Blog Proposal

Background

It seems clear that the blog isn't working at the moment. There are a few potential reasons:

- Lack of a functioning, active group to manage it

- General idea that blog posts are fully fledged "articles" creates high barrier to entry

- Lack of visibility on website means people potentially don't see the point of writing content

- Everyone is already busy with other things

- The blog system through BrowserCMS certainly leaves something to be desired

Content

We currently already have a few sources of "regular content" from Climate Camp:

- Twitter

- Facebook page

- Newsletter

Twitter messages are already displayed on the front page of the website and this seems to work well. It is suggested that instead of considering the blog to be a separate "thing", we begin cross-posting content which is posted on Facebook, and also create a new blog "post" for every newsletter which goes out.

This has the immediate advantage that there is already a process for these things and there are already people who produce this content, regularly. They could (hopefully) be persuaded to post to our blog at the same time.

Software

If people are being expected to regularly post things to the blog, they need good software to do so. It is proposed that we abandon the BrowserCMS blog system and instead install WordPress to manage the blog section of our site. (BrowserCMS would continue to be used for static pages on the website.)

WordPress is a mature, open-source blogging platform. It should be possible to integrate it such that there is no real difference in the external appearance of the blog. People have asked for comments to be enabled, and that could of course happen at the same time.

I estimate this work would take a day or maybe two. I currently have the time to do this so

could turn it around pretty quickly.

Home Page - Feeds Section

At the moment the "feeds" section of the home page contains:

- Blog posts

- Press releases

- "Media Circus" - this is a feed pulled from Google News with news items related to climate camp

- "Climate Campers Online" - this is a feed pulled from various Indymedia sites

- Twitter

"Media Circus" has been a problem in the past because it has sometimes come up with either irrelevant news articles, or ones which we really don't want to be promoting on our front page (for example our lovely friends at the Daily Mail).

"Climate Campers Online" rarely gets updated, as there are very few articles about climate camp being posted to Indymedia regularly.

It has also been suggested that we have some sort of "events calendar" containing a listing of the events which get sent out in the newsletter. This is already happening but it is not currently promoted on the front page.

I propose we scrap the "Media Circus" and "Climate Campers Online", add in an events listing and give more precedence to the blog. Relevant articles from Indymedia could always be "guest posted" to the blog as and when they are published, and this does not exclude campers from contributing articles to the website, as our current blog policy gives anyone the ability to propose a blog article.

The new 'feeds area' layout would be along the lines of the excellently drawn wireframe on the next page.

Blog

Press

Events

Twitter