This session will cover:

- Basic parts of a blog
- Planning your content
- Optimizing for search engines
- Writing posts
- Engaging your readers
- Sending email notifications
- Repurposing content

What's a blog? (technically...)

- Dated posts that can be organized and published different ways
- Collection of static pages
- Theme to manage visual elements
- Community interaction via comments and social sharing
- Tools to manage images, multimedia, links, users, settings, menus, posts, pages, widgets etc.
- Plugins add functionality
- Self-publish without coding!

Basic parts of a blog

- What's a blog? (technically...)
- Dated posts that can be organized and published different ways
- Collection of static pages
- Theme to manage visual elements
- Community interaction via comments and social sharing
- Tools to manage images, multimedia, links, users, settings, menus, posts, pages, widgets etc.
- Plugins add functionality
- Self-publish without coding!

What's a blog? (technically...)

- Dated posts that can be organized and published different ways
- Collection of static pages
- Theme to manage visual elements
- Community interaction via comments and social sharing
- Tools to manage images, multimedia, links, users, settings, menus, posts, pages, widgets etc.
- Plugins add functionality
- Self-publish without coding!

Basic parts of a blog

- What's a blog? (technically...)
- Dated posts that can be organized and published different ways
- Collection of static pages
- Theme to manage visual elements
- Community interaction via comments and social sharing
- Tools to manage images, multimedia, links, users, settings, menus, posts, pages, widgets etc.
- Plugins add functionality
- Self-publish without coding!

What's a blog? (technically...)

- Dated posts that can be organized and published different ways
- Collection of static pages
- Theme to manage visual elements
- Community interaction via comments and social sharing
- Tools to manage images, multimedia, links, users, settings, menus, posts, pages, widgets etc.
- Plugins add functionality
- Self-publish without coding!

Basic parts of a blog

- What's a blog? (technically...)
- Dated posts that can be organized and published different ways
- Collection of static pages
- Theme to manage visual elements
- Community interaction via comments and social sharing
- Tools to manage images, multimedia, links, users, settings, menus, posts, pages, widgets etc.
- Plugins add functionality
- Self-publish without coding!

What's a blog? (technically...)

- Dated posts that can be organized and published different ways
- Collection of static pages
- Theme to manage visual elements
- Community interaction via comments and social sharing
- Tools to manage images, multimedia, links, users, settings, menus, posts, pages, widgets etc.
- Plugins add functionality
- Self-publish without coding!

Basic parts of a blog

- What's a blog? (technically...)
- Dated posts that can be organized and published different ways
- Collection of static pages
- Theme to manage visual elements
- Community interaction via comments and social sharing
- Tools to manage images, multimedia, links, users, settings, menus, posts, pages, widgets etc.
- Plugins add functionality
- Self-publish without coding!

What's a blog? (technically...)

- Dated posts that can be organized and published different ways
- Collection of static pages
- Theme to manage visual elements
- Community interaction via comments and social sharing
- Tools to manage images, multimedia, links, users, settings, menus, posts, pages, widgets etc.
- Plugins add functionality
- Self-publish without coding!

Basic parts of a blog

- What's a blog? (technically...)
- Dated posts that can be organized and published different ways
- Collection of static pages
- Theme to manage visual elements
- Community interaction via comments and social sharing
- Tools to manage images, multimedia, links, users, settings, menus, posts, pages, widgets etc.
- Plugins add functionality
- Self-publish without coding!

What's a blog? (technically...)

- Dated posts that can be organized and published different ways
- Collection of static pages
- Theme to manage visual elements
- Community interaction via comments and social sharing
- Tools to manage images, multimedia, links, users, settings, menus, posts, pages, widgets etc.
- Plugins add functionality
- Self-publish without coding!

Basic parts of a blog

- What's a blog? (technically...)
- Dated posts that can be organized and published different ways
- Collection of static pages
- Theme to manage visual elements
- Community interaction via comments and social sharing
- Tools to manage images, multimedia, links, users, settings, menus, posts, pages, widgets etc.
- Plugins add functionality
- Self-publish without coding!

What's a blog? (technically...)

- Dated posts that can be organized and published different ways
- Collection of static pages
- Theme to manage visual elements
- Community interaction via comments and social sharing
- Tools to manage images, multimedia, links, users, settings, menus, posts, pages, widgets etc.
- Plugins add functionality
- Self-publish without coding!

