

## Setting Up an RSS Aggregator

## What is RSS, anyway?

- *RSS can stand for Really Simple Syndication (RSS 2.0), Rich Site Summary (RSS 0.91, RSS 1.0), or RDF Site Summary (RSS 0.9 and 1.0).*
- *But all you really need to know is that RSS is a simple XML-based system that allows you to subscribe to websites.*



These icons are often used to indicate a feed is available for a site.

XML

RSS

## A Sample RSS Document

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<rss version="2.0">
  <channel>
    <title>LIS Events</title>
    <description>Events of interest to GSLIS students, staff, faculty and alumni.</description>
    <link>http://my.simmons.edu/gslis/resources/calendars/events.shtml</link>
    <lastBuildDate>Tue. May 30, 2006</lastBuildDate>
    <pubDate>Tue., Feb. 27, 2007</pubDate>

  <item>
    <title>Setting Up An RSS Aggregator Workshop</title>
    <description><![CDATA[<p>When: Tuesday, April 24&mdash;1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.; Thursday, April 26&mdash;6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.<br />Where: Boston Campus, Palace Road Building, Room P-213<p>]]></description>
    <link>http://my.simmons.edu/gslis/resources/calendars/events.shtml#rss</link>
    <pubDate>Mar. 27, 2007</pubDate>
  </item>
</rss>
```

## Atom

- There is another XML syndication format, Atom, in common use.
- Atom differs slightly from RSS, but its overall purpose is the same
  - Wikipedia says:  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RSS\\_\(file\\_format\)#Atom](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RSS_(file_format)#Atom)

## RSS Aggregators

- An RSS aggregator is a program that collects links to new content on sites to which you've subscribed.
- There are lots of aggregators available.
  - Desktop programs
  - Web-based accounts
  - Some web browsers
  - Some mail clients


## Setting Up a Bloglines Account

- Go to <http://www.bloglines.com> and click "Sign up now!" Follow the instructions to register.
- Once you have your account set up, log in.

## Importing Subscriptions

- Import subscriptions to library-related blogs
- <http://www.bloglines.com/public/gslislab>
- Click on "Export subscriptions"
- Select "Save to disk"
- Next, go to your Bloglines page and click "Import subscriptions." Enter the location of the export.opml file you just saved, then click "Import"
- You're done!

## Manually adding a feed

- Now we'll manually add a feed – the GSLIS events calendar.
- Open a new browser window and go to <http://my.simmons.edu/gslis/resources/calendars/events.shtml>
- Look for the  RSS link and click it.
- Copy the address of the feed from the toolbar, then go back to your Bloglines page and click the link that says "Add." Paste the address of the feed into the box and click subscribe.
- You're done!

## Even easier ways to add feeds...

- Firefox 2.0 and Internet Explorer 7 have one-click subscription. Just click on the orange RSS icon in the toolbar to subscribe. (For IE you'll need to download [the Bloglines add-on](#))
- You may also see icons specific to Bloglines listed on pages with feeds.
- You can also add feed from within Bloglines – just use the search bar at the top right-hand corner of your screen.

## Bloglines Playlist

- Bloglines also lets you create subsets of your feeds called "playlists." For example, if you like to start each day by reading the weather, the latest Red Sox news, and your favorite comics, you can create a playlist with just these feeds on it.
- To create a playlist, click the "Playlists" tab and then click "Add." You will be presented with a list of feeds you can add to your playlist.

## Using Bloglines

- Bloglines is fairly user-friendly, but here are some tips and tricks for using it.
- Click on the "My Feeds" tab. This is where you can view your feeds and read new content.
- Click on "Edit" to modify or delete feeds. You can also organize your feeds into folders.
- If you want to save a post for later, you have several options. You can email it to yourself (or someone else), save it to your clippings folder, blog it, or check the "Keep new" button.

## Help! I just deleted unread posts!

- Once you click on a feed, Bloglines assumes you have read all the entries. If you click by mistake, don't worry. You can get the entries back by clicking on the feed title again, then selecting the appropriate time frame.

## Public vs. Private Subscriptions

- Bloglines allows you to share your subscriptions so friends and colleagues can see what you're reading.
- Click on the "Account" link in the top right-hand corner of the page. Select "Blog Settings" and fill in your user name. Then indicate whether you would like your blog and blogroll to be public or private.
- If you make these public, you can still make individual subscriptions private.

## Other RSS Aggregators

- Sites such as [My Yahoo!](#) and [Google Personalized Homepage](#) allow you to subscribe to feeds.
- Some other web-based aggregators are [Rojo](#) and [NewsGator Online](#).
- On Windows, you can use [FeedDemon](#), [NewsGator for Outlook](#), or [Attensa for Outlook](#).
- On Mac OSX, [NetNewsWire](#) is a popular program.

## Creating RSS Feeds

- We won't go over how to manually create RSS feeds during this workshop, but if you're a blogger chances are your blogging software already has this feature built in.

## Resources

- Handouts from the TechLab download center:  
[http://my.simmons.edu/gslis/techlab/docs/rss\\_intro.pdf](http://my.simmons.edu/gslis/techlab/docs/rss_intro.pdf)  
[http://my.simmons.edu/gslis/techlab/docs/rss\\_bloglines.pdf](http://my.simmons.edu/gslis/techlab/docs/rss_bloglines.pdf)
- MIT Libraries RSS Introductory Course:  
<http://news-libraries.mit.edu/techtalks/rss-part-1>  
<http://news-libraries.mit.edu/techtalks/rss-part-2>
- Bloglines Add-On for Internet Explorer 7  
<http://www.windowsmarketplace.com/details.aspx?view=info&itemid=3084964>