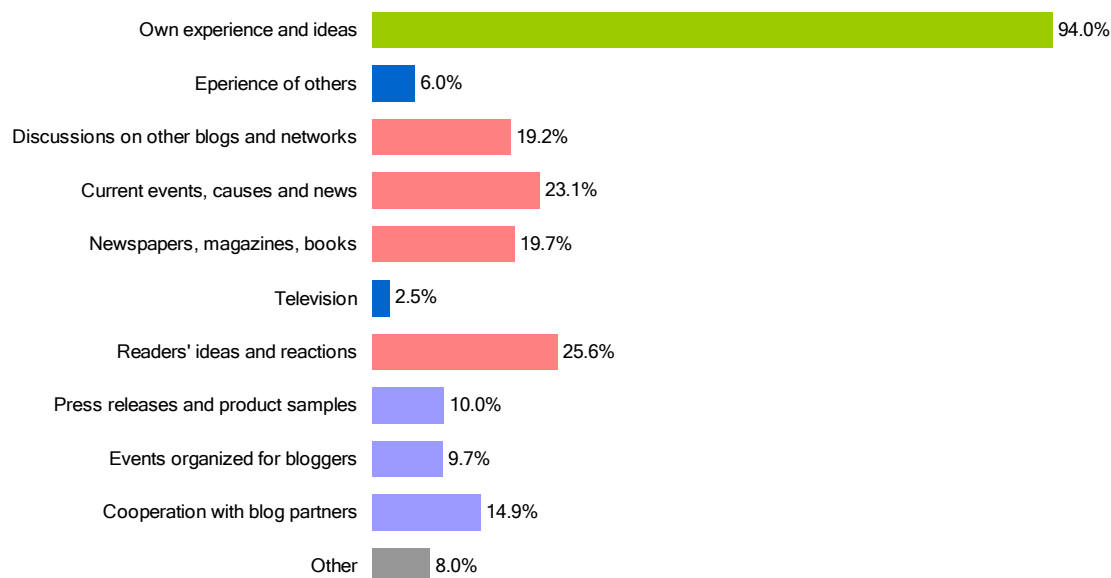
## How many years I have been blogging



Two-thirds of respondents (66.2%) have been blogging for less than five years, though 6.4% were diehards who started blogging more than 10 years ago.

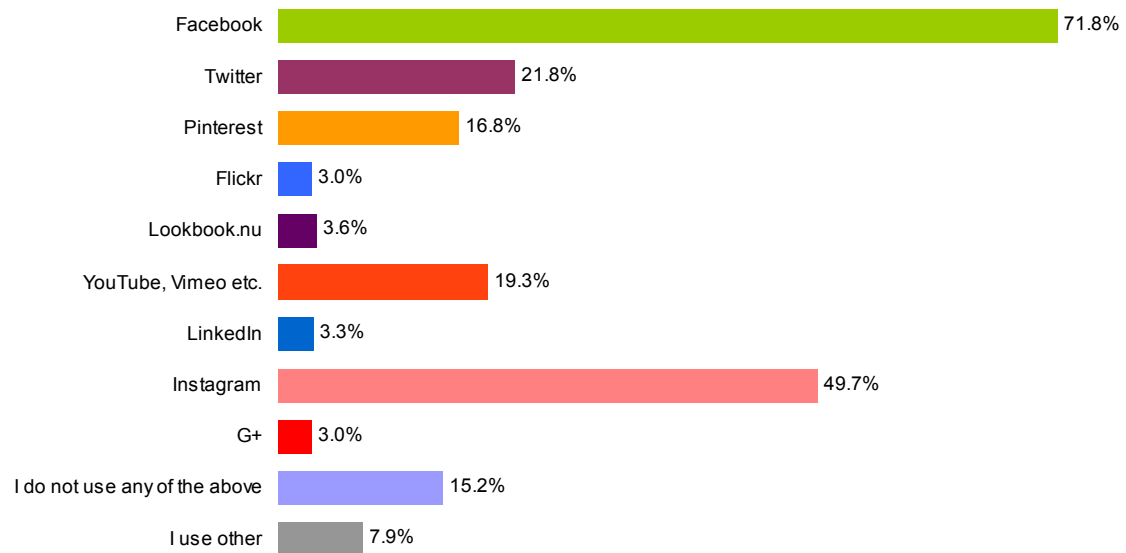
# Blogger's inspiration

Where do writers find information and ideas?  
(up to three main options were allowed)



Our respondents identified the main sources of their information and ideas similarly to last year. Bloggers' own creativity is clearly the decisive factor, based on their experience and ideas (94.0%). They take other important inspiration from readers (25.6%), current events, issues and news (23.3%), discussions on other blogs or social networks (19.2%) or the media – newspapers, magazines and books (19.7%). They stated roughly twice as often as last year that their sources also included press releases and samples of products (10.0%), events organized for bloggers (9.7%) or writing in cooperation with partners of their blogs (14.9%).

