

RSS: Replacing Aggravation with Aggregation

Rebecca Cooper

rebeccacooper@gmail.com

Blogs, blogs everywhere

- There are approximately 175,000 blogs registered each day (technorati.com, 2007)
- Blog hopping (going from blog to the next) can be very time consuming. Although this may be a great way to pass some idle moments, when you're reading blogs for a purpose (e.g., looking for the latest news in your field), it's not the most efficient technique...

RSS

- **RSS** is a family of XML file formats for web syndication used by websites and weblogs. The abbreviation is used to refer to the following standards:
 - Rich Site Summary
 - RDF Site Summary
 - Really Simple Syndication

What does RSS look like?

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="utf-8" ?>
<rss version="2.0" xmlns:media="http://search.yahoo.com/mrss/"
  xmlns:dc="http://purl.org/dc/elements/1.1/">
  <channel>
    <title>Controlled Vocab</title>
    <link>http://www.flickr.com/groups/arlisna/discuss/72157594203387383/</link>
    <description><p><a href="http://www.flickr.com/people/bryanloar/">B.Loar</a> posted a
      new topic:</p> <p>I've asked everyone that contributes to this group to tag their photos
      with ARLIS/NA. Should we tag our photos with something more specific. Are there
      other terms we should agree on? (Use, Use For) <br /> <br /> I would think using
      broader terms (BT), narrower terms (NT), & related terms (RT) would be going
      overboard. However, I think a very small set of agreed upon terms might be helpful.
      Then, again, how user friendly is that?</p></description>
    <pubDate>Tue, 18 Jul 2006 05:43:12 -0800</pubDate>
    <dc:date.Taken />
    <author>nobody@flickr.com (B.Loar)</author>
    <guid isPermaLink="false">tag:flickr.com,2004:/grouptopic/72157594203387383</guid>
  </item>
</channel>
</rss>
```

Huh?

- RSS Feeds are like transmitters that enable a website to send out a signal when there is new content.
- That signal can be harnessed by an RSS Feed Aggregator
- SO... instead of going to all those weblogs, you can sit back, and let the content come to you.

Aggregators

- There are many different types
 - Web-based (Bloglines, Google Reader)
 - Desktop (FeedReader, FeedDemon)
 - E-mail (Thunderbird, GMail, R|Mail)
 - Web Browser (Firefox plug-ins)
 - Mobile phone

Bloglines (web-based)

The screenshot shows the Bloglines website in a Mozilla Firefox browser window. The browser's address bar displays the URL <http://www.bloglines.com/myblogs>. The page title is "Bloglines | My Feeds (118) - Mozilla Firefox".

The main content area features a welcome message for "ursasine" and a search bar. Below this, there are navigation tabs for "Forums" and "Search". A prominent blue banner for the "Institute of Museum and Library Services" (IMLS) is visible, indicating it has 82 subscribers. The banner includes a "Search for Posts" field and a "More Options" link.

