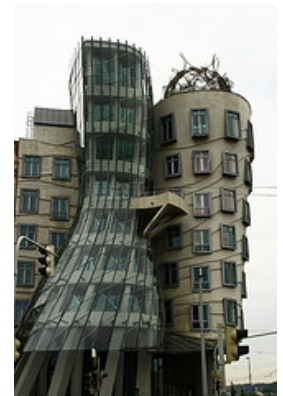


RSS and current awareness: how two projects (ticTOCs and Gold Dust) are hoping to improve the academic information landscape

INFORUM 2008
29th May, 2008, Prague

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Journal **T**ables of **C**ontents Service

Gold Dust Project



Outline



- RSS and its potential for current awareness purposes in the academic sector
- ticTOCs project
- Gold Dust project

RSS - Wikipedia

- RSS is a family of Web feed formats used to publish frequently updated content such as blog entries, news headlines, and podcasts. An RSS document (which is called a "feed" or "web feed" or "channel") contains either a summary of content from an associated web site or the full text. RSS makes it possible for people to keep up with web sites in an automated manner that can be piped into special programs or filtered displays. RSS content can be read using software called an "RSS reader", "feed reader" or an "aggregator".



RSS – more information

- RSS Specifications
 - <http://www.rss-specifications.com/>
- RSS Compendium
 - <http://allrss.com/>



Growth of RSS



Selection of feed categories of interest to academics

- Journal Tables of Contents (TOCs), e.g.
 - http://www.nature.com/nature/current_issue/rss/
- Calls for papers, e.g.
 - http://www.elsevierstechnology.com/rss/compsci_cfp.xml
- Funding opportunity news, e.g.
 - <http://fundingopportunities.com/news/rss.xml>
- New patents, e.g.
 - <http://www.freepatentsonline.com/rssfeed.html>
- New theses & dissertations, e.g.
 - http://rss.proquest.com/rss/diss/Dissertations_Engineering_Chemical.xml
- Professional society news, e.g.
 - <http://royalsociety.org/rss/newsFeed.xml>
- Forthcoming conference & events, e.g.
 - <http://eventseer.net/feeds/main/>
- New Teaching & Learning resources, e.g.
 - <http://crs.nsd.org/rssfeed.php?svc=rrs&flt=c>



More feed categories

- New book announcements, e.g.
<http://www.wildy.com/browse-by-subject>
- New items in Repositories, e.g.
<http://arxiv.org/rss/cs>

Example from Eventseer.com

- **3rd international conference on digital information management (ICDIM 2008)**
- Final Call for Workshop Proposals

Third IEEE International Conference on Digital Information Management (ICDIM 2008)

(IEEE sponsored)

November 13-16, 2008

University of East London, London. UK

(<http://www.icdim.org>)

ICDIM 2008 (IEEE Sponsored) will host a number of workshops addressing different areas related to digital **information management** that complement the main ICDIM 2008 conference.

We invite workshop organizers to send proposals as instructed below.

Workshops are intended to serve as an intensive collaborative forum for exchanging late breaking ideas and theories in an evolutionary stage. We encourage prospective workshop organizers to submit proposals for highly-interactive workshops focusing on either in-depth analysis or broad-ranging approaches to areas related to digital **information management**.



Response from downstream - commercial



Response from downstream – LIS community

- **TOCRoSS** - to place journal tables of content (TOC) data into a library catalogue without human intervention
- **FeedNavigator** Health articles and RSS feeds - downloads medical feeds published by web sites and aggregates their content into a single feed, latest news first.
- University of Saskatchewan Library - **Electronic Journals with RSS Feeds**



Guides to RSS

The screenshot shows the UCD Library website. The header includes the UCD logo and the text "The Library at UCD". Navigation tabs include Home, Links, News, Site Map, About, Services & Facilities, Catalogue, Electronic Resources, Subject Portals, Students, and Virtual Tour. The breadcrumb trail is "Home > Rss > Tutorial > RSS demo". A link to "Email this page" is present. The main heading is "RSS - A Tutorial" with a sub-heading "Introduction to RSS Feeds". The text describes a short tutorial on creating an RSS account and setting up a feed. A note mentions a control bar at the bottom of the presentation screen. A large black box contains the text "UCD Library RSS Tutorial" and "(click the icon to start)" with an orange RSS icon.