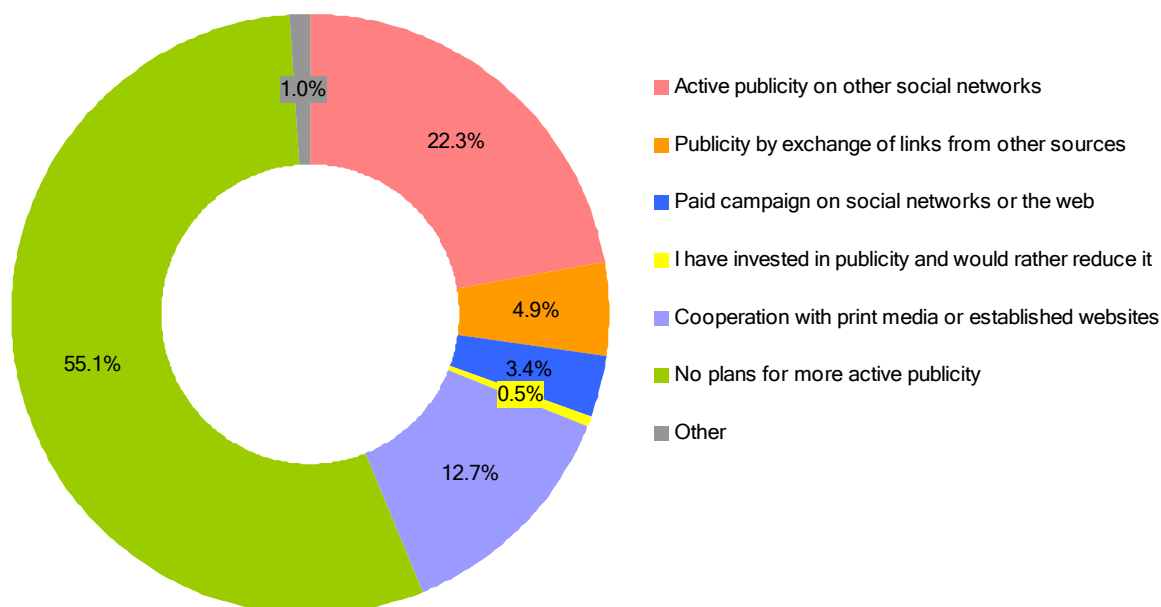
## Growing interconnection of blogs and social networks



Bloggers use social networks to promote their blogs much more than they did last year. Only 7.3% stated they did not advertise on the networks at all. Facebook is used most of all, attaining 71.8% and getting close to the European level of IPREX BLOGBAROMETER™ 2014. Similarly, the use of Instagram, having grown twofold to 49.7%, approached last year's European level. Twitter (21.8%), YouTube (19.3%) and Pinterest (16.8%) share the third rank on the imaginary popularity scale of social networks among our respondents.