Basic parts of a blog

- What's a blog? (technically...)
- Dated posts that can be organized and published different ways
- Collection of static pages
- Theme to manage visual elements
- Community interaction via comments and social sharing
- Tools to manage images, multimedia, links, users, settings, menus, posts, pages, widgets etc.
- Plugins add functionality
- Self-publish without coding!

What's a blog? (technically...)

- Dated posts that can be organized and published different ways
- Collection of static pages
- Theme to manage visual elements
- Community interaction via comments and social sharing
- Tools to manage images, multimedia, links, users, settings, menus, posts, pages, widgets etc.
- Plugins add functionality
- Self-publish without coding!

Basic parts of a blog

- What's a blog? (technically...)
- Dated posts that can be organized and published different ways
- Collection of static pages
- Theme to manage visual elements
- Community interaction via comments and social sharing
- Tools to manage images, multimedia, links, users, settings, menus, posts, pages, widgets etc.
- Plugins add functionality
- Self-publish without coding!

What's a blog? (technically...)

- Dated posts that can be organized and published different ways
- Collection of static pages
- Theme to manage visual elements
- Community interaction via comments and social sharing
- Tools to manage images, multimedia, links, users, settings, menus, posts, pages, widgets etc.
- Plugins add functionality
- Self-publish without coding!

Basic parts of a blog

- What's a blog? (technically...)
- Dated posts that can be organized and published different ways
- Collection of static pages
- Theme to manage visual elements
- Community interaction via comments and social sharing
- Tools to manage images, multimedia, links, users, settings, menus, posts, pages, widgets etc.
- Plugins add functionality
- Self-publish without coding!

What's a blog? (technically...)

- Dated posts that can be organized and published different ways
- Collection of static pages
- Theme to manage visual elements
- Community interaction via comments and social sharing
- Tools to manage images, multimedia, links, users, settings, menus, posts, pages, widgets etc.
- Plugins add functionality
- Self-publish without coding!

Basic parts of a blog

- What's a blog? (technically...)
- Dated posts that can be organized and published different ways
- Collection of static pages
- Theme to manage visual elements
- Community interaction via comments and social sharing
- Tools to manage images, multimedia, links, users, settings, menus, posts, pages, widgets etc.
- Plugins add functionality
- Self-publish without coding!

What's a blog? (technically...)

- Dated posts that can be organized and published different ways
- Collection of static pages
- Theme to manage visual elements
- Community interaction via comments and social sharing
- Tools to manage images, multimedia, links, users, settings, menus, posts, pages, widgets etc.
- Plugins add functionality
- Self-publish without coding!
Planning your content.

**Who is your audience?**

- Adults
- Young adults
- Professionals
- Scientists
- Peers
- Colleagues
- Collaborators
- Local community
- ANR clientele
- FACS clientele
- 4-H youth and/or parents
- Master Gardeners
- ... ????
How are you using your blog?

As a...
- Bulletin board
- News service
- Gathering place
- Community newsletter

For...
- Event promotion
- Education and “how-to”
- Reviews
- Providing resources

Will your blog have...

- Regular sections?
- Collaborative authors?
- Guest authors?
- Special sections?
- Focused categories?
- Moderated comments?

What percentage of your content is...

- Original content, not republished
- Content you wrote, but have published elsewhere
- From other sources
- Event-oriented (meetings, conferences, field days)
- Issue-oriented (food safety, plant disease, wellness, etc.)
- Educational

Content – where is it?

- Look at your calendar:
  - Regular events that happen weekly, monthly or yearly?
  - Seasonal cycles in your subject matter?
  - Big changes in your office, research or subject matter?
- Decide what to write about, for example:
  - Before: prepare for a seasonal issue, plan for an event
  - During: update on what is happening, issues as they unfold
  - After: recap of events, what was decided, what is next
Cherry-pick content

- Keep in mind throughout day (and when planning)
- Jot down ideas and reminders for topics
  - Issues that repeat themselves in your field
  - Instruction that needs extra explanation or support
  - News about current research in your field
  - Common problems your audience needs help with
  - Interesting things happening around you
- Ask for feedback – what does your audience want to know?

