



SATURDAY, APRIL 30, 2005

When Blogs Attack

by Michael in New York on [4/30/2005 11:15:00 AM](#)

A blog of disgruntled employees at Los Alamos is focusing attention on the turmoil and anger created by the current director G. Peter Nanos. The [New York Times](#) reports:

Four months of jeers, denunciations and defenses of Dr. Nanos's management recently culminated in dozens of signed and anonymous messages concluding that his days were numbered. The postings to a public Web log conveyed a mood of self-congratulation tempered with sober discussions of what comes next....

Dr. Nanos would not comment. A spokesman for Los Alamos, Kevin Roark, said false rumors of the director's resignation had circulated for months....

Several outside experts said that the director's quick departure was inevitable and that the blog's attacks were playing a significant role.

"Nanos is leaving," said Greg Mello, director of the Los Alamos Study Group, a private organization in Albuquerque that monitors weapons laboratories. "The blog changed the climate, giving people an outlet they didn't have before."

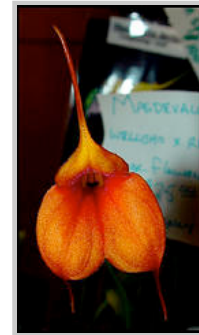
Blogs seem to be everywhere. But this one is unusual, in that the Los Alamos National Laboratory, isolated in the mountains of New Mexico, has a long history of maintaining the highest level of federal secrecy. The lab's very existence was once classified. Today, barbed wire rings many of its buildings, federal agents monitor its communications, and its employees are constantly reminded that loose lips sink ships.

The blog (lanl-the-real-story.blogspot.com) went public in January and since then has registered more than 100,000 visits, with more than half a million pages viewed and more than 5,000 comments, some extensive. Discussions run on a variety of topics, from the sanctity of retirement benefits to the likely identity of the next contractor who will run Los Alamos.

One more reason for business and government to take blogs very seriously indeed -- and for people who contribute to blogs with postings and comments to be cognizant of the impact we can have. With great power comes great responsibility, as Peter Parker was once told.



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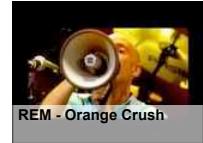
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