## Plans to promote and improve blogs

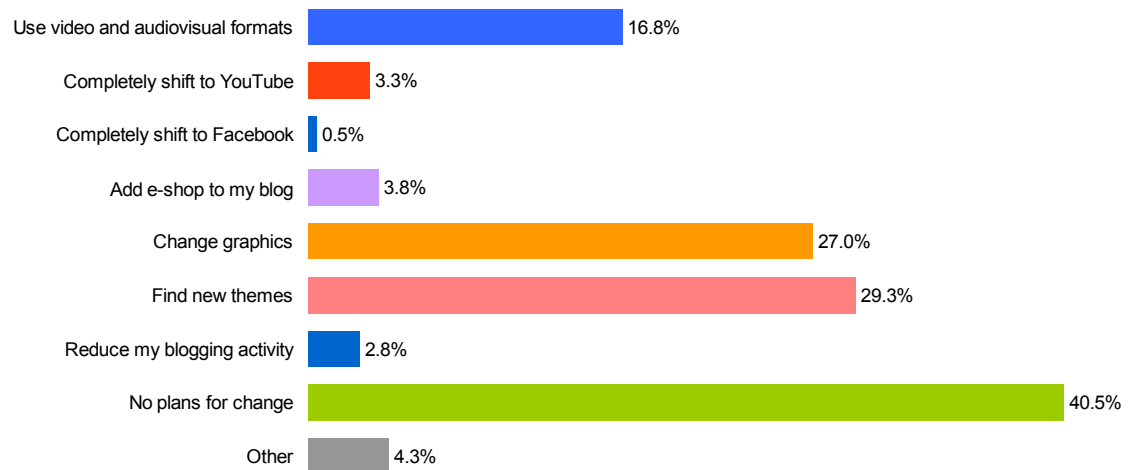
Are you planning to increase publicity?



We added two questions in this year's survey to explore bloggers' ideas about their future concerns. The above trend of greater use of social networks will probably continue. Although the majority of respondents (55.1%) do not plan to increase publicity, more than one-fifth (22.3%) plan to use other social networks. There are also other ways to publicize a blog and attract more visitors. This is why 12.7% plan to cooperate with print media or well-established websites, 4.9% will publicize their blogs by an exchange of links, and 3.4% will pay for a campaign.



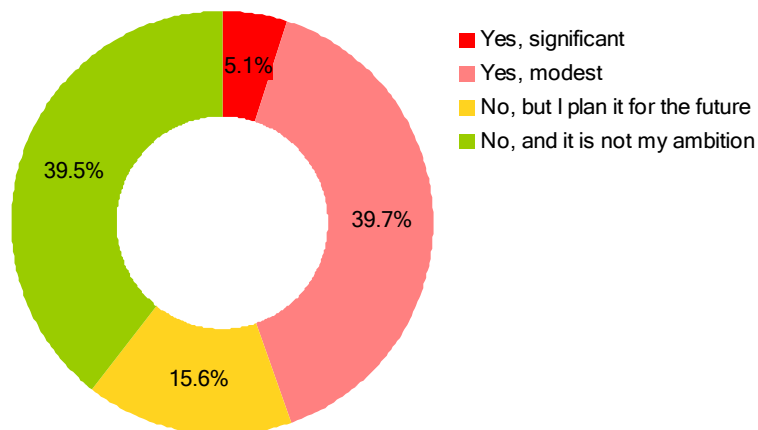
## How do I plan to improve my blog?



Bloggers also think about how to improve the format of their blogs. Two-fifths of respondents (40.5%) do not want to change anything, but 29.3% want to find new themes, 27.0% would like to change the graphic form of their blogs, and 16.8% want to use video and audiovisual formats. 2.8% of respondents contemplate a reduction of their activity, and 3.0% plan to shift to YouTube. Most of those considering shift to YouTube and using video and audiovisual formats are female bloggers who write about cosmetics and fashion.

# Money and benefits

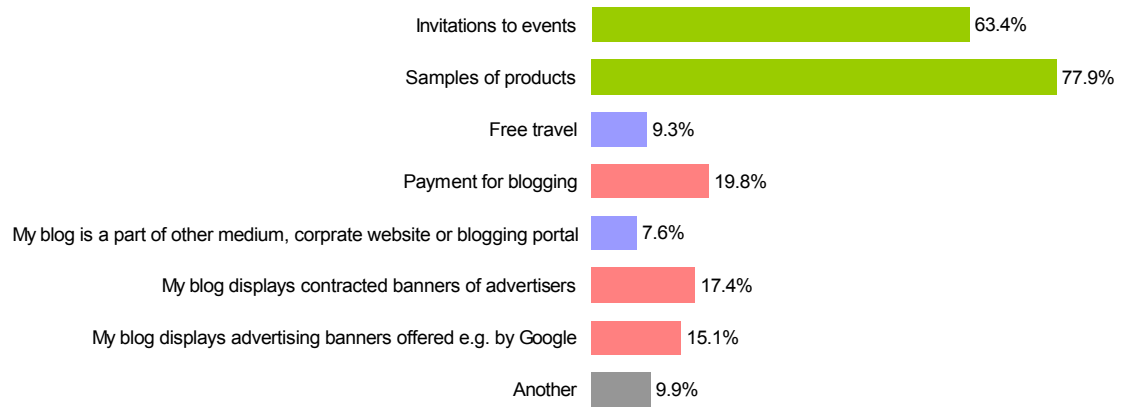
Do you have financial or other benefits from blogging?



