



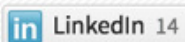
By **RACHEL FOSTER** published SEPTEMBER 27, 2012

Case Study: A Community that Provides Trusted Advice and Drives Early-Stage Interactions and Opportunities

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The challenge: Find ways to attract and engage early buy-cycle stage leads

Prior to launching the **expertIP blog**, Allstream had redeveloped its website to house information about its products, along with white papers that discuss how to use and implement these products. While the website proved to be a valuable tool for converting later-stage leads, Allstream knew it was missing out on engaging a huge audience — those just starting out or very early in the buying cycle.

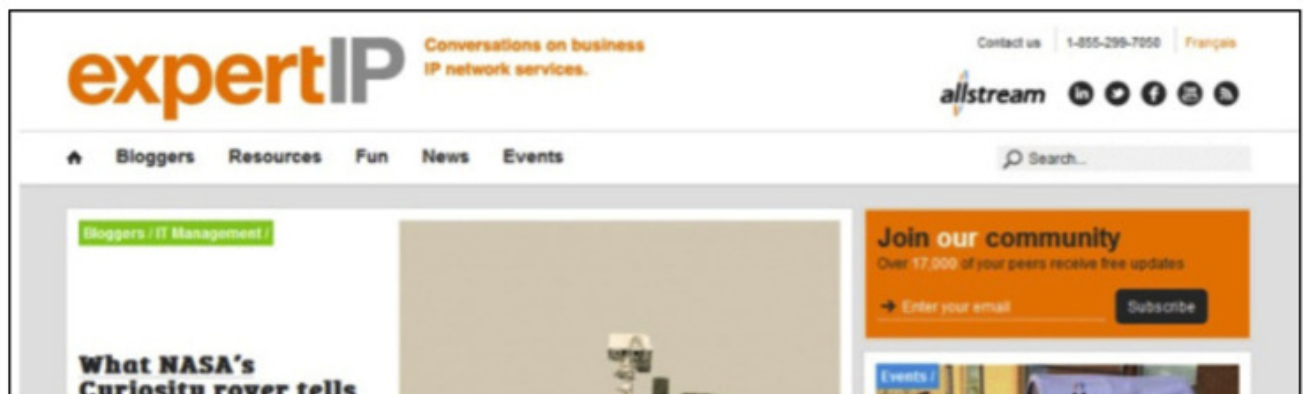
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"We wanted to create content that would provide folks just figuring out that they had a challenge or opportunity we could address with value and keep them connected to Allstream as they sought to learn more as their needs developed," says Jeff Gluck, Senior Manager, Web Marketing, Allstream.



The implementation: 7 keys to corporate blogging success

Here are seven things Allstream and Concrete learned as they launched expertIP and would like to share with other organizations that are thinking about starting a corporate blog:

1. Have a strong understanding of your voice: One of the biggest challenges of corporate blogging is developing a consistent voice. To get your voice right, you first must have a solid understanding of your target audience. Who are they? Where do they hang out? What types of content do they find valuable?

To reach its audience, Allstream wanted to tone down its "corporate" or "sales" speak: *"We're a fairly conservative organization and tend to rely on more formal language," says Gluck. "However, we knew that we needed to use friendly, everyday language, as the blog is not the voice of the organization talking to the market, but the voice of individuals within the organization. It's no longer 'business to business' but 'people to people.'"*

2. Make a business case: To make the business case for its new content marketing initiative, Allstream needed a number that would define the project's cost. Allstream totaled all of the costs, along with what it could realize in terms of value (i.e., increased findability, brand awareness, etc.) to prove that a blog would make sense from a business standpoint.

3. Develop an expert team: Allstream and Concrete knew they needed a top-notch team to create a blog that would set Allstream apart from the competition. Concrete brought Allstream a full team of experts — including designers, developers, freelance writers, and SEO professionals.