



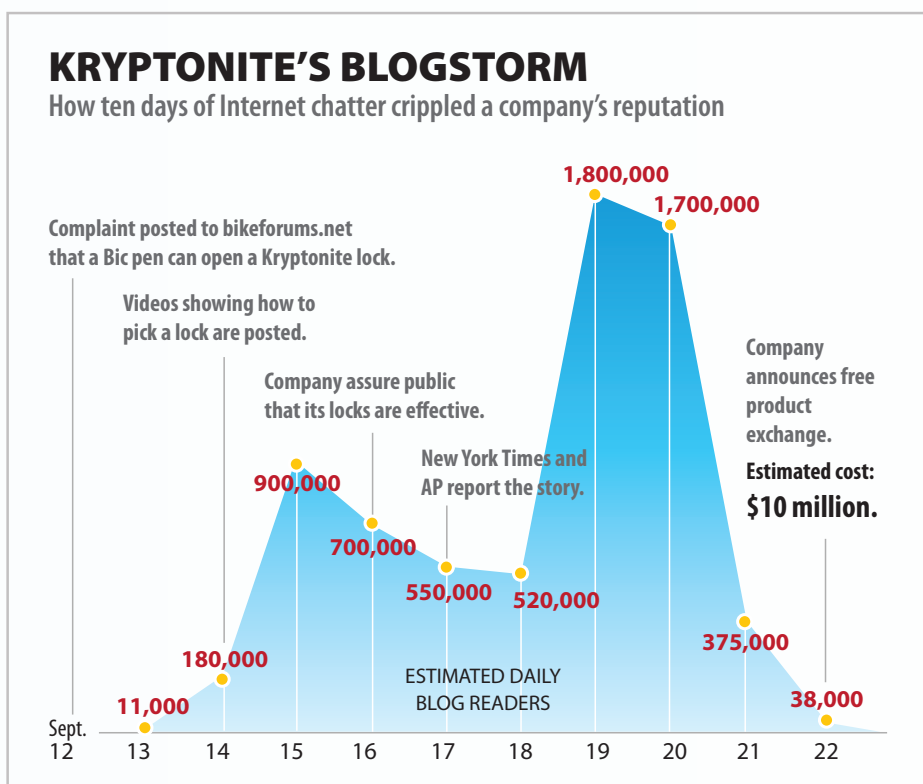
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Dealing With The Other
Side of Influence

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The Kryptonite lock incident has become a cautionary tale for businesses who may believe they can afford to ignore blogs. This case demonstrates the dynamic between bloggers and traditional media journalists that significantly amplified the impact of the story.



A video demonstrating how to pick these expensive bike locks with an ordinary Bic pen appeared on a blog and quickly reached hundreds of thousands of blog readers a day. When the company issued a statement downplaying the issue saying the locks “continue to present an effective deterrent to theft” the NY Times and the AP picked up the story, exposing the problem in newspapers all across the country. With the increase in awareness, conversations in the blog world reached millions of people.

By the time the company announced the product exchange plan almost a week later, the “make-good” received very little coverage. Even today the story lives on: lock buyers today will find today turns up 8 negative stories about this incident in the top 10 results of a Google search for “kryptonite lock”– but no mention of the problem being corrected and affected locks having been replaced.

Blogging guru and former Microsoft technology evangelist, Robert Scoble, told Communications World he stays on top of consumer discussions so he can immediately respond to incorrect information. “Somebody can post something totally false about you. But you can come to that story right away and answer it and kill a rumor before it turns into a New York Times article. Once it is printed in the Times, people think it must be true.”