UCD
DUBLIN

An Leabharlann, An Coláiste Ollscoile, Baile Átha Cliath

The Library at UCD

Home Links News Site Map

About Services & Facilities Catalogue Electronic Resources Subject Portals Students Virtual Tour

Home > Rss > Tutorial > RSS demo

Email this page

RSS - A Tutorial


Introduction to RSS Feeds

This is a short, basic tutorial on creating a free account with a Web-based RSS feed reader, and setting up a sample RSS feed. Links to more information on RSS, the concepts behind it, and how to subscribe to feeds are included at the end.

Note: You may use the control bar at the bottom of the presentation screen to fast-forward or rewind the tutorial.

UCD Library
RSS Tutorial

(click the icon to start)



Guides to RSS

RSS Basics and Beyond

Tips and Tricks for Getting the Most out of Syndicated Content

Ken Varnum

Web Systems Manager

University of Michigan Libraries

varnum@umich.edu

13 June 2007

RSS Basics and Beyond

Library

share

1 / 42



close



Journal Tables of Contents Service

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Guides to RSS



Library Home

RESOURCES

- Library Catalog
- Summit
- Databases & Other Catalogs
- Print & E-Journals
- Reference Tools
- Course Materials & Reserves

Off Campus Access

SERVICES

- Borrowing
- Interlibrary Loan
- Reference & Instruction
- For Students
- For Faculty & Staff
- For Visitors & Alumni
- Your Library Account

COLLECTIONS

- Special Collections & Archives
- IMC
- Language Resources
- Government Documents

What Is RSS And How Do I Use It?

Does the library have any RSS feeds?
Yes; use the links below in your RSS reader:

- [feed for Science News from the Library](#)

What is RSS? What does it stand for? Why should I care?
At this point, it really doesn't matter what RSS stands for. It can mean "Real Simple Syndication" or "Rich Site Summary" or "RDF Site Summary". What matters is that using RSS allows you to view information from many sources in one place, thus saving you time.

What are RSS feeds? How do I use them?
RSS is a means of converting the content on a webpage into "feeds." RSS readers (also called aggregators) are used to collect, organize, and view RSS feeds. Many readers are available, for all platforms and with differing levels of features and customization. A list of available RSS readers is available from the [RSS Compendium](#).

For many people, [Bloglines](#) is a great choice. Not only is it easy to use, but it is free and works with any web browser. Since it is a web-based product, you can access your feeds from any computer connected to the Internet. Detailed help on using Bloglines can be found from this [tutorial](#) and from the [Bloglines Help Page](#).

If you already have a Google Mail account, you might want to use [Google Reader](#). Curious about the differences?

- [Google Reader vs. Bloglines](#) (from Usabilityworks.org)



TOCS

Journal Tables of Contents Service

Gold Dust Project



Guides to RSS



Virtual reference service
Answers to clinical questions out of library hours
Available now via Resources - Library section



The RCM

Career

Professional

Membership

Employment
Relations

International

Resources

Archives



Wednesday, 23rd April, 2008

[Register](#) | [Log in to access additional content](#)

Library

What is RSS?

RSS stands for *Really Simple Syndication*, or *Rich Site Summary*, or *RDF Site Summary*. It's an easy way for you to keep up with news and information that's important to you, and helps you avoid the conventional methods of browsing or searching for information on websites. Now the content you want can be delivered directly to you without cluttering your inbox with e-mail messages. This content is called a "feed."

RSS is written in the Internet coding language known as XML (eXtensible Markup Language), which is why you see RSS buttons commonly labeled with this icon: . RSS links are also available when you see the RSS icon: .

What is an RSS reader?

An RSS reader is a small software program that collects and displays RSS feeds. It allows you to scan headlines from a number of news sources in a central location.

Where can I get an RSS reader?

[Information services](#)

[Other libraries](#)

[Referencing](#)

What is RSS?



Journal **T**ables of **C**ontents Service

Gold Dust Project



Guides to RSS

The screenshot shows the University of St Andrews website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, Current Staff, Current Students, Maps, and Contacts. Below this is a search bar with the text "Enter search keywords" and a "Search" button. The main header features the University of St Andrews logo and name. A secondary navigation bar includes links for Prospective Students, Alumni, Parents, Administration A-Z, Subjects, Research, Library, About the University, News and Events, and Visiting.

RSS feeds at the University of St Andrews

What is RSS?

RSS (Really Simple Syndication) is a format for delivering **regularly changing web content**. RSS is used on the University of St Andrews website to share the **latest news and events** that are **frequently updated** on the site.

Why use RSS?

RSS allows you to **easily stay informed** by retrieving the latest content from the sites you are interested in **without needing to visit each site** individually. Now you can have all the latest news delivered directly to your computer in a way that is as **quick and easy** to use as downloading your e-mail.

