

Keep Up-To-Date Using Subject Specific Blogs, RSS Feeds, and Listservs

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ABSTRACT:

Students and faculty need to keep up-to-date with their area of research. Subject specific blogs, RSS feeds, and listservs make it easier than ever to keep up with the latest news, innovations, articles, and research.

RSS feeds are easy to use. RSS stands for Rich Site Summary (it is also referred to as Really Simple Syndication). If an electronic journal, website, or blogger offers an RSS feed, it is easy to capture that feed and receive updates from them. Some electronic journals will even create an RSS feed based on user-specified search criteria and then notify the user when new relevant articles become available.

Blogs [a combination of the words "web" and "logs"] are an informal but valuable means of communication. Blogs typically include an RSS feed so the blog author can, in effect, push information to interested people. Blog authors could be fellow researchers sharing ideas or librarians alerting readers to new resources or upcoming lectures. Many professional and scholarly societies also offer blogs and RSS feeds.

Listservs are lists that people subscribe to via email. They typically focus on a specific topic, demographic, or profession. When new information is posted to the listserv, subscribers receive the information via email.

This poster presents subject specific blogs, RSS feeds, and listservs.

STEPS TO RECEIVING RSS MESSAGES:

1. Select **one** of the following tools to receive and read feeds:
 - **Email programs** [ex. Thunderbird].
If your email program supports RSS feeds, simply add an RSS URL to your subscription list. For each machine where you want to read feeds you will need to install the email program and build the subscription list.
 - **Browsers** [ex. Firefox].
If your browser supports RSS feeds, simply add an RSS URL to your subscription list [Firefox calls them "Live Bookmarks"]. For each machine where you want to read feeds you will need to install the browser and build the subscription list.
 - **Feed readers** [ex. Feedreader].
Some readers are free, others charge a small fee. For each machine where you want to read feeds you will need to install the feed reader and build the subscription list.
 - **Web-based solutions** [ex. Bloglines.com, Rocket RSS Reader].
Nothing to download! Many web-based solutions are free but require registration. Allows you to keep all your blog subscriptions in one place, but read them from anywhere. May not have as many features and capabilities as the other solutions.
2. Find a blog or website that offers an RSS feed.
3. Add the feed link to the tool from step 1.
4. **Repeat steps 2 and 3 to add more feeds - you only perform step 1 once!**

DREXEL BLOGS AND RESOURCES:

- **Physics** Blog and RSS Feed
by Peggy Dominy
<http://drexelphysics.blogspot.com>
- **Bioscience** Blog and RSS Feed
by Peggy Dominy
<http://drexelbioscience.blogspot.com>
- **Math** Blog and RSS Feed
by Peggy Dominy
<http://drexelmath.blogspot.com>
- **Chemistry** Blog and RSS Feed
by Peggy Dominy
<http://drexelchemistry.blogspot.com>
- **Engineering Resources** Blog and RSS Feed
by Jay Bhatt and Andy Wheeler
<http://englibrary.blogspot.com>
- **Drexel CoAS E-Learning** Blog and RSS Feed
by Jean-Claude Bradley
<http://drexel-coas-elearning.blogspot.com>
- **LIB-BIZ-KIT** Listserv
by Emily Missner
Membership is free. Receive updates about business resources at Drexel University. Email emissner@drexel.edu for more info.

WHY SUBSCRIBE TO RSS FEEDS?:

- RSS will not clog your email inbox.
- RSS is fast [some services offer near-instant or hourly updates]. Some email alert systems send daily or weekly bulletins.
- RSS does not require the user to revisit websites or blogs for the latest information - information is sent to you.
- If a website or blog does not offer email updates *RSS may be the only way to receive updates.*

BLOGS AND RSS FEEDS PROVIDE:

- Job Leads
- Funding Announcements
- News
- Article Alerts
- Conference Information
- ... and much more!

WHO OFFERS RSS FEEDS?:

- Institute of Physics [IoP]
- Ingenta
- Elsevier's Engineering Village 2 search platform for Compendex and Ingenta.
- NSF
- PUBMED - use HUBMED.com.
- freshpatents.com - receive information about new patents and new patent filings.
- ... plus many more!

DOES A WEBSITE OR BLOG OFFER AN RSS FEED?:

Look for these icons and click on them.



MORE INFORMATION:

- Use **Feedster.com** to **search for RSS** feeds.
- **Bloglines.com** - **start your own** blog or use bloglines as a **feed reader** to receive information.
- **Blogspot.com** [also called **blogger.com**] - **start your own blog** or **search for blogs** that address your interests.