Plot your course

- Make an editorial calendar for regular content
  - Assign a topic or idea to cover each week
  - Use Wordpress to make drafts
  - Collaborate with others – ask colleagues to contribute
  - Put writing assignments in your calendar
  - Dedicate time each week to write, find images, edit, etc.
  - Stick to your desired publishing schedule

Course changers and interrupters

- Allow space for spur-of-the-moment content:
  - How will you respond?
  - Determine what is important to share – for your audience and for the issue at hand.
  - Seasonal or event-oriented? You may already be prepared.
- You choose what you publish and when
  - What does your audience expect?
  - When is it okay to deviate from your plans?
- Schedule a “wild card” post – the unknown content that you can still expect, the disrupter in your careful planning.
- Out-of-the-office? Use “publish date” to schedule ahead.

Optimizing for search engines
What is Search Engine Optimization (SEO)?

- The intentional use of search words and phrases to increase your visibility and ranking on search result pages – like Google, Bing, or Yahoo.
- Words, phrases and language that your real, intended, or prospective audience uses to describe your content.
- Make your content relevant to the words and phrases your audience uses in search queries.
  - i.e. - degree, major, study

How do you stand out?

- Users must choose from a set of results, often weighing the titles, descriptions, and URLs of each result against the next.
- Is your content streamlined to fit with these terms?
- Do your posts make a competitive first impression?

Where do you fit in? What’s your niche?

- You are in a county, in the state of Georgia, in the southeast United States.
- You write on behalf of UGA, Extension, and either FACS, CAES, or 4H
- You have expertise in a particular subject matter relevant to your local community and beyond
Establish keywords

- General, high-level – may be repeated themes in your work, the key issues in your community or area of expertise (i.e. body of work, collection of posts)
- Specific, granular – detail of particular topics and current issues (i.e. a single post, often repeating)
- Prioritize keywords – for your blog and for your posts
- Watch traffic to your website, are those keywords showing up?

Use your keywords!

- Blog title – does your name make sense?
- Post title – first impression, is your subject clear?
- Content – body and excerpt text
- Categories and tags – label your content
- Images – include descriptions and ALT text
- Descriptive, contextual link text
  - YES: Go to the CAES OIT Website
  - NO: Click here

Writing posts.
What makes a good post?

- Targeted keywords and topics
- Intriguing, clear title
- Content
  - Clear beginning, middle, and end
  - Includes importance and context to reader
  - Practical application of information
- Call to action (ties to purpose and expected outcomes)
- Short excerpt
- Reader feedback (if allowing comments)
- Related images

SAMPLE POST

SWD survey- your help needed

Please take a moment to fill out this Spotted Wing Drosophila damage survey, from Jane Doe at NC State, here.

Surveys like these are vital to justify funding for research on this destructive pest.

Prepared on 26 March 2015

Title:
+/- Says what it is about, sort of
+ Includes request
  - Passive request.
  - Abbreviated information

Opening paragraph
+ Very clear purpose
+ Authoritative
  - Link is not descriptive
  - Link does not stand out

Closing paragraph
+ Tugs on heartstrings
+ “vital to justify,” “destructive” (power words)

What's missing?
- SEO-friendly keywords
- Why the problem is important.
- Context for local readers
- Question to inspire comments
- Not enough content to lead from excerpt to post
Help Measure Spotted Wing Drosophila’s Impact on Georgia Crops

Spotted wing drosophila (SWD) is a destructive, invasive pest that is harming Georgia’s small fruit crop industry.

Researcher Dr. Jane Doe at NC State is documenting the impact of spotted wing drosophila (SWD) on blueberry, blackberry, cherry, grape, raspberry, and strawberry crops in the southeast region of the United States. Her ongoing, grower-focused assessments have been used to develop research, extension, and education activities on SWD.

If you are a fruit grower, marketer, gardener, extension agent/specialist, crop consultant, or have an interest in SWD, please follow the link below to contribute to her survey. Your input is vital to justify funding for research on spotted wing drosophila.

Take the 2014 SWD Impact Assessment Survey

Have you seen spotted wing drosophila in your vineyard? How has it impacted you this season?

Excerpt (summary):

If you are a fruit grower, marketer, gardener, extension agent/specialist, crop consultant, or have an interest in spotted wing drosophila, read this article to find out how you can contribute to ongoing research in Georgia and the southeast region.

Take the 2014 SWD Impact Assessment Survey

Include an image!
Social psychologist Ellen Langer tested the power of a single word:

"Excuse me, I have five pages. May I use the Xerox machine?"
60% said OK

"Excuse me, I have five pages. May I use the Xerox machine because I'm in a rush?"
94% said OK

"Excuse me, I have five pages. May I use the Xerox machine because I have to make some copies?"
93% said OK

https://blog.bufferapp.com/words-and-phrases-that-convert-ultimate-list
Where is your audience?