How you can use RSS

You will need special software called a **Feed Reader** or **News Aggregator** which can check RSS-enabled webpages, such as this one, and display any updated articles that it finds. A **variety of RSS Readers** are available for different platforms and online.

What is RSS? You are alerted when new content is available.

RSS feeds

- University News
- University Events
- Latest job vacancies
- Library News
- Library Recent accessions
- Library Latest DVDs

See also

- News
- Events
- IT Services messages



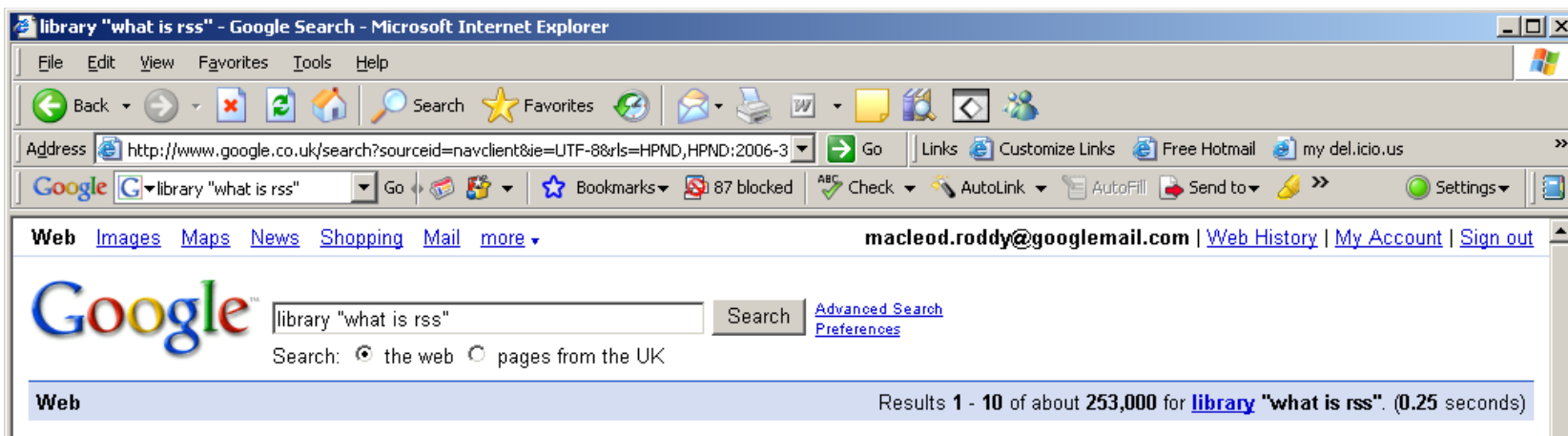
TOCs

Journal Tables of Contents Service

Gold Dust Project



Response from downstream – LIS community



- Google search:
 - Library + “what is rss” = 253,000 hits!!
- What a lot of duplicated effort!!!



fumsi March 2008

The screenshot shows the FUMSI website homepage. At the top left is the FUMSI logo. To its right is a banner for 'LISHOW SHOW 2008' with a link to 'www.lishow.co.uk'. Further right are navigation links: 'subscribe | contact us | site map | cart'. Below these is a search bar with a 'Go!' button and the word 'advanced'. A central banner features the word 'define' in large white letters on a dark background, followed by the text: 'Whatever your job title, you interact with information. Our content and resources can help.' To the right of this banner is an orange box with the text: 'FUMSI is for individuals, teams and organisations. Get the benefits of a FUMSI subscription. Learn more >>'. Below the banner is a navigation menu with links: 'HOME', 'HOW DO I FUMSI?', 'MAGAZINE ARTICLES', 'TOOLS AND REPORTS', and 'ABOUT FUMSI'.

When we first use it, we are keen to find interesting new blogs and sources to add to our subscriptions. Then, after a while, the amount of attention required by our subscribed feeds begins to exceed the amount of time we have to read them. So we stop looking for new feeds. We end up in a 'comfort zone', and new, potentially interesting voices don't get a chance to be heard.

This snippet shows a portion of a website article. On the left is a logo for 'ISI EMERGING MARKETS' with the website 'www.isi.com' and 'A Euromoney Institutional Investor Company'. The main text reads: 'very mechanism that was meant to help us. By the way, if you don't really understand what RSS is, head over to 'RSS the Oprah Version' for the clearest explanation of the technology I've seen.' Below the text are five RSS feed icons in different colors (black, blue, green, orange, purple). To the right is a small image of a person's face and the start of a paragraph: 'for the Manage practice, with your suggestions and proposals for articles or reports. We're always looking for case studies, ways to connect IT with IS, legal issues relating to compliance or copyright, overviews of data management tools and...'



