

How does Raymond decide what to post on any particular day?

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Occasionally somebody asks about the timing of an entry I've written and wants to know how far ahead with this blog thing I really am.

To give you an idea of how far in advance I write my blog entries, I wrote this particular entry on February 13, 2008. Generally, the articles are published in the order I wrote them; this particular entry ended up on February 27, 2009 because that was the next available open day. If the big news topic of February 27th, 2009 happens to be related to this entry, it's just a coincidence.

Now, with a buffer of over a year, I do have quite a bit of leeway in choosing when any particular article is published. Although articles in general just get slotted in for the next open day, I will occasionally arrange for one to come out on a thematically-related day. Sometimes the connection is blatant, like writing about time and time zones on the Fridays before Daylight Saving Time transitions, or writing about Hallowe'en on, well, Hallowe'en. More often the connection is low-key, like telling a story about the economics of parking tickets on a day when parking is free in Seattle or warning about fake guacamole on the Friday before the Super Bowl. And sometimes the connection is impossibly obscure, like taking a story that I know a friend will like and slotting it in on their birthday, anniversary, or some other day meaningful to them.

(To answer Paul's specific question: I found the article on guacamole and said, "That would be a great article to use for the Super Bowl." Since I already had a Super Bowl article picked out for 2007, the guacamole article was slotted in for 2008.)

There are other patterns you may have picked up on:

- Mondays are usually spent "answering viewer mail" (i.e., taking topics from the Suggestion Box).
- Less technical articles appear towards the beginning of the week; more technical articles appear later in the week. Tuesday in particular tends to get the funny stories.
- There is usually one e-mail related posting per month.

- There is usually one Microspeak posting per month.
- Sometimes an entire week is devoted to a theme, such as the annual CLR Week.
- An unusually short or unusually long technical post is usually balanced by an amusing non-technical post. (I have a stash of about a hundred of these “light diversions”.)
- I tend to avoid technical topics on major holidays.

But generally, it’s just a FIFO queue.

Oh, and right now, the queue is full up through the beginning of June 2010.

Raymond Chen

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