

Chapter 4 - Tracking Other Blogs

B6C4-1

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Two things power the blogging world: writers + the community in which they function
Get involved! → links + references

- 1) Leave pithy comment on influential blog
- 2) Reference another's blog post in 1 of yours + link to it
- 3) Write something highly relevant to current event

Need to know, to do + this) what's going on in industry
Need to listen to the conversation, + join in

This chapter = similar to Book 7 Chapter 2 ^{but} not and B6C1
but it's not - B6C1 = how to find right topic

B6C4 = how to track relevant blogs on ongoing basis

I. Understanding Feeds + Feed Readers

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all blogs generate list of updates in an RSS feed
= standard for delivering list of headlines
+ articles or article summaries as a
streamlined text file
= built using XML

Format + useful for humans but it is for computers!
Allows feed readers (type of computer software)
to retrieve headlines + summaries from
almost every blog on Internet

+ to deliver them in a pretty, easy-to-read format
Every time blogger publishes new post, blogging software
adds the post to the RSS feed.

When you sign in to feed reader it alerts you to new posts
Can subscribe to feeds from websites you like

FRs allow you to collect info from many diff. sites, blogs, ^{sources} news +
+ organizing the info you need, + forget the rest

II. Setting up Google Reader: www.google.reader.com
 595 = 1 of most popular; easy to use, c powerful features
Subscribing to feeds is easy

1. Click Add Subscription link
2. Type Web address of blog to which you want to subscribe
3. Click Add

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To subscribe to blog from its homepage

1. Look for RSS subscription or icon - click it
2. Choose Google Reader
3. Click OK.

To add RSS feed manually:

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1. On blog's homepage, find RSS link or icon
2. Right-click icon
3. From menu, click copy
4. Log into Google Reader
5. Click Add Subscription
6. Paste link into subscription field & click Add

III. Using Folders & Tags to Organizing Your Feeds

A. Using folders to organize feeds

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1. Log into Google Reader
2. Click feed you want to place into folder
3. At upper Right open Feed settings drop-down
4. Click New Folder

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To create many folders at once:

1. Log into Google Reader
2. At bottom Left, click Manage Subscriptions
 Produces list of every feed & their folder

(599)

add change or delete folders as desired

Use simple, clear folder names

B. Using tags to organize feeds

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Tags = keyword or phrases you assign to a single post
≠ to an entire feed

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1. Click the post you want to tag

2. Click Edit Tags at bottom of post

3. Type the tags you want, separated by comma then Save
To tag posts w/o touching mouse, press T on keyboard

Enter tag in the Edit Tags field that appears

To view all articles with a given tag:

1) Click that tag at bottom of the article

2) Click tag name on lower left of Google Reader window

IV. Reviewing Feeds Fast with Hot Keys

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Google Reader + most standard feed readers include

Hot key = key that allows you to use your mouse
to rapidly view, tag, or manipulate each postGoogle Reader Hot Keys

J - moves down to next item

K - moves up to previous

Shift + N - moves you to next folder

Shift + P - previous

T - opens the tagging menu

Shift + S - opens an item on your Shared Items page

To find more hot keys, look in Google Reader Help for
"keyboard shortcuts"

suggested process - use J key to jump thru unread items

- 1) If I see a headline that catches my eye, stop & read
- 2) If it looks interesting tag it eg - Tools, tips
- 3) If I want to share it with my team, press Shift+S

Remember - you're not here to read every item.

You're here to build a reference library

V. Creating a Shared Items Page

603 Easiest way to share items = click the share icon
or press Shift+S,

To refine your shared posts, use tags

To create a custom shared feed:

1. Create a tag & tag a few items
2. Click Manage subscriptions in Lower L of window
3. Click the Folders & Tags tab
4. Click the share icon next to tag you want → Public
- 604 5. Click View Public Page next to tag made public

Email link to others with whom → share posts

They'll be able to subscribe to all the items
to which you add this now public tag

Shared feeds = doubly handy:

1. Create a page others can see items you consider important
2. Create an RSS feed

Now team has 2 options for finding what they want

VI. Avoiding Information Sanity

1. Organize, don't read - tag it & file it
2. Declare bankruptcy - mark all as read & start over
3. Be picky - clean reader ruthlessly once/month