Journal Tables of Contents Service

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Problems with RSS

- Sometimes still a bit technical
- Too many possibly relevant RSS feeds, and not always easy to find them
- These produce a torrent of items within which only a very small number may be of interest to academics
- It can take much time to manage the process



Save the time of the user

- Better RSS finding tools
- Better RSS filtering tools
- Better RSS personalisation tools
- Services aimed at niche areas of interest to academics
- Save their precious time
- ticTOCs Journal Tables of Contents Service
<http://www.tictocs.ac.uk>
- Gold Dust <http://www.hull.ac.uk/golddust/>



ticTOCs

- Project to develop a freely available **current awareness service** which will make it easy for academics and researchers to **find, display, store, combine** and **reuse** scholarly journal tables of contents (TOCs) RSS feeds from multiple publishers in a personalisable website, and also facilitate the export of TOC RSS feeds to feedreaders of choice.
- <http://www.tictocs.ac.uk>

ticTOCs partners

Universities, etc



For profit publishers, etc



Not-for-profit



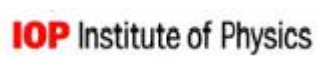
Journal **T**ables of **C**ontents **S**ervice

Gold Dust Project

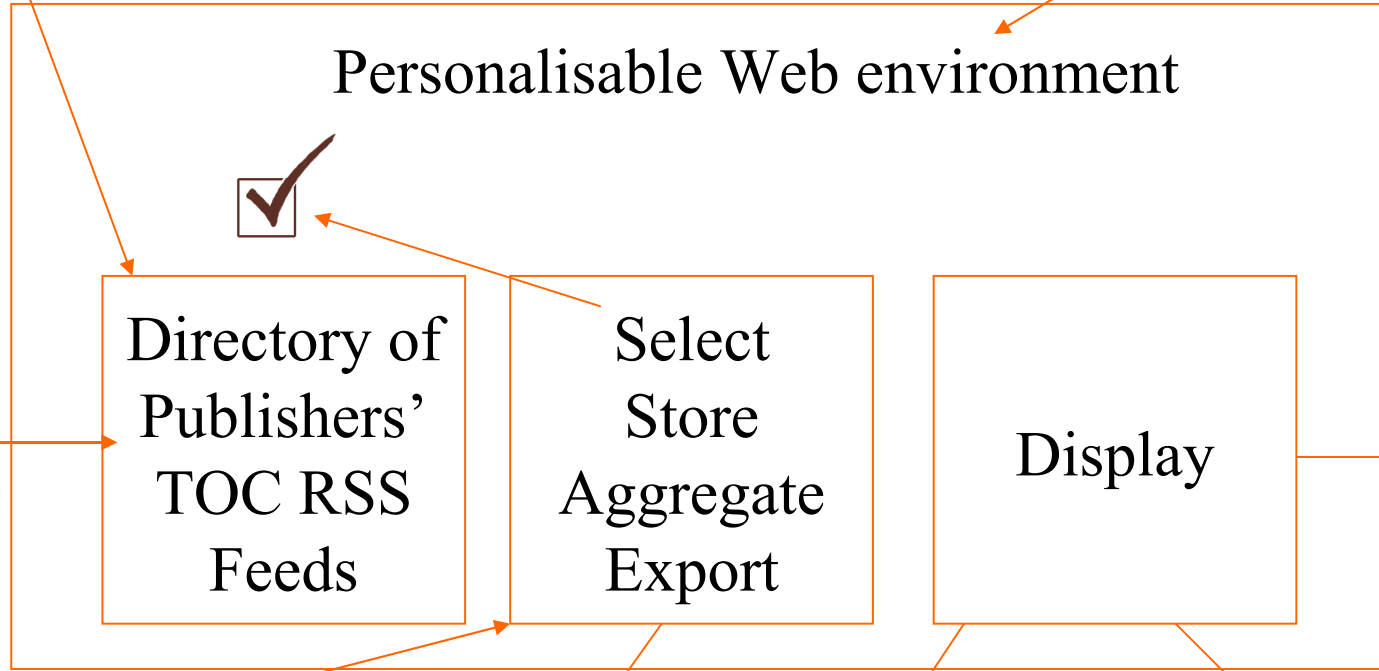




ticTOCs



Content



Export TOCS To other readers

Export items in TOCS to bibliographic management services

Re-use metadata



TOCs by RSS

- March 2005 - 13 Publishers with 1,139 titles
- October 2006 - 38 Publishers with more than 7,000 titles
- April 2008 – many more publishers, 000s more titles!

