

People are sticky

 blog.edtechie.net/digital-implications/people-are-sticky/



Do I win the “eeeeuuwww” blog post award? There’s a concept in web design about [stickiness](#), ie content that has people returning or spending longer. So in web design this might be having up to date content, nice design, etc. In light of my [previous post about OER](#) (read the comments by the way, some great stuff from Pat Lockley, Jim Groom, Lorna Campbell and Alan Levine in there) I’ve been thinking about why we like blogs and are a bit meh about OER sometimes (some OER is great of course, and many blogs are woeful, but you get my drift).

Stickiness, for want of a better, less punchable phrase, may be the answer. Blogs are generally more personal, social content. People are sticky – we like reading certain people’s take on a subject precisely because it is human. I don’t want the BBC interpretation of a new technology, I want to know what Audrey Watters thinks about it. Two things about stickiness: it’s a continuum, not a binary; you don’t always want or need something to be sticky.

On the first point, people are good at being sticky (I’m already annoying myself with the term, so I can imagine how you feel). Indeed in a world where our jobs may be taken by robots, stickiness may be one of our defining attributes. It’s nebulous, shifting, personal and rooted in thousands of years of culture and millions of years of evolution. But a newspaper, project, organisation or website can be sticky (because it is made up of good contributors). Some things are more sticky than others and to different people, so it’s a hard quality to pin down and provide a template for that is reproducible.

On the second point, you need to determine if stickiness is an attribute that is important. For example, if I’m creating

an open textbook, it needs to be great for that course, but it doesn't really need to be something that people want to come back repeatedly. This may get at the distinction Jim was making in the comments about why he likes people and not resources. So, "how much stickiness do we want?" is now a valid project question.

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