The number of respondents who enjoy modest monetary and other benefits from blogging has grown by more than two-fifths since last year (39.7%), and the number of those who enjoy no benefits and do not envisage them dropped conversely by about one-fourth. This manifests the strength of the more active part of bloggers, as was seen in the response to other questions. The predominant part in the segment of respondents with significant incomes and benefits are blogs with more than 10,000 unique visitors per month in the fields of fashion and cosmetics.

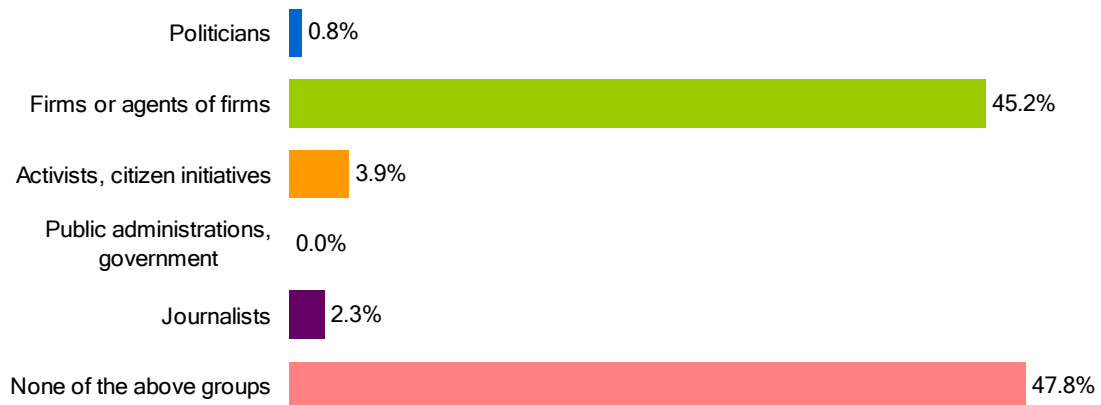
Only 7.1% of respondents cited monetary gain as one of the main reasons for their blogging (See *Motivation for blogging*), which corresponds with the form in which bloggers obtain their benefits. We enquired for this with 44.8% of the respondents who stated that they enjoyed significant or minor benefits. Most bloggers (77.9%) in this group receive samples of products; invitations to various events rank second (63.4%). One-fifth of respondents (19.8%) stated that they were paid for blogging. Invitations to events and sending of samples have increased since last year.

## What kind of income or other benefits do blogs yield to their writers?



# Firms are more active in relation to bloggers

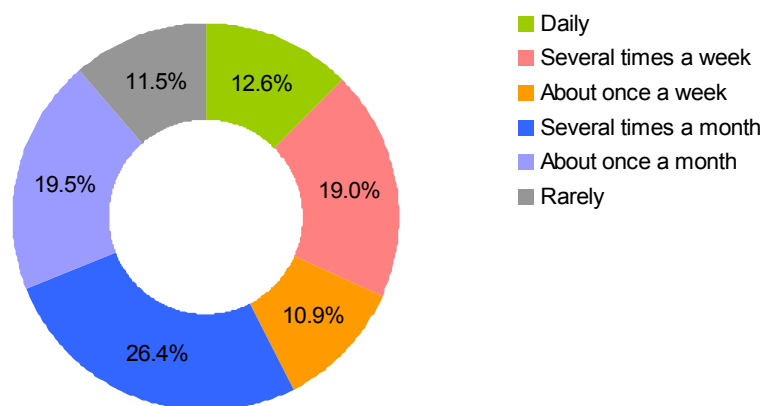
Which of the following groups contacts you most often?



Compared with last year, the number of bloggers not contacted by any of the above groups has dropped by two-fifths. This change is due to increased activity of firms and their agents who address almost half (45.2%) of the bloggers. Bloggers are most often offered cooperation (85.1%), samples and products (78.2%), invitations to events (63.2%) or special activities for bloggers (63.8%). 38.5% of this group of addressees receive press releases.

