

Selection 2.0: Using RSS To Enhance Print, Multimedia, And Web-Based Resource Selection

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There are two things that have recently changed how I approach the selection of resources for teachers and students. First, it is the growing role that the amateur plays in my learning. Secondly, it is the ability to use RSS to bring information to me.

In the 21st century, technology enables anyone, any amateur, to post and share information on the Web. As an avid blog reader, I read the blogs written by classroom teachers, teacher-librarians and other educators. These are people who write for a wide audience, but not for professional journals. I have come to value and respect the opinions they hold and when they recommend a resource, I bookmark it using my social bookmarking tool, *Delicious* (<http://delicious.com/>). I also tag it with appropriate key words that enable me, and others to find the resource easily.

However, the real joy with using *Delicious* is that it provides an *RSS feed* (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RSS>) for each tag. RSS is a Web-based application that allows you to ‘subscribe’ to a site, and then notifies you when new information has been added. The article, *Are you connected? The RSS aggregator as a professional development tool for teacher-librarian* (<http://teacherlibrarian20.wikispaces.com/RSS>), originally published in *The Medium*, (Vol 45, No 3 Spring 2006), explains RSS and aggregators.

We can use *RSS* to train information to come to us. *NetVibes* (<http://www.netvibes.com>), a personalized start page or personal Web portal organized into tabs, with each tab containing user-defined modules is my personal choice for having my desired information flow to me. The modules allow the addition of news feeds, html (useful for adding widgets), links, a wide variety of ready-made widgets such as adding *Facebook* and *Twitter feeds*, IM chats, and/or your own selected feeds. The ability to add my own feeds is important to me feeds from my [Delicious tags](#) can be imported. I decided to use *NetVibes* because after experimenting with other options I found that it allows me to share public pages and it handles the *Delicious* feeds without complications.

On my public page (<http://www.netvibes.com/donnadesroches#General>), I created subject and grade level tabs. I then began adding my modules usually using the *add feed* module for my delicious tags, for example: *math primary* (http://delicious.com/ddesroches/primary_math). Occasionally, I add an individual link using the link module when I want to add an individual Web site, for example: *Mrs. Cassidy’s Grade One Class* (<http://staff.prairiesouth.ca/~cassidy.kathy/index.html>). The html model is used when I want to add a widget such as the *search widgets* (<http://access.gale.com/widgets/>) from Gale Infotrac (<http://infotrac.galegroup.com/itweb/saskschregion6>).

Now whenever I bookmark and assign tags to an item in *Delicious*, it automatically updates the feed in *Netvibes*. This is time-saving method of updating links means I do not have to continually add links to a Web page, thus, leaving me with more time for reading blogs and copying and pasting URLs. Now that is innovation!