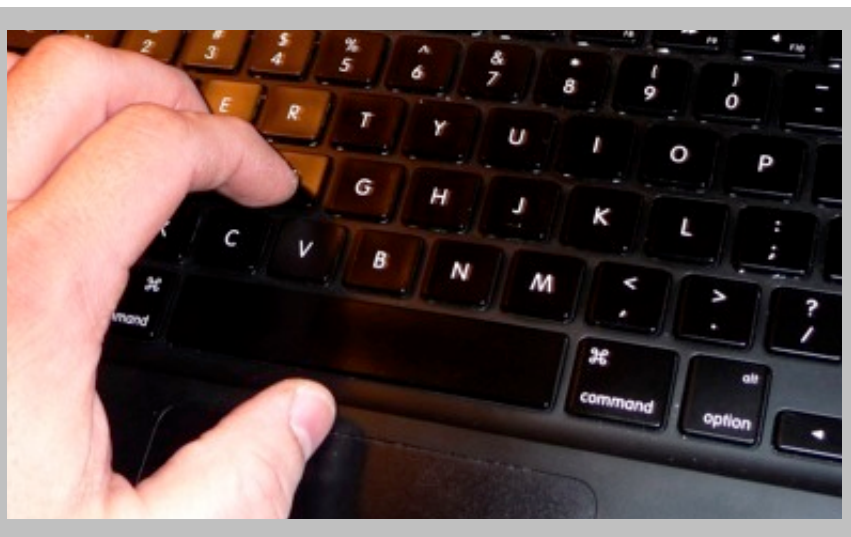


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Telling Your Story

A quick introduction to blogging

As a waiting parent, how often are you asked by friends, family, coworkers, and random people in the neighborhood:

- How much longer is it going to take?
- Why are you being fingerprinted again?
- Where are you going?
- Isn't there anything you can do to make it go faster?
- Do you have any pictures?

With paperwork, preparing your house, foregoing vacation days, and waiting in lines at government offices, why should you invest the time to blog about your adoption experiences?

Starting now to tell your story will train your well-wishers to regularly visit one place for the freshest news. (Imagine the time you will save by not repeating the same anecdotes five or ten times per day!) More importantly, the practice will get you in the habit of observing details and setting aside just a few minutes each night to reflect, with as much or as little as you feel like saying.

As your DTC and LID milestones slip by, and the long wait for referral stretches out before you, writing helps pass the time constructively and lets you see just how much you have actually accomplished. Reading the blogs of other waiting parents gives you the comfort of knowing that what you feel is shared. And if you need inspiration during the long wait, the sites of families who have completed the journey bear witness that the process does have an end.

Eventually your child will be matched, and you'll be boarding an aircraft for the big trip. Yes, you could call home each night, but international calls are expensive, you can't send video, and when you're ready to talk, depending on where you are, it could be the middle of the night in the States. Your support network back home has pulled for you for years; they want to see pictures of your child when they log on each morning at work,

Related Entries

- ▶ [Email and Internet Safety](#)

External Links (will open in a new window)

This article was adapted from one I wrote for our good friends at Children’s Home Society & Family Services.

Useful blogging resources:

[Blogger](#)

[WordPress](#)

[Sitemeter](#) (to keep track of your visitors)

[Clustrmaps](#) (to see your visitors on a free map)

A few adoption blogs for examples:

[Checking Boxes](#)

[China Adoption Talk](#)

[Jadeyn’s Journey](#)

Contact us with your ideas, questions, and feedback! [weninchina@mac.com](mailto:weninchinainfo@mac.com)

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not in two weeks when you’ve returned!

But ultimately your choice to blog is not about entertaining your loved ones or streamlining communication. What you write each day becomes the first draft of the history you’ll share with your child. The posts become beacons that help you keep your own memories in order: What did we have for dinner the third time at Lucy’s Bar? When did we visit the farming village? And you can always go back to expand on what you’ve written, edit comments, and add more pictures. If you don’t take these notes while you are in the moment, it will be much harder weeks or months later to recollect what you did, saw, and felt.

And as your child grows up, he or she will have an incredible record to better connect to personal origins, and appreciate your emotions and experiences as parents.

Getting Started

There are many free blog hosting sites: the two most frequently used are [WordPress](#) and [Blogspot \(also known as Blogger\)](#). Both services walk new users through setup with an easy step-by-step approach. You’ll choose your name and password, layout, color scheme, and design elements. Both sites offer numerous “widgets” such as clocks, maps, news feeds, and more to personalize your space. Expect to spend two hours or less to construct a basic site.

Think about how you want to handle you and your child’s privacy. Blogging does not have to mean your personal lives become an open book; you may not want strangers to know the details of why you chose adoption, or what your daughter looks like. Fortunately, when you set up your site, you have options to limit access to your blog to those you’ve specifically invited or block it from Internet search engines such as Google. We took an even simpler path: keeping [our blog](#) open for everyone to read, but making the choice to not use our family name anywhere on that site.

When you have finalized your settings, the actual process of posting is essentially the same as writing an email. Merely log in with your password, choose “create new post”, and start writing. Attaching photos or videos can be done with the click of a button.

On The Road

Don’t have a laptop? We didn’t when we took our trip, but it wasn’t a problem, as our fellow travelers kindly let us use theirs for an hour or so each night. Our hotel in Nanning, amazingly, featured an in-room PC. Every hotel we encountered had a business center with computer access (although we wouldn’t say it was “cheap”).

If you do bring a laptop – and if you have one, you should – you’ll find that hotel rooms are often wired for in-room Internet access; just get the password from the front desk. Wi-Fi is not ubiquitous; although, you may come across free hotspots. Upload speeds certainly varied, but overall were similar to broadband in the US.

All Internet traffic going in and out of China passes through one government-controlled filter. Beijing uses this to selectively limit what its citizens can see and say, and as a result many foreign websites can be blocked – temporarily or permanently. What this means for blogging is that, while you can post and edit your messages, you might not be able to view the finished product until you get home. For more about this, I’ve written a [separate piece](#) on weninchina.com.

When You’re Home

.....
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The reasons to start blogging are the same reasons to keep at it once you've returned. And you may find a new reason: you like doing it. The pressure is off; no more essays for your dossier, no urgent demands for more pictures of the grandchild. It's just the pleasure of telling a good story about what happened today or sharing a funny photograph. It's a letter to your child twenty years from now. It's a spark of hope for another waiting parent two years behind you.