Syndication 4

Syndication is a new way to deliver and gather content over the Internet. It a way to provide subscribers with frequently updated content. Syndication uses web feeds to publish frequently updated content, such as a blog post, podcast, online forum (see chapter on online community), and any kind of traditional media such as news, press releases, articles, audio or a video stream.

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While there are several syndication formats, the most common is known as RSS, "really simple syndication". This symbol representing syndication is often shown on sites to indicate a web feed is available.

Syndication is a standard way to send out an alert that you've published some information, maybe an update to your blog or a news announcement. It typically includes a brief summary of the content being sent, the name of the author and the date of the update.

You can also use RSS to send out a software or security update, product bulletin, speech, video or audio clip. Any kind of information or news, such as a new real estate listing, weather alert, coupon, or even an invoice. How cool is that?

RSS is the most commonly used standard for syndication. Syndication feeds, however come in a range of "flavors".

Here are a few more symbols:

Web or News Feeds

These alerts are sent in the form of web or news feeds, which signal readers that you have published something new on your blog or website. They allow companies to publish information and automatically syndicate, or send it, to interested readers. Readers who subscribe to updates receive them automatically as they become available.

Web Feeds Are like TIVO for the Web

Why would you want to do that? Well, busy people have no time to surf the web to find out when a competitor, thought leader, or anyone else, has made a news announcement.

Wouldn't it be amazingly cool if the information, or at least a short form of it, came automatically to your email or to a news aggregator (a separate site you reserve to collect your feeds and read at your convenience). And what if all the headlines of all the topics you were interested in flowed directly to you, without your having to hunt for them. Syndication, or RSS, does precisely that. It captures all of the most current information from all of your favorite websites and blogs and puts them all in one place where you can read them at your convenience.

RSS is a "Pull" medium

RSS is not just a time saving device. As a publisher, you can reach a more targeted audience of people who are really interested in what you have to say. RSS is a "pull" medium – the user must sign up.

Companies often hate this aspect. They would much rather just blast the information out over email and not ask anyone's permission. I remind the companies that hire me that these days, customers use spam catchers to filter out unwanted email, so the effectiveness of email blasts is diminishing. Moreover it may intensely irritate the receiver. With RSS the user must agree to sign up, and that means you have an