- Are they on your blog? Maybe not... yet.
- Advertise blog on listservs, social media, your website
- Set up email notifications for new content
- Post short-form content (and links) in expected places:
  - Calendar of events on your website
  - Facebook status updates
  - Twitter posts
- Post long-form content on your blog:
  - Articles, tutorials, editorials, expert advice, etc.
  - Make value clear

Inspire discussion

- Include an open-ended question
- Ask for specific contributions (ex: finish a list, or personal examples)
- Request ideas, suggestions for things your audience wants to learn
- Shake things up – take a stance on an issue (careful though!)
- Be approachable, consider the tone of your writing

Go fishing for comments...

- Share your post on social media
- Succinct summary, teaser, or lead-in text
- Ask a question, ask for feedback
- Look for responses on other channels (and your blog)
- Ask people to share your post
- Share links with similar authors
- Share your post on your website
- Collaborate with local agents and specialists

Your role in the conversation

- Review promptly – Wordpress will notify you for approval.
- Approve comments as you see fit.
- Acknowledge comments - build trust and show active author participation
- Reward insightful comments
- Be judicious with what you allow (i.e. – screen for obvious SPAM or link bait)
- Controversial comments may be conversation starters or expertise killers – be watchful. [Popular Science]
- Know your comment settings.
“...Even a fractious minority wields enough power to skew a reader’s perception of a story…”

“Uncivil comments not only polarized readers, but they often changed a participant’s interpretation of the news story itself.”

http://www.popsci.com/science/article/2013-09/why-were-shutting-our-comments

Benefits of email notifications

- Dedicated audience
- Content is online for users and also in subscriber’s inbox.
- Drive traffic to your blog
- Maintain interest in your blog
- Send only when new content is published

The important parts...

- Who gets the notifications?
  - Your email address book?
  - A listserv that you own?
  - A listserv that you are a member?
  - An email subscription list?
  - Other people who ask?

- How often do you send it?
  - Daily
  - Weekly
  - Monthly
  - Seasonally

- What is in the notification?
  - Just the links, thank you
  - Links with descriptions, images
  - Custom content for subscribers

- How do you manage it?
  - Your email program
  - A listserv
  - An email newsletter service
Notification – just the basics

**Subject:** Latest Posts from Walk Georgia  
**Message:**  
Check out the latest posts on our blog at [blog.extension.uga.edu/walkgeorgia](http://blog.extension.uga.edu/walkgeorgia).  
Have a good week,  
*Walk Georgia Team*

Notification - with some detail

**Subject:** Best way to burn calories on Valentine’s day  
**Message:**  
Are you looking for motivation this week for your exercise program? Check out these recent posts on our blog:  
- [Best way to burn calories on Valentine’s day](http://blog.extension.uga.edu/walkgeorgia)  
- [Thanks to our participants](http://blog.extension.uga.edu/walkgeorgia)  
- [Take-the-stairs Tuesday!](http://blog.extension.uga.edu/walkgeorgia)  

Have a good week,  
*Walk Georgia Team*

Notification – automate w/ content

- **Subject** – use most recent post heading  
- **Message** – posts with full titles, summaries, images and links  
- **Sign-off** – standard info about your blog and office  
- **Track**  
  - Email notification opens  
  - Click through rate from email to blog article
How do you automate this?

- Create a Mailchimp.com account (email newsletter service)
- Send to whom? Set up subscription list
  - Migrate existing lists you manage
  - Embed sign-up form on your blog
  - Invite additional subscribers via email
- Send what? Set up RSS-driven campaign
  - Upload UGA Extension/CAES email newsletter template
  - Create RSS-driven campaign – will need RSS feed link from blog
  - Modify campaign design to match blog
  - Schedule to send new content daily, weekly or monthly

Email newsletter resources

- Blog subscribers and email updates
  [http://www.caes.uga.edu/unit/oit/blog/blog-subscribers.html](http://www.caes.uga.edu/unit/oit/blog/blog-subscribers.html)
- Archived trainings
  [http://www.caes.uga.edu/unit/oit/trainings/archives.html](http://www.caes.uga.edu/unit/oit/trainings/archives.html)
  - Getting started with eNewsletters
  - Using MailChimp to Create Extension-branded Newsletters
- Email Newsletter DIY Guide
  [http://www.caes.uga.edu/unit/oit/email-newsletters](http://www.caes.uga.edu/unit/oit/email-newsletters)
**Should I publish a PDF/Word file?**

- Not good for casual readers
  - Takes extra software to open
  - Mobile users have to download the document
  - Difficult to access phone numbers and addresses for mobile
- Text is not indexed in your blog search results
- Difficult to track hits/opens/downloads to PDFs
- Good for printing, has distinct layout
- Are you sharing an editable resource?