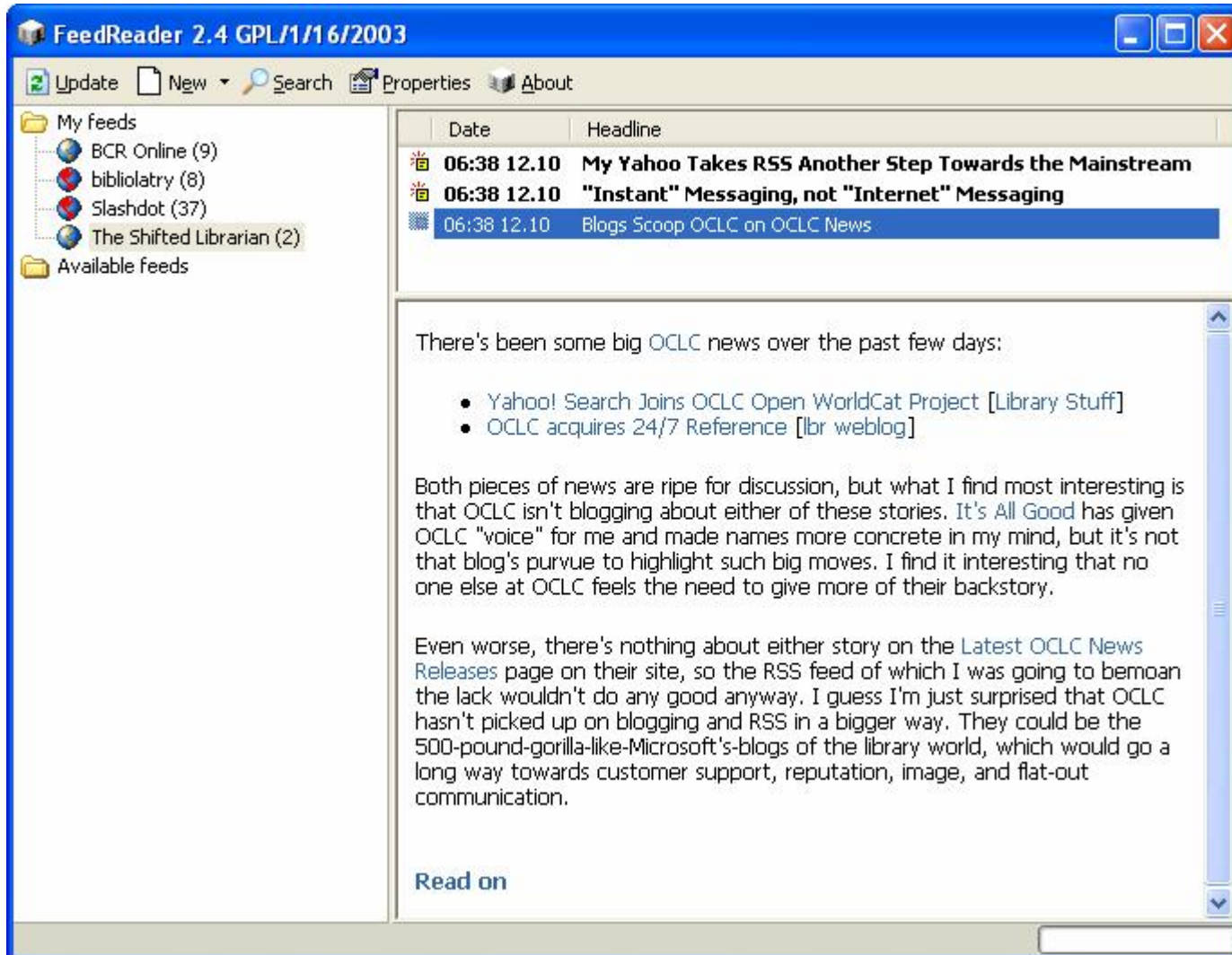
The main article displayed is titled "New Project Profile: Manhattan and New Orleans Children's Museums Offer Mutual Support in Turbulent Times". The article text reads: "When disaster struck, the Children's Museum of Manhattan and the Louisiana Children's Museum offered each other much-needed assistance. An encouraging word, a timely donation, and a play-based program forged an enduring bond and created role models for the rest of us." The article is dated "Wed, Apr 25 2007 2:45 PM" and includes links for "Email This" and "Clip/Blog This".

Below the main article, there are two more article teasers: "Dr. Radice's Statement on the Loss of Kitty Carlisle Hart" and "IMLS Invites Proposals to Produce 2008-2009 WebWise Conference".

The left sidebar contains a list of feeds under the heading "20 feeds". The feeds listed include: "Bloglines | News (1)", "Friends (9)", "Grad School (62)", "jobs (1)", "Libraries", "Lisnews", "NYT > Arts (10)", "Institute of Museum and Library Services", "What's New - Philadelphia Museum of Art (10)", "High Museum of Art | Calendar", "The Dahesh Museum of Art", "[ArLiSNAP] (10)", "ARLIS DC-MD-VA Chapter Announcements (10)", and "Women and Art Round Table - ARLIS/NA (5)".

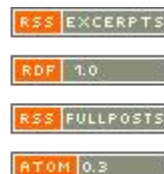
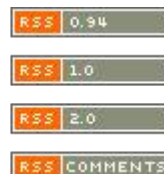
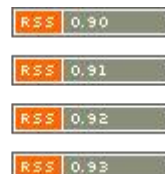
The bottom of the browser window shows the status bar with "Done" and the user's email address "ursasine@gmail.com".

FeedReader (Desktop)




What should I add?

- Add the resources you'd usually check while doing research...
- Look for the RSS or XML button...



How do I create a feed for my site?

- Hand-rolled
You type the markup and the content
- Semi-automated
You type the content, software generates the markup. (ListGarden.com)
- Fully-automated
You put the content in your blog and software generates a feed based on that content.
(Feedburner.com )

Use it For

Yourself

- Keeping up with news
- Professional development
- Saving time
- Collection development assistance

Your Users

- Push news to your users so they can read it in the manner they choose
- New acquisitions, library announcements, etc.
- Fresh content, all the time

Notable blogs & feeds

- **ArLiSNAP**
www.arlisnap.org
- **New York Times Arts Section**
www.nytimes.com/pages/arts
- **Art News Blog**
www.artnewsblog.com
- **Tame the Web**
www.tametheweb.com/ttwblog

- **Musematic**
musematic.net

As well as RSS feeds for publishers, book dealers, tables of contents, podcasts, and more.

Questions?

Rebecca Cooper

rebeccacooper@gmail.com