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[Nov](#) [December](#) [2005](#) [Jan](#)

| S | M | T | W | T | F | S |
|----|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | <u>1</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> |
| 4 | <u>5</u> | <u>6</u> | <u>7</u> | <u>8</u> | 9 | 10 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

My Links

- [RSS 2.0](#)
- [Atom 0.3](#)
- [Contact](#)

Search

 [Go](#)

Archives

- [December 2005 \(15\)](#)
- [November 2005 \(8\)](#)
- [October 2005 \(6\)](#)
- [September 2005 \(2\)](#)
- [August 2005 \(7\)](#)

News

For me sharing of thoughts and information is what blogging is all about. This way we can learn from each other.

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[» Blogs that link here](#)

 **Technorati**



Canada's Association of Information
Technology (IT) Professionals

Resident Bloggers

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[John Oxley](#) Director IT Pro Evangelism
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Navigation

- [Home](#)
- [Blogs](#)

Post Categories

- [Industry Perspectives \(rss\)](#)
- [MS News \(rss\)](#)

Blogs and RSS Deserving Attention from IT Managers?

John did a great blog on RSS that is very useful, but let us step back and talk about corporate Blogs which drive RSS. I believe Blogs are the richest form of current information available and if you don't tap into them extensively as IT Managers/Professionals, you are missing a great resource. And, they represent a real opportunity for you to stay ahead of your clientele if you initiate one for your company. I say, there is nothing better than an ongoing, dynamic and real-time dialogue. Maybe, that is why there are 6 million Blogs and growing.

Online content is outstripping traditional media (newspapers, magazines, television) and blogs are the revolution leading this change with more than 40% of internet users in 2005 obtaining the bulk of their information online. From the September 12/2005 issue of Information Week where BLOGS ARE HURTING BUSINESS PUBLISHERS, "The news and trade market is in for some rough weather, according to report released Monday by researchers at Outsell Inc. Traditional segment leaders-- newspaper companies and business trade publishers--face disruption from online competitors."

In 2004, the influential "Time Magazine" name Blogs as the "Time Person of the Year"—the reason is obvious—they can't be ignored as the new media. The World Press Baron, Rupert Murdoch indicates this year in a speech to Editors in Washington DC that Print Publications must move online and make heavy investments/acquisitions into a blog form. These trends are also backed up by research done by PEW Research on consumer trends--the shift to blogs is unavoidable.

Should IT Managers and Professionals use and reach out to their audiences using this Blog medium for communication?

I found this Morgan Stanley research report about [internet trends](#) of great value. On page 12, the report shows communications today is about: Mobile, VoIP, IM, Email, and Blogs. I believe that, to continue to be viable, these techniques have to be used and implemented.

Blogs are rapidly taking over e-mail and other forms of communication internally within companies and externally with clients / customers with significant improvements in communication productivity--often more than a 50% improvement. You have heard about the big companies using it with great success. RSS Syndication then provides the vehicle to keep you and your clientele alerted and notified.

Syndication Services with RSS

Blogs are a good resource for research for IT Pros, and a vehicle for keeping together on the same page when your IT team members are working on the same project. Research or information is the most highly used activity for online IT Pros. An older research strategy is to save any URL that deals with a topic as a URL Favorite.

Question: do you use all your favorites and check them often? Or, do you end up with so many, they no longer become useful?

The answer to this dilemma is RSS. RSS [Really Simple Syndication, Rich Site Summary, or RDF Site Summary] allows you, the IT Manager/Pro, to be updated automatically when there are changes to web content.

How does RSS work?

It's an XML data format that allows content providers to syndicate a list of content items available on a Web site. Content providers create RSS files [feeds] on their Web servers by using simple programs. The RSS file contains placeholders for data using starting and ending tags. Each item in a RSS feed is described in XML by attributes such as title, date, author, and content summary. Content subscribers can scan the content descriptions to see which entries they want to read. If you want to read the whole content, then you use an RSS reader to access the information on its original Web site. RSS feed providers can register their RSS feeds with multiple RSS aggregators/readers to maximize distribution. And you, as an RSS subscriber can use your reader to register with multiple Web sites. Using an RSS reader, you can simply go to any RSS feed page, click on the button next to the feeds you want and follow the prompts.

How can you use it in business?

RSS is undergoing a fundamental evolution where data is both syndicated and consumed automatically by software programs. Gartner explains that "a credit card company could provide an RSS feed describing the last 10 transactions on a

card for users who want to monitor accounts for identity theft, [or] an enterprise resource planning application could provide highlights of inventory data to authorized users via an RSS feed." Doesn't this sound better than e-mail to you? Before you ask, yes security is still an issue...

Gartner forecasts RSS feeds will be utilized by aggregation and data mining systems. And I believe if you think about it, you can find many other uses. Do you have any to share?

And Gartner projects application-generated RSS data will be the norm. For this reason, consider putting it on your radar map of things to think about for 2006?

It's simple, easy, proven, and free – all good signs for tight IT budgets. You read the reports about knowledge management—how about using RSS as a tool here? According to recent news reports, it complements e-mail, instant messaging, file sharing, data dissemination tools and collaboration suites. For the future, why not plan on distributing feeds to your different client communities and auto-categorizing information in categories or taxonomies?

If you have a story to share about your Blog and RSS feed experiences, I would love to hear it...

Stephen

posted on Thursday, December 08, 2005 8:00 AM by [joxley](#)
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Comments

re: Blogs and RSS Deserving Attention from IT Managers?

Thursday, December 08, 2005 4:37 PM by [Tamara](#)
Thank you for your thought provoking and useful post.

re: Blogs and RSS Deserving Attention from IT Managers?

Friday, December 09, 2005 9:11 AM by [Stephen Ibaraki](#)
Tamara, thank you for the input.

By the way, if you want to get into blogging more, I recently talked with Richard Giles about this where he give some useful tips. Here's a link to the chat:

<http://www.stephenibaraki.com/cips/v1115/rgiles.html>

Thank you,
Stephen