TOCs by RSS

American Chemical Society
American Institute of Physics
American Physical Society
Annual Reviews
ANSI Journals
BioMed Central
Blackwell Synergy
BMJ Journals
CALIBER - University of California Press
Cambridge Journals Online
Cell Press
International Union of Crystallography
EDP Sciences
Emerald
Haworth Press
HighWire Press
Hindawi Publishing Corporation
IEEE Xplore
Inderscience
Ingenta Connect
Institute of Physics
Karger Publishers

Lippincott Williams & Wilkins
Mary Ann Liebert, Inc.
MIT Press
Nature Publishing Group
New England Journal of Medicine
New Scientist
New Statesman
Oxford University Press
Peeters Publishers
PLoS - Public Library of Science journals
Project MUSE
Royal Society of Chemistry
SAGE Publications
Science
ScienceDirect
SIAM
Springer
Taylor & Francis informaworld
Thieme –
Wiley InterScience
Zetoc
...



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Exploitation of current content

- Publisher revenues \$5 billion p/a STM journals.
- 20,000 – 25,000 Peer Reviewed journals.
- 200,000 researchers UK, 5.5 million globally.
- Latest articles are ‘cream on this cake’
- Efficient exploitation of latest issues is vital for publishers, researchers and authors.



TOCs

Journal Tables of Contents Service

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TOC directory

ticTOCs

Journal Tables of Contents Service **beta** JISC

Home | About Us | ticTOCs News | Help | Info for Publishers | Sign In

My TOCs

Search for TOCs by Journal Title

Go

Browse Journals by Publisher

Enter Publisher name:

Welcome to ticTOCs

The ticTOCs Project is piloting a free service where academics and researchers can keep up-to-date with journal Tables of Contents (TOCs). This is the beta version. Further features and enhancements will appear in the near future.

Please start by searching for TOCs, or by browsing TOCs by publisher. Then, if you click on a journal title, the latest Table of Contents will be displayed.

You can use ticTOCs to select journal TOCs and save them on your MyTOCs folder (with a "tick"). From there you can read future TOCs at your convenience, or export them as an OPML file into your favourite feed reader.

At the moment, ticTOCs has **6,680** journal Tables of Contents, with **171,287** articles, collected from **37** publishers. More journals will be added in the future.

ticTOCs Prototype 1.0 Beta version was released on Wednesday March 12th 2008.

ticTOCs contains 6,680 TOCs

OPML

Tick here to add to MyTOCs

RSS feed

Journal Tables of Contents Service *beta* **JISC**

Home | About Us | JicTOCs News | Help | Info for Publishers | Sign In

My TOCs

1. Property Management **X**

OPML Export

Search for TOCs by Journal Title

property

Found 7 journal(s)

Property Management
The Journal of World Intellectual Property
International Journal of Cultural Property
Journal of Property Investment & Finance
Journal of Property Research
International Journal of Intellectual Property Management
Journal of Intellectual Property Law & Practice

Browse Journals by Publisher

Remove from MyTOCs | Get TOC Feed

Property Management
ISSN (Print) 02637472
Published by Emerald

Table of Contents

Expand All Collapse All

+ Client influence in residential property valuations: an empirical study : Table of Contents

- Using rents and price dynamics in real estate portfolio valuation : Table of Contents

Author(s): Michel Baroni; Fabrice BarthÃ©lÃ©my; Mahdi Mokrane
Abstract: Abstract: Purpose – The aim of this paper is to use rent and price dynamics in the future cash flows in order to improve real estate portfolio valuation. Design/methodology/approach – Monte Carlo simulation methods are employed for the measurement of complex cash generating assets such as real estate assets return distribution. Important simulation inputs, such as the physical real estate price volatility estimator, are provided by results on real estate indices for Paris,

Export item to RefWorks



Journal Tables of Contents Service

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Are you a geek?