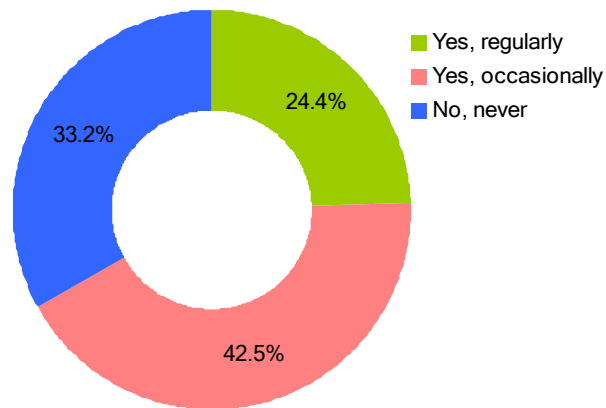
Firms contact bloggers more often than they did last year, e.g. the number of respondents contacted daily has doubled.

How often do they contact you?



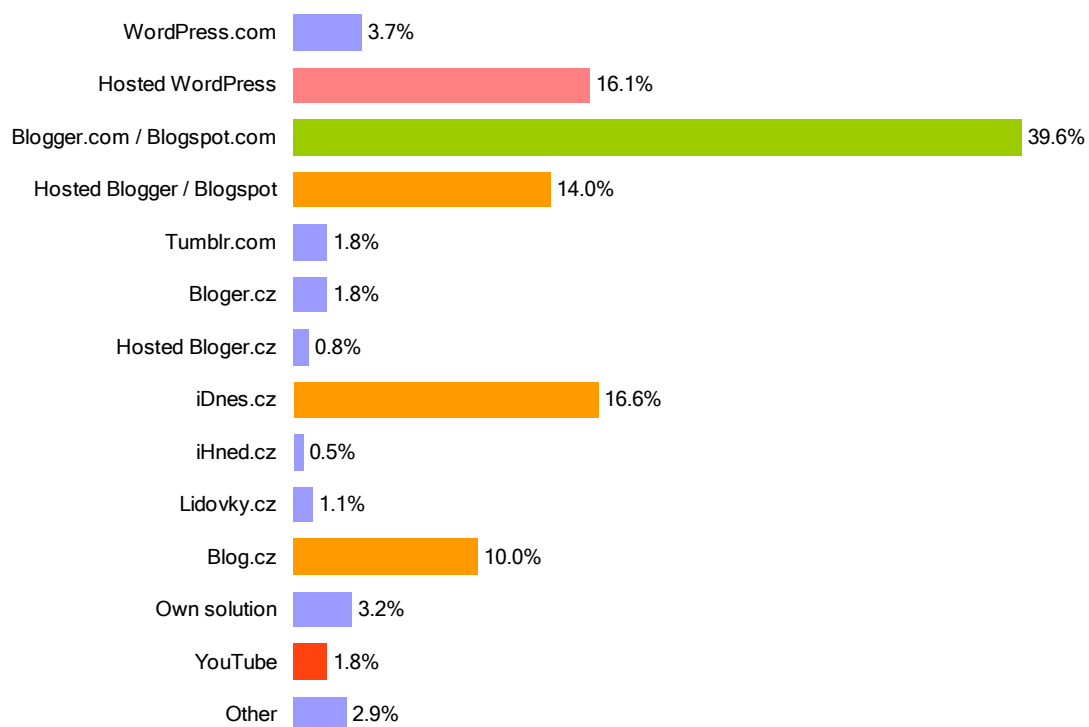
# Bloggers and brands

Do you write about brands or branded products?



Bloggers who write regularly or occasionally about brands are more numerous than last year. This also suggests increased activity of firms in relation to the blogosphere, as well as bloggers' willingness to cooperate with firms. They write mainly about the brands they like (83.5%) or about their day-to-day customer experience (54.3%).

## The platform I blog on



Czech bloggers who joined the survey prefer global platforms, except for writers of technologically focused blogs, who use their own solutions more often. The strong showing of bloggers on iDnes.cz is the result of notification of the survey by the blog administrator.

## About the authors



Donath Business & Media

The company has been active in the areas of public relations and public affairs in the Czech Republic and Slovakia since 1991. For more information, see [www.dbm.cz](http://www.dbm.cz).



MR. Think

Consultancy agency MR. Think (Market Research Think) was established in 2003. It offers comprehensive specialized independent consultancy on market research and marketing. For more information, see [www.mrthink.cz](http://www.mrthink.cz).

## Free distribution statement

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