

Wyoming State Library

RSS FAQ

What is RSS?

RSS is a family of file formats for Web syndication used by (among other things) news websites and weblogs (online journals).

The technology of RSS allows Internet users to subscribe to websites that have provided RSS feeds; these are typically sites that change or add content regularly. To use this technology, site owners create or obtain specialized software that presents news articles in a list, giving a line or two of each article and a link to the full article or post. Unlike subscriptions to many printed newspapers and magazines, most RSS subscriptions are free.

How is RSS Used?

RSS is widely used by the weblog community to share the latest entries' headlines or their full text, and even attached multimedia files. In mid 2000, use of RSS spread to many of the major news organizations, including Reuters, CNN, and the BBC. These providers allow other websites to incorporate their "syndicated" headline or headline-and-short-summary feeds under various usage agreements. RSS is now used for many purposes, including marketing, bug-reports, or any other activity involving periodic updates or publications.

What Does a RSS Feed Look Like?

The screenshot shows an RSS feed titled "Wyoming State Library News". The feed header includes the title, a subtitle "A publication of the Wyoming State Library", and metadata: "26 Items | [Sort Oldest First](#) | Updated: Fri, Jan 13 2006 9:15 AM". The feed contains three items, each with a title, a short description, and a "Keep New" checkbox. Callouts identify the "RSS Feed Name" (the title), "Short Description" (the text below the title), "Link to More Information" (the text below the short description), and "Feed Items" (the entire list of items).

Item Title	Short Description	Link to More Information
Guide to licensing and acquiring electronic information	In New Publications Provides advice on selecting, acquiring, and licensing electronic material for both public and academic libraries.	Email This Clip/Blog This
E-metrics for library and information professionals	In New Publications Provides an introduction to E-metrics and explains how you can use electronic data capture to measure value and performance.	Email This Clip/Blog This
Disaster planning: A how-to-do-it manual for librarians with planning templates on CD-ROM	In New Publications Provides step-by-step instructions for developing a disaster plan. CD-ROM contains sample plans, templates, and other electronic resources.	Email This Clip/Blog This

Example of posts to the Wyoming State Library News RSS Feed

How Do You Read RSS Feeds?

A program known as a feed reader or aggregator can check RSS-enabled web pages on behalf of a user and display any updated articles that it finds. It is now common to find RSS feeds on major websites, as well as many smaller ones.

Client-side feed readers and aggregators are typically constructed as standalone programs or extensions to existing programs like web browsers. Such programs are available for various operating systems.



<http://www.thinkmac.co.uk/newsmac/>



<http://www.feedreader.com/>

Web-based feed readers and news aggregators require no software installation and make the user's "feeds" available on any computer with web access.



<http://www.bloglines.com/>



<http://www.google.com/reader/>






<http://my.yahoo.com/>



<http://www.newsgator.com/>

How Do You Find RSS Feeds?

On websites, RSS feeds are typically linked with an orange rectangle  that often contains the letters XML  or RSS .

There are also search engines that specialize in finding content published by RSS feeds.



<http://www.blogdigger.com/>



<http://www.feedster.com/>

Information for this FAQ came from the **Wikipedia**: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RSS>.
For more information on the RSS Feeds available from the Wyoming State Library,
go to <http://will.state.wy.us/feeds/news.html>.