Really Simple Syndication
Discussion Points

● What is RSS
● A Brief History of RSS
● RSS Uses
● How RSS Works
● Setting Up an RSS Feed
● Finding RSS Feeds
● Using an RSS Feed
● Final Thoughts
Here’s the Dictionary Stuff

RSS

Noun
Computing

1. a standardized system for the distribution of content from an online publisher.
2. creating an RSS feed that others can subscribe to.
RSS or Really Simple Syndication is a web feed that allows users and applications to access updates to websites in a standardized, computer readable format.

These feeds can allow a user to keep track of many different websites in a single news aggregator.

The aggregator will automatically check the RSS feed for new content, allowing the list to be automatically passed from website to website or from website to user.
History of RSS

- The RSS format was preceded by several attempts at web syndication that did not achieve widespread popularity.
- RDF Site Summary, the first version of RSS, was created by Netscape. It was released in March 1999.
- After abandonment by Netscape, RSS 1.0 was published in August 2000.
- RSS 2.0 released through Harvard under a Creative Commons license in July 2003.
- Aside from a few variants, RSS hasn’t changed since then.
RSS is not as popular as it once was but still has many uses.
Uses of RSS

- Podcasts
- News Headlines
- Web Page Changes
- On Line Auctions
- Blog Updates
- Daily Jokes, Recipes, Astrology, Deals, etc.
And much, much more.
How RSS Works

1) RSS works by having the website author maintain a list of notifications on the website in a standard way. This list of notifications is called an "RSS Feed".

2) RSS provides very basic information to do its notification. It is made up of a list of items presented in order from newest to oldest. Each item usually consists of a simple title describing the item along with a more complete description and a link to a web page with the actual information being described.
3) RSS Feeds are coded with XML instead of HTML

```xml
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<rss version="2.0"
 xmlns:content="http://purl.org/rss/1.0/modules/content/"
 xmlns:wfw="http://wellformedweb.org/CommentAPI/"
 xmlns:dc="http://purl.org/dc/elements/1.1/
 xmlns:atom="http://www.w3.org/2005/Atom"
 xmlns:sy="http://purl.org/rss/1.0/modules/syndication/"
 xmlns:slash="http://purl.org/rss/1.0/modules/slash/"
>
<channel>
  <title>Bulkly</title>
  <atom:link href="http://bulk.ly/feed/" rel="self" type="application/rss+xml"/>
  <link>http://bulk.ly</link>
  <description>Add Massive Amounts of Content To Your Buffer Queue In a Few Clicks</description>
  <lastBuildDate>Sun, 08 May 2016 04:03:49 +0000</lastBuildDate>
  <language>en-US</language>
  <sy:updatePeriod>hourly</sy:updatePeriod>
  <sy:updateFrequency>1</sy:updateFrequency>
  <item>
    <title>Social Media Automation &amp;#8211; How To Be Balanced &amp;#038; Not Look Like a Robot</title>
    <link>http://bulk.ly/social-media-automation</link>
    <comments>http://bulk.ly/social-media-automation/#comments</comments>
    <pubDate>Fri, 06 May 2016 10:30:55 +0000</pubDate>
    <dc:creator><![CDATA[Chris Makara]]></dc:creator>
    <category><![CDATA[Uncategorized]]></category>
    <guid isPermaLink="false">http://bulk.ly/?p=1096</guid>
    <description><![CDATA[Social media automation. For some people that phrase makes them cringe. duties. I get it, we all have 24 hours a day to get stuff done. I have 24 hours in a day. You have 24 ]]]]></description>
</item>
</channel>
</rss>
```
That’s Enough About XML Programming

- If you’re interested, there are many how-to sites
- It isn’t as hard as it looks.
- Usually you just have to copy and paste to code a web site.
Remember!

We are interested in finding the web site’s

RSS Feed URL
Finding RSS Feeds
Most sites with RSS Feeds display an RSS icon.

1) Click to get the URL

If no Icon displayed, things to try:

1) Do a site search for rss - example WBRZ2

2) Add “/rss” or “/feed” to the url – example WAFB9

3) Do an Internet search for the rss feed
Feed Readers

- Feed Reader usage has declined since 2013 when Google quit supporting Google Reader
- Most Feed Readers work in a similar way
  1) Give it your list of RSS Feeds (URL)
  2) It gives you a list of post
- It’s really that simple
Types of Feed Readers

1) Web-Based – Usually a website where your feeds and posts are listed.

2) Desktop – An application is installed on your computer.

3) Browser – major web browsers have built-in solutions. These are slowly being phased out.

4) E-Mail Based – I’ll be demonstrating this shortly.

5) Podcasts – Which we discussed last week.
Feed Reader Comparison Links  
(if you’re interested)

- Lifewire
- The Geek Page
- Lifehacker
- My Favorite Site for free stuff
- Search the Internet
Many E-Mail Programs support RSS Feeds, either natively or with add-ons.

I use **Thunderbird Email** for my RSS Feeds
1) Click the RSS Feed
2) Name the Account (can be changed later)
3) Open Account Settings
4) Click Manage Subscriptions Tab
5) Enter URL
6) Click the Add Button
7) Click the Close Button

It’s that simple. Let’s add **Today I Found Out**
Some Final Thoughts

● Although RSS usage is declining, it still has many advantages.

● There are sites that claim to make an RSS Feed for any site. I’ve found that these don’t usually work very well
What’s The Next SIG Topic

Have you got a topic idea? Want to learn about something special? Tell me anytime you see me or contact me online.

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