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## Sony to Daddy Bloggers: We Haven't Forgotten About You

**Consumer Electronics Giant Turns to Guys for Product Reviews, Writeups**

by [Abbey Klaassen](#)  
Published: [August 20, 2009](#)



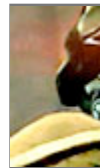
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NEW YORK (AdAge.com) -- In the middle of the marketing frenzy around mommy bloggers, Sony Electronics has turned its attention to the other gender, launching [DigiDads](#), a program all about putting its products into a small group of blogging dads in hopes that they'll play with them and write about them.

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Sony's DigiDad Project aims to put daddy bloggers in the spotlight.

[Brogan](#), president of New Marketing Labs. Unlike with journalists, who often receive products on loan from Sony to review, Sony will put together projects for the blogging dads that they can use the gadgets on.

"Anybody can do blogger outreach," said Mr. Brogan. "We're aiming for telling a story vs. 'Here's some stuff, write about it.'" The projects will include "Summer of 100 Faces," where the dads and their kids will use Sony cameras to take 100 portraits. Other plans include using a GPS-equipped video camera to map out historical video tours of a neighborhood or record a tour on a vacation.

Ms. Cohen tapped Mr. Brogan -- who is getting paid as a consultant on the project, not unlike a PR firm would on traditional outreach -- after meeting him at the Consumer Electronics Show where he interviewed her for his Power 150-ranked blog. Ms. Cohen said Sony has done programs for mommy bloggers, flying them out to San Diego to show them how to use the company's products, but it has never done one with a focus on dads.

Mr. Brogan is a firm believer in the viability of what has become a sensitive issue for some in the internet space: sponsored conversations in blogging. He came under fire from some social-media purists late last year when he ran on his blog a campaign for Kmart, brokered through sponsored-conversation firm Izea, on whose board he sits. He believes it was executed well but said going forward he is extra careful about "making sure people understand the intention behind it."

In this case, the bloggers get nothing other than the products for a few months and some good exposure (many of them are in the marketing or consulting field themselves). Ms. Cohen has charged them with writing honest reviews and "fully expects the good and the bad. We want to be open, honest and transparent about the relationship." In that way, she said, "we're treating them like journalists."

The dads are not getting paid for using the consumer-electronics giant's products and will have to return them when they're done. Oh, and it's not quite as simple as giving them a product to review, and asking them to write about it, according to Marcy Cohen, senior manager of communications at Sony Electronics, and [Chris](#)



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One subject of debate was whether to buy affiliate advertising on the blogs, so if readers liked the products they could purchase it right from the sites. The decision was not to do so, for fear of appearing too heavy-handed.

The bloggers include Michael Sheehan of [HighTechDad.com](http://HighTechDad.com); Max Kalehoff of [AttentionMax.com](http://AttentionMax.com); Brad Powel, one of the dads behind [DadLabs.com](http://DadLabs.com); C.C.Chapman, whose blogs include [DigitalDads.com](http://DigitalDads.com) and [CC-Chapman.com](http://CC-Chapman.com); and Jeffrey Sass, who contributes to [DadoMatic.com](http://DadoMatic.com), a blog Mr. Brogan founded.

Sony will be evaluating the campaign based on the exposure it gets, including via Twitter, and in comments and links to the blogs.

One of Sony's biggest goals when it comes to social media, said Ms. Cohen, is "to engage customers in conversation and share the insights we gain from that with engineers, product developers and designers."

The program was announced today and already Mr. Brogan's blog had almost 20 comments. "The feedback is going to be invaluable," she said. "It's an easy way to speak frankly and directly."

Added Mr. Brogan: "I think CE organizations have kind of forgotten the 'C' part of things. They're doing rigorous market analysis but not asking customers what they want or, better yet, listening to data that's provided every day for free on Twitter, Facebook and everywhere else."

### 6 Comments

By jack08 | new york, US [August 20, 2009 09:47:11 pm](#):

Why not designate space in electronic stores or departments as "SONY ISLAND" Aplace where people can associate SONY with fun, games and the latest in technology. Let "SONY ISLAND" become the destination for new technology.

Jim Burnette

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By Rodney33 | FRISCO, TX [August 21, 2009 01:17:41 am](#):

I wish Sony well. I think their heart is in the right place. They have stumbled a few times in social networking.

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One instance they were outed for trying to portray consumer advocacy that was fabricated, which called attention to an insurmountable issue, their new game console wasn't upgraded enough to justify the cost.

Thus there was pent up backlash from avid fans who had hoped for so much more.

The fake social networking ploy became the poster child that epitomized all that was wrong with Sony's new game platform that so underwhelmed from a purest perspective, they had to hire fake enthusiasts to get the word out.

Now, at every turn in social networking, Sony chooses the path most followed in hopes of attracting those who typically choose the path less followed.

It's safe to find a proven blogger audience and be 100% transparent in your communication to them. They do a good job of getting the word out. But there is a currency of "wow" that doesn't translate well with this approach.

That's because it is a watered down version of the contrived fake approach, the only real difference is the degree of transparency.

Sony should dip their toe back in the water and expand their social networking strategy to include more organic initiatives to address the blogosphere. Providing real informational tools for bloggers to discover and share on their own without any direct relationship with Sony, will bring back a little "wow" factor and wonder back to Sony.

But, Sony cannot afford to take the risk of being labeled contrived once again. They also cannot control the messages of unpaid bloggers who could post negative thoughts and opinions about them for any random reason like reviewers in magazines and newspapers often do.

But if Sony's products are exceptional and they truly have an advantages that opinion leaders can get excited about, then an organic approach will deliver a significantly higher engagement and pass along value.

We have a white paper on the subject and a new study coming out in a few weeks that drills down on the specifics of monitoring and addressing social network conversations.

Rodney Mason, CMO

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By Rodney33 | FRISCO, TX [August 21, 2009 01:21:29 am](#):

"truly have an advantages" should read -  
truly have an advantage.

Rodney Mason, CMO  
Moosylvania  
The Great State Of Design  
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By VickieJazz | Wayne, NJ [August 21, 2009 09:07:09 am](#):

Why would I think that daddy bloggers wouldn't be a great market to approach - but PR should watch out - mommy bloggers turned the table recently during their PR blackout! Great stuff.

[Permalink](#)

By JasonAvant | San Diego, CA [August 21, 2009 12:34:43 pm](#):

As the founder of a popular (and revenue-generating) dadblog - [www.dadcentric.com](http://www.dadcentric.com) - I'm more than a bit skeptical about this. While the various participants are going to great lengths to say that they will be providing unbiased reviews of the products that Sony ships them, the fact that Sony is a paying client of Mr. Brogan's (per a post on his website: <http://www.chrisbrogan.com/a-different-kind-of-blogger-outreach/>) raises questions about the nature of the project. There is no such thing as bad publicity, and even if the bloggers themselves aren't directly profiting from their new relationship with Sony, Mr. Brogan is. Hopefully readers of those various sites are aware of this.

While the number of influential dadbloggers pales in comparison to their mommyblogger counterparts, we dads who make a living at blogging would be well advised to avoid some of the potential ethical (and possibly legal) implications of failing to fully disclose the relationship between the product suppliers and those writing reviews. This is a hot button topic among the mommyblogging sector, and one that will impact dadbloggers.

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By BlackBoxStrategy | Denver, CO [August 21, 2009 01:08:09 pm](#):

One thing that has always struck me is how isolated stay at home parents can become and how social media has helped that tremendously. I'm surprised that more companies are utilizing the networks that SAH parents have been setting up, especially stay at home dads.

<http://blackboxstrategy.net/Blog>

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