- You definitely won't have to be an RSS geek to use ticTOCs.
- If you are one, however, there's stuff for you too

Metadata inconsistencies

- <title>Nature</title>
- <title>BMJ Current Issue</title>
- <title>Journal of Geophysics and Engineering latest papers</title>
- <title>SpringerLink – Journal</title>
- <title>Blackwell Synergy International Journal of Cosmetic Science: Table of Contents</title>
- <title>NATURE-LONDON-</title> [Zetoc feed]



Metadata inconsistencies

- [multiple authors - IOP]
 - <dc:creator>Luciano Telesca</dc:creator>
 - <dc:creator>Antonio Lanorte</dc:creator>
 - <dc:creator>Rosa Lasaponara</dc:creator>
- [multiple authors - Biomed Central]
 - <dc:creator>Alexandra Devine, Michelle Kermode, and Helen Herman</dc:creator>
- [multiple authors – Elsevier]
 - <description>Dostal, M. , Roberts, J.B. , Holmes, R.</description>



Best practice recommendations

- CrossRef and ticTOCs will produce best practice recommendations covering what information to include in journal TOC RSS feeds, and the best way to structure that information.

ticTOCS Blog

- See News from ticTOCs blog <http://tictocsnews.wordpress.com/>



Journal Tables of Contents Service



Journal Tables of Contents Service

Gold Dust Project



Gold Dust

- Develop innovatory **solutions** to the problem of **information overload**. It will deliver highly relevant, **personalised** current awareness content of a variety of kinds to **academics**, without the need for any input by those academics, in a **flexible** way from within selected JISC and non-JISC presentation services.



Gold Dust Partners (12)



Lead institution



Journal **T**ables of **C**ontents Service

Gold Dust Project



Gold Dust Project Associates (6)



Gold Dust Project



Gold Dust

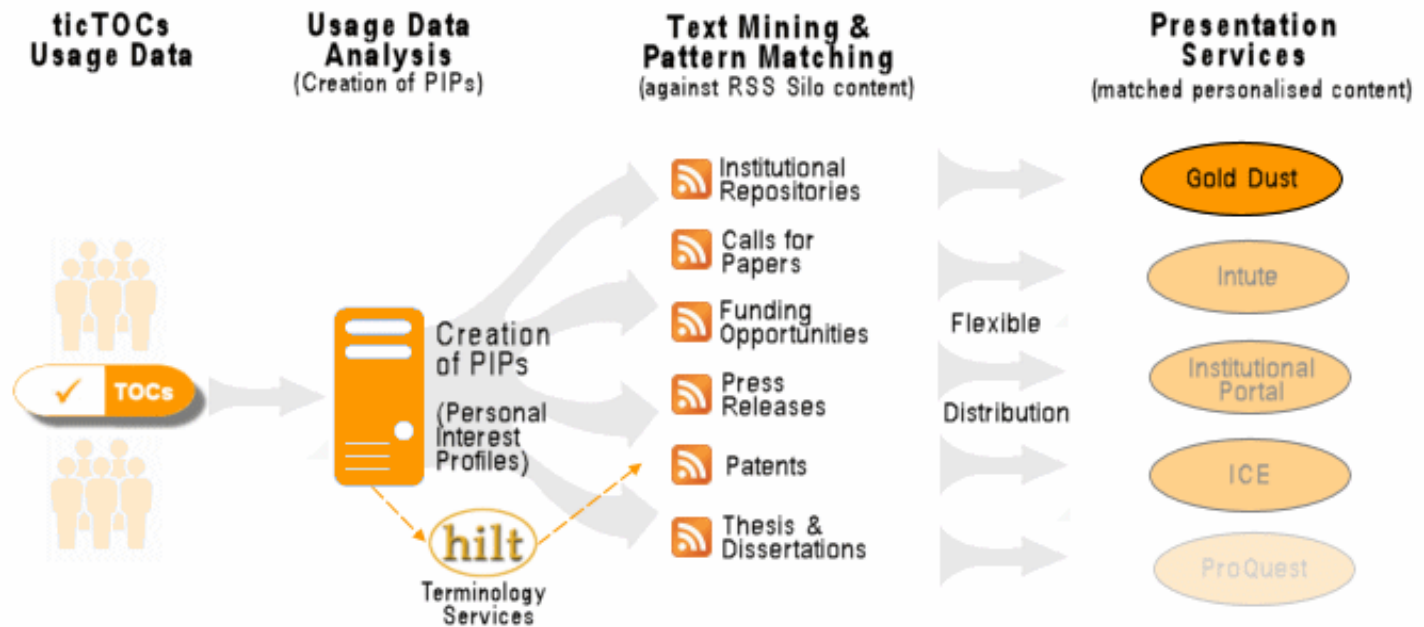


Fig 1. Principles of Gold Dust. Aggregation of new content, effortless discovery of relevant materials - delivery via service of user's choice.



