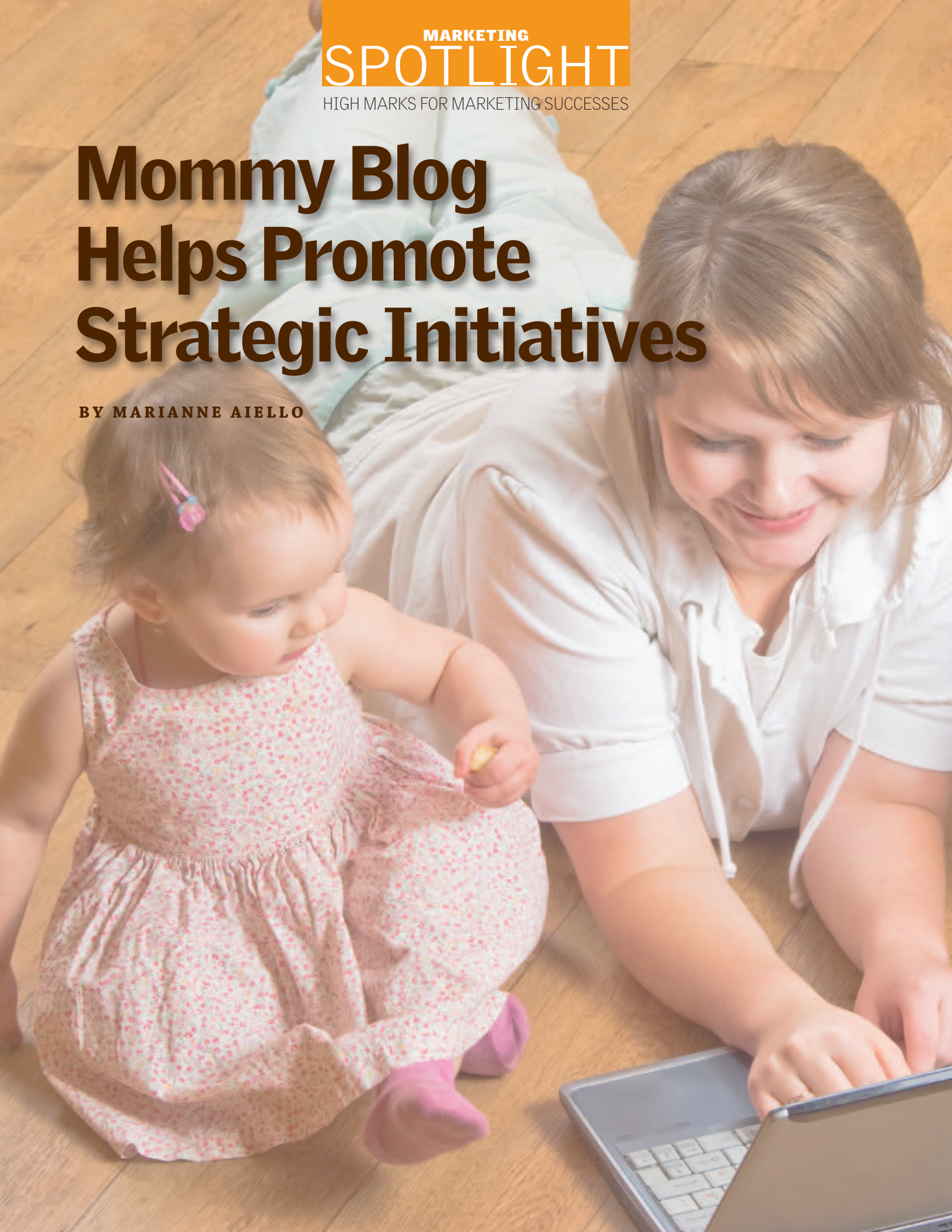


MARKETING  
**SPOTLIGHT**

HIGH MARKS FOR MARKETING SUCCESSES

# Mommy Blog Helps Promote Strategic Initiatives

BY MARIANNE AIELLO



**D**uring a recent strategy session for two newly affiliated hospitals, marketing department leaders were chatting about the challenges of being working mothers. It's hard enough deciding what to feed your children for dinner, they commiserated, let alone decide on a healthcare provider. Then the proverbial lightbulb ignited.

"We're always trying to tell people about our services, but we wondered if there is something that could bring more than just healthcare decisions to moms," says **Michelle Davis**, director of marketing operations and community development at Lowell (MA) General Hospital. "When you don't have a lot of time, searching the Web to find what you're looking for isn't really practical."

### PROMOTING A NEW PARTNERSHIP

To solve this problem, Lowell General marketers developed a mommy blog they hope will be a one-stop website for a mom's every need. Although the "Merrimack Valley Moms" blog will include children's health information, the content will largely be driven by four mommy bloggers from the community who will be free to write about any child-related topic they'd like.

