


HOW TO: Add Multimedia to Your Blog

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This post originally appeared on the [American Express OPEN Forum](#), where Mashable regularly contributes articles about leveraging social media and technology in small business.

A website without multimedia is like a cupcake without icing: Functional but lacking. These days, all manner of web pages from huge company sites to small business blogs are expected to add audio, photo, or video to their posts and homepages.

While this all sounds well and good for multimedia companies that produce endless amounts of content, small businesses with text-based websites can run into trouble finding and providing appropriate content. The real trick is adding multimedia that enriches your site, product, or brand without taking away from your company's core message and aesthetic. And how do you get a rich multimedia experience without hiring a coder?

This is rarely easy. To help, we've collected some simple resources to add audio, photo or video to your blog.

The Basics

For most blog hosting sites, including [WordPress](#) and [Tumblr](#), most multimedia is handled through embed codes. Don't worry, you don't need to know HTML; you just need to know where the button for viewing and editing HTML on your blog post is. All embeds can be handled as simple copy-and-paste jobs using these resources.

WordPress, Tumblr and any other half-decent blog host will have ways to add multimedia in their dashboard. Some of these are better than others. Tumblr tools are pretty intuitive whereas WordPress sometimes glitches when switching between HTML and visual formats. To save you all sorts of headaches, the following resources work off embed codes. This means you can see and edit all your multimedia visually, then copy-and-paste the final code into your post as HTML. Simple as that.

1. Audio

Audio is often overlooked as a multimedia device when compared to photo and video. There are, however, some great ways to include your favorite songs, or even some original audio, into your blog.

[SoundCloud](#), an online platform for receiving, sending and distributing music, offers a ton of options, allowing you to upload any track from your computer and share it instantly. You can add track descriptions, catalogue numbers, a website to purchase (if applicable), keywords, artwork and even BPM and track type. While it's a format more geared towards musicians, it's a terrific way to include an audio intro or CEO interview in your post. After you save changes, click share to get the embed code or click any of the icons in the dropdown menu.

SoundCloud is completely free and includes smart features like the ability to add comments at specific time markers (perfect for breaking a long clip into chapters). Lastly, make sure you have the rights to your audio if you are using it for commercial purposes.

2. Photo

When dealing with photos, two services immediately come to mind — [Picasa](#) (from [Google](#)) and [Flickr](#). Rather



than taking those routes, we wanted to find you some completely free options that don't require you to post your photos to a cloud account.

Uploading individual photos is a snap on most blog sites. Adding an embeddable slideshow, however, can make your post look more dynamic. It's also a way to include a collection of photos without stretching your post well beyond the page break. [Slide.com](#) let's you create slideshows with a variety of effects from images on your computer. You can further customize by theme, size, background, and color, and even add music and establish privacy settings. A preview will pop up as you edit. Hitting "save" will bring up your embed code, or you can post directly to your blog using the icon menu on the left.

For those looking for a more professional approach, check out [Photopeach](#). Slideshows can be customized with opening titles and end credits, giving the impression of a complete show. There are fewer options for editing the appearance of the slide, but sharing is still a cinch from the menu that pops up on the right side of the slideshow.

3. Video

When it comes to video, the easiest option is usually to go straight to the source. Three popular video sites — [YouTube](#), [Vimeo](#) and [blip.tv](#) — all come with a simple "embed" button prominently displayed near the bottom of their videos. Most will allow you to edit the background and size of the video before you create your code.

Using [Google can help you find](#) exactly what kind of video you're looking for. You can search by keyword, duration, date posted and host site (excluding Vimeo and blip.tv).

[Mixpod](#) is also an interesting alternative for creating video (or audio) playlists. Originally designed as an audio tool, Mixpod's player also allows you to create a video playlist. If you want to use a video that isn't by a musician, simply click on "add URL" to directly add whatever videos you want to embed. You can even rename and reorder your playlist however you'd like. Mixpod gives you a ton of freedom to select different players, themes and detailed color palettes. Word of advice: If you're using video, make sure you select a player that can play it — some aren't compatible.

BONUS: Twitter Widgets and Suitable Fonts

Embedding a [Twitter](#) widget can be a great, simple way to show news around a specific keyword. While there are tons of ways to add a specific stream — including [Hootsuite](#) and built-in devices from your blog — Twitter provides the easiest one to use. [From Twitter's site](#), we recommend selecting "search widget." This lets you choose a title, search keyword, color scheme and widget size.

Fonts can convey a lot about your brand or personal identity. "[The LeBron James/Comic Sans angry letter](#)" is one example of someone choosing an inappropriate font. As silly as it seems, font choice can hurt the impact of your message.

If you like playing with fonts, try comparing a ton of variables using [Typetester](#). While you can't directly embed your preferences, it can give you a good sense of what typeset suits you. WordPress also has [a handy resource](#) for figuring out which fonts you can actually use and how to go about setting your general preferences in HTML.

More blogging resources from Mashable:

- [10 Tips for Corporate Blogging](#)
- [HOW TO: Build a More Beautiful Blog](#)
- [5 Ways To Turn Your Traffic Into Valuable User Data](#)
- [40+ Web Design and Development Resources for Beginners](#)
- [HOW TO: Create a Successful Company Blog](#)

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