Gold Dust

- <http://www.macs.hw.ac.uk/~mthljr/golddust>

Gold Dust

Real-time News Feeds via RSS

Personal Interest Profile (PIP)



Users

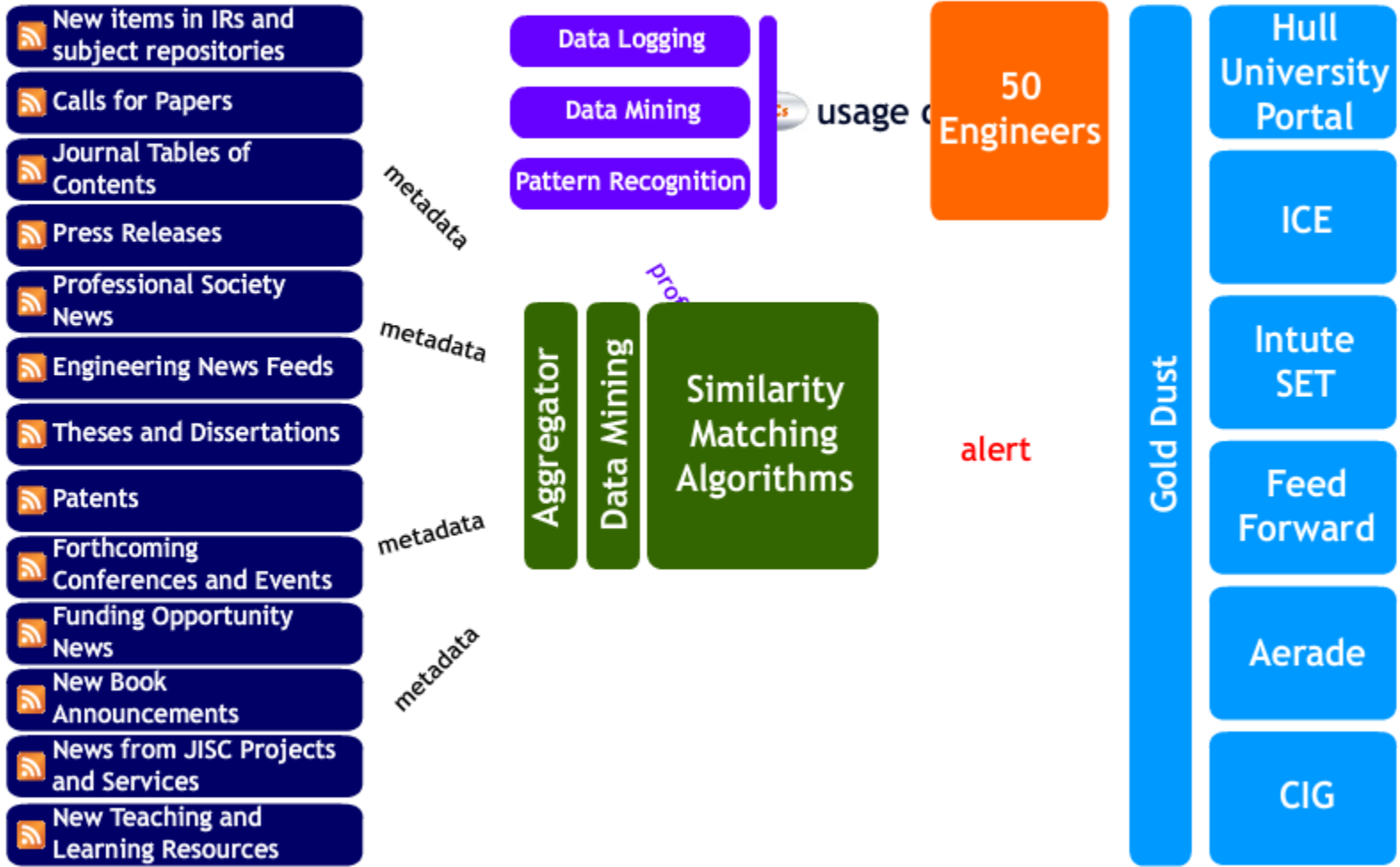
Flexible Delivery and Presentation

metadata
metadata
metadata
metadata
metadata
profile data

Digest



Gold Dust



ticTOCS and Gold Dust - benefits

- ticTOCs
 - Make it easy for researchers to find and exploit journal Tables of Contents, without having to understand the technicalities of RSS, or spend lots of time managing the process

ticTOCS and Gold Dust - benefits

- Gold Dust
 - Develop **practical solutions** to identify **highly relevant** (personalised) items of interest from amongst a mass of potentially relevant **current awareness** information which is being generated via **RSS** by **numerous** content providers, and then test its **delivery**, as required, to **academics**, without requiring their direct input in the whole process.