**Can I post a picture of the file?**

- Not a good idea
  - Text documents are not meant to be consumed as pictures
  - Quality of text may be poor, difficult to read
  - Resolution of image is limited (how much can you zoom in?)
  - Pictures of text are illegible to:
    - Screen readers that read text aloud
    - Search engines
    - Those visually impaired
- Instead find other way to publish content:
  - Include text directly in your post
  - Find a link online to original document

**Assume readers will not open files**

- How can you make documents easy to:
  - Find?
  - Use?
  - Consume?
  - Share?
  - Discuss?
- Consider the benefits of extra work:
  - More readers
  - More participants at events
  - Interaction you can track

**Republishing documents**

- At minimum
  - If an event or announcement:
    - Put all key information into the post (date, place, event, contact)
    - Direct people to linked PDF if they need to print out a flyer
  - If an article:
    - Make a case for opening the additional file
    - Write summary that states value and relevance of file
    - List high points of file, main ideas, etc.
    - Write enough to tag, categorize, and include keywords
- Ideal
  - Strip the content from the PDF or Word document
  - Republish it as a text-based blog post
  - Create an excerpt/summary
Examine how the content is formatted and positioned.

Highlight the text with your cursor.

Use your cursor to select usable chunks to copy-and-paste.

Encourage others to prepare documents for you in ways you can use them.

Are columns...

- True? - Uses column setting in Word
- Visual only? Text is separated into columns by tabs and spaces
Troubleshooting columns

Yes! Columns are true. Content stays together.

No. Columns only visual. Content skips between columns.

Mark Your Calendars!

Ag Forecast Seminar
Wednesday, January 21
10 a.m. – lunch, meal provided
Toombs County Agri-Center, Lyons
Registration required: $30/person
Register at www.georgiaagforecast.com

Area Haylage Seminar
Monday, January 26
10:30 a.m., followed by complimentary lunch
Vidalia Onion and Vegetable Research Center
Bernard Adam will be guest speaker
This meeting is being held by Lassiter Implement

Farm Bill Update
Tuesday, February 3rd, 2015
6:30 p.m.
County Farm Bureau
This meeting is being held by Farm Bureau

Content from specialists

Different ways you’ve received it
1. From an email newsletter or notification
2. From a website or blog
3. From an email message
4. From a phone call, interview, work session, etc.

Different ways to publish
1. Link to provided content (look online for original, encourage specialists to post original information on their sites)
2. Write summary - frame in your context, to your audience
3. Include quotes from provided content
4. Avoid republishing document on your blog/site
5. Write original content from your experience in your voice

Moving forward!

Tip
Add an extra space at the end of your text before creating columns.
Will it be perfect?

- No... but it will be published.
- Write often and find your voice.
- Listen to your community.
- Be patient.
- Keep writing!

Requesting a blog

- On your own, decide:
  - What will it be about?
  - What will you name it?
  - How often will you write?
  - Will you have co-authors?
  - Will you have blog subscribers?
- Write to Mikey Greenland at mikeyg@uga.edu
  - Your name
  - Your office name
  - Name of your blog
  - Desired address - blog.extension.uga.edu/???
  - Information for anyone collaborating with you.

Online help resources

- Training archives
  http://www.caes.uga.edu/unit/oit/trainings/archives.html
- Blogging DIY Guide
  http://www.caes.uga.edu/unit/oit/blog
- Web Style Guide
  http://www.caes.uga.edu/unit/oit/web-style/index.html
- Email newsletter DIY Guide
  http://www.caes.uga.edu/unit/oit/email-newsletters
Questions?
Mikey Greenland: mikeyg@uga.edu
Emily Pitts Ennis: epitts@uga.edu

Visit http://www.caes.uga.edu/unit/oit/blog for more resources and WIMBA archives.