"Moms want to have authentic conversations and are using social media vehicles to come together and exchange information," says **Dan Dunlop**, president of Jennings, a Chapel Hill, NC, agency that worked on the project. "The information they gather from these online interactions, whether from mommy blogs or Facebook groups, has a credibility because it is coming from real people—not marketers."



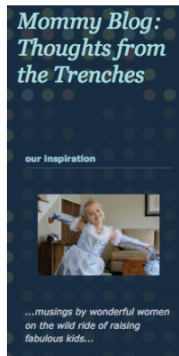
## Me A Mommy Blogger? What Would I Blog About?

MAY 6, 2010

by dandunlop

tags: mommy blog, lowell general hospital, mommy blog contest, thoughts from the trenches, mommy trenches

If you've heard about our contest to recruit mommy bloggers for the Merrimack Valley Moms blog (see details in [earlier post](#)), you may have asked yourself: "What would I have to blog about?" It's a good question. So, we thought it would be helpful to give you a feel for what motivates some of the most popular mommy bloggers out there.



One of the top mommy blogs is "Thoughts from the Trenches." Check them out at <http://mommytrenches.blogspot.com>. It's written by a collection of about eleven women and they do a great job on their home page explaining what drives them to blog. Here's an excerpt from the introduction to their blog that helps define their inspiration:

#### Mommy Blog: Thoughts from the Trenches

##### Who are we?

We are mothers with something to say. While we're busy with the daily grind of raising our wonderful kids (among us 20 and counting), we think big (or small, or just plain funny) thoughts. And our kids inspire us. We write our memories, revelations, and kicks-in-the-pants here to share them and to save them.

##### Why this blog?

Because it's not just misery that loves company. It's joy, laughter, tears, successes, celebrations, thoughts, happy days and sad that all love company.

So what would you blog about? Your life. The

We invited you to tell us why you'd make a great entry on the wall of Lowell General Hospital's Facebook page. <http://www.facebook.com/LowellGeneral> or a video that you upload to the Facebook page. I

Possibly related posts: (automatically generated)

The pediatric health content will be provided by experts and physicians from Lowell General and Tufts Medical Center, a Boston-based organization that recently aligned its Floating Hospital for Children with Lowell General, which is located about 35 miles away in the suburbs. The blog includes both Lowell General and Tufts branding.

"The partnership is about bringing the best in care to the Merrimack Valley so moms don't have to deal

with the time considerations and stress of driving their sick child into Boston to see a specialist," Dunlop says. "The mommy blog furthers that objective by creating a virtual gathering place where moms can come together and talk about what's important to them. The hospitals are facilitating information sharing



# SPOTLIGHT

TOTAL FANS ON MAY 08					
MALE	FEMALE		MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
			29%	69%	
		13-17	3%	2%	5%
		18-24	7%	17%	24%
		25-34	9%	21%	30%
		35-44	5%	16%	21%
		45-54	4%	9%	13%
		55+	2%	4%	6%
<b>TOP COUNTRIES</b>		<b>TOP CITIES</b>		<b>TOP LANGUAGES</b>	
United States	734	Lowell	252	English (US)	722

**THIS GRAPH FROM LOWELL GENERAL'S** Facebook account shows how female- and mom age-dominated its fans are.



and creating a bond that goes deeper than simply providing pediatric and maternity services.”

### FINDING MOMMY BLOGGERS

To select the four mommy bloggers from the Lowell community, the 217-bed hospital is holding a three-week-long contest during which local moms can submit text or video blogs explaining why they would be a great resource for area mothers. The four winners will each receive a \$250 prize and the opportunity to blog once per month.

After the first week of the contest, two moms had applied, mommy blog visits increased by 30%, and Lowell General’s Facebook page gained 20 more fans and an increase in posts and comments, which marketers view as improved engagement. Once the four mommy bloggers are in place, marketers expect local moms to get even more involved.

“We want to find mommy bloggers that people would want to listen to and trust,” Davis says. “We felt that

it really shouldn’t be us—it should be our community talking to each other, and at times we can provide the healthcare expertise that we bring to the table. We’re really looking for the community to make the content.”

### PROVIDING EXPERT CONTENT

In between mom blog posts, Tufts and Lowell General experts will provide helpful tips and information.

“We can integrate health topics into the blog with guest bloggers who are experts in the field because we have not only Lowell General to pull from, but all the resources at Tufts,” Davis says. “The mommy bloggers won’t be health experts, but they will create the audience for us.”

Eventually, Lowell General will integrate the mommy blog into its much larger social media program and will expand to include seminars on topics such as demystifying social media for parents and the best online resources for quality health information.

“The ultimate goal for the blog is for it to take on a life of its own



as the place area moms go for information about being a parent in the Merrimack Valley area—a place where they can commiserate, celebrate, and maybe find inspiration,” Dunlop says. “Our hope is that it will take on the authentic voice of the real moms who contribute posts on a regular basis. We also see it as an opportunity for the hospitals to share important health information that area moms will value.” *huma*