Huffington Post

What's it about: Variety of topics; mainly political but also:
- media, business, entertainment, living, style, etc

Who writes the articles:
- Core group of bloggers: Huffington, Conyers, Shearer, Sekoff
- 9000 bloggers

Who follows the blog:
- Targets liberal readers
- 1m+ comments on the site each month
- 20-40m unique visitors per month in March 2010
- Technorati rank of 1

Notes: upscale content generator; good to wrap ads around it
- bought by AOL for $300m

Sources:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Huffington_Post

TechCrunch

What's it about: Web 2.0 and Silicon Valley
- Profiling startups, reviewing internet products, breaking tech news

Who writes the articles:
- Michael Arrington + group of writers (6)

Who follows the blog:
- 10m+ unique visitors per month
33m page views per month  
Technorati rank of 2  
4.5m RSS feed subscribers  
NYTimes tech editor  
Notes: bought by AOL for $65m, content generator for ads  
Source:  
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/TechCrunch

The Oil Drum  
What's it about: Issues on energy, peak oil, sustainability  
Who writes the articles:  
Core group of editors (9), plus selected contributors (8)  
Facilitated by: Institute for the Study of Energy and Our Future  
Who follows the blog:  
well-known for rigorous, quantitative analysis of energy production and consumption  
read by a diverse collection of public figures, including:  
Notes: seems to go for quality of articles and elite readership  
Sources:  
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Oil_Drum

List of Influential Bloggers?  
How did they reach influential status?  
Huffington Post  
a bit of marketing savvy and deep pockets could go just as far as geek credibility, and get there faster.
Influential blogs are probably always quite good. But just being good may not be sufficient to be widely read. Either they seem to have been there forever and gained credibility the long way, or the blog had a break and gained publicity, and stayed in the public eye since.

Sources:

http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2008/mar/09/blogs
http://www.blogginglabs.com/influential-bloggers-website-owners/
http://northxeast.com/nxes-fifty-most-influential-bloggers/

**Stories of Influential Bloggers Making a Change?**
Blog Action Day, by change.org
One day of conversing on a single subject, 2010 = water
5600 bloggers, 143 countries, 40m readers
Kristine touched audiences and developed a strong following by writing about the tragic 2009 death of her six-day-old daughter from an undetected congenital heart defect. This birth defect affects one in 100 newborns and can often be diagnosed in utero or at birth through simple, non-invasive tests. As a means of coping with her grief and educating parents-to-be, Kristine writes about her process, posts current information about congenital heart defects (CHDs), and advocates for universal screening for CHDs.

Katherine Stone, *Postpartum Progress*

After experiencing a severe bout of postpartum depression in 2001, Katherine became an advocate for women with perinatal mood and anxiety disorders. Her own feelings of fear and isolation inspired her to take action to help others. In 2004 she created the blog *Postpartum Progress*, now the most widely-read blog in the United States on postpartum depression (PPD), postpartum anxiety, postpartum psychosis and other mental illnesses related to pregnancy and childbirth.

Maggie Ginsberg-Schutz, *Violence Unsilent*

While researching and writing an article profiling seven survivors of domestic violence, Maggie, a freelance journalist, created *Violence UnSilenced* in February 2009, to shed light within the blogging community on domestic violence and sexual abuse/assault by giving survivors a voice. The site is supported by countless bloggers and also has been featured on iVillage, BlogHer, Momocrats, and mentioned in the Huffington Post, raising awareness of this very important issue. Alltop created a new domestic violence channel after learning about Violence UnSilenced.

Debbie Dubrow, Michelle Duffy, Pam Mandel and Beth Whitman, *Passports With Purpose*

Passports with Purpose unites travel bloggers through an online fundraiser each December. Debbie Dubrow, Pam Mandel, Michelle Duffy and Beth Whitman, the
bloggers behind Delicious Baby, Nerd’s Eye View, WanderMom, and Wanderlust and Lipstick, respectively, launched a travel-inspired fundraising initiative in 2008. Participating bloggers procure travel-related items for an online random drawing. Using Twitter, Facebook, blogs, and other social media channels, Passports with Purpose earned $7,500 for Heifer International in its inaugural year and nearly $30,000 in 2009 to build a school in Cambodia. The goal for 2010 is to raise $50,000 to build a village in Southern India. (http://www.passportswithpurpose.com)

- Megan Jordan, Velveteen MindMegan Jordan, a blogger and Gulf Coast resident, draws upon her personal experience of the devastating effects of Hurricane Katrina, her lyrical voice, and her highly-engaged audience at Velveteen Mind to help others in her region rebuild. Forming a partnership with Tide detergent and its “Loads of Hope” disaster relief program, Megan hosted a holiday “blogging carnival” about the meaning of hope. Megan and several other bloggers joined the “Tide Loads of Hope” truck in New Orleans, providing laundry services to residents in need during the holiday season. (http://www.velveteenmind.com/)

Lessons for Rise of Influence
- Make it easy for contributors to contribute
- Have a point of view
- Provide a safe environment
- Build on your big hits
- consistent: quality content on regular basis
- well-written
- unique
- focus
- injects the personal
- analyze the data
- offer details, not regurgitation
- thought provoking
- exude passion
- instructional
- networked - be out there, guest posts, comments, references to others, etc

Sources:
http://www.techipedia.com/2010/influential-bloggers-traits/

On other note...
Change.org, victories:
UCLA to re-open islamic studies program
Congress Votes To Save AmeriCorps
Olga Zanella, Future Dentist and DREAMer, Will Stay in the U.S.
Tortured Human Rights Activists Freed in Bahrain
Domino's Ends "30 Minutes or It's Free" Guarantee in South Korea