More information

Current awareness

Helping RSS help researchers

Roddy MacLeod reveals how universities, publishers and funding bodies have come together to improve how researchers are informed of the latest journal content

Scholarly journal publishing is a major business. It is worth more than \$5 billion per year and around 2,000 STM publishers are estimated to publish between 20,000 and 25,000 peer-reviewed scholarly journals worldwide¹.

With most of these titles, newly-published articles form the cream of the journal publishing cake. These new articles reveal the results of recent research, often for the first time, so it is important that researchers know about them as soon as possible. This is particularly true now that many research funding bodies require submission of research output to institutional or subject repositories within a few months of publication in scholarly journals. If researchers do not hear about new papers when they are first published then they could choose to go straight to the repository and bypass the publisher altogether – a situation that could cause concerns for the publisher's accountants.

Despite the issues at stake, however, discovery methods for new articles appear to be underdeveloped at present.

The people behind the project

The ticTOCs project, which is being led by the University of Liverpool Library, began in April 2007 and is scheduled to run for two years. The UK funding body JISC is the primary funder of ticTOCs and Crossref, ProQuest, RefWorks and Emerald have also invested in the project. Other consortium partners include Heriot-Watt University, where most of the technical development is being undertaken, and Cranfield University, Nature Publishing Group, SAGE Publishers, Institute of Physics, Inderscience Publishers, IMAWS, Directory of Open-Access Journals, Open J-Gate and iPrint.

More details about ticTOCs can be found at www.ticdocs.ac.uk and a ticTOCs news blog is available at: ticdocsnews.wordpress.com.



The project will allow researchers to select Tables of Content from journals of interest from an easy-to-use online directory of thousands of feeds.

Traditionally, keeping up with the literature meant physically browsing journals in a library or scanning cross-publisher clipping services. More recently, it has involved saved searches in online databases or the delivery of Tables of Contents (TOCs) by email. Many publishers provide email TOC alerting facilities, and private research has shown that such services are very popular. However, the process usually involves additional registration processes, and can result in administrative overheads.

RSS (Really Simple Syndication) has emerged as another delivery mechanism for journal TOCs, with many journal publishers now offering alert options (a good list of publishers providing RSS feeds is available at the University of Liverpool Library's website: www.liv.ac.uk/Library/research/journals/rss.html).

However, exploiting RSS today can involve a certain level of understanding of the principles of feed syndication. It may also require the downloading of a desktop feedreader or registration with a web-based feedreader, although internet browsers are becoming

issue of finding out what journal TOC RSS feeds are available. At the present time this can involve considerable effort.

These barriers to easy-to-use journal TOC RSS are being addressed in a new project known as ticTOCs (see box). The project has been named ticTOCs because part of the service will involve the ticking of selected TOCs of interest, from an easy-to-use online directory of thousands of feeds.

The main goal of this project is to develop a freely-available service that will make it easy for academics, researchers and anyone else to find and display scholarly journal tables of content from multiple publishers, without having to understand the technical or procedural concepts involved in the process. In addition, it will facilitate the aggregation of TOC feeds and their reuse at other sites, and enable items in feeds to be exported to bibliographic management software, from within a simple web-based environment.

The intention is to encourage showcasing of the latest research output at numerous websites. This will happen by enabling the reuse of TOC content by gateways, subject-based discovery services, library services and others. Another aim is to make it easy to subscribe to journal TOC RSS feeds, with one click, through seamless linking to the ticTOCs service.

Tackling standards

Finally, ticTOCs is producing recommendations for good practice for TOC RSS feeds. These are important because an analysis of the current practice of publishers with regard to the provision of TOC RSS feeds has revealed a wide variety of different processes. There is a need to encourage the production of more standardised journal TOC RSS feeds, thereby facilitating their interoperability and improving the quality of their data.

The project is being hailed as a significant development in journal current awareness. The intention is to demonstrate how the innovative application of simple technologies enables the easy delivery of valuable services. A prototype service is expected to be running by April 2008.

Roddy MacLeod is senior subject librarian a Heriot-Watt University, UK.

FURTHER INFORMATION

1. UK scholarly journals: how to report FRL, FOLK and DTL 2006. www.liv.ac.uk/dtp/scholarly-journals

- *Research Information*, Issue 33, December 2007/January 2008
- *Free Pint*, No 234
- *Multimedia Information & Technology*, Vol 34 no 1, Feb 2008.
- News from ticTOCs blog



TOCs

Journal Tables of Contents Service

Gold Dust Project



- Thank you
- Questions?

- Roddy MacLeod
- r.a.macleod@hw.ac.uk