

Introduction

RSS is a method of automatically receiving updates from information sources. By subscribing to an RSS feed with an RSS reader program, you are informed whenever a new update on that feed is posted for you to read. This saves time by eliminating the need to visit a website to check if there is anything new, as you will know immediately when something has been changed.

Considerations

- **Ensure that it is easy for anyone to subscribe to your RSS feed.** Subscribing to a RSS feed often requires locating the RSS icon. Sites often describe this as “the orange button”, which, along with other descriptions based on colour, should be discouraged as colour blindness can mean these symbols are seen differently. Image below is taken from Vischeck showing a view of the RSS feed icon as viewed by someone with red/green colour deficit. <http://vischeck.com/>



- **RSS readers can be standalone programs, or incorporated into your web browser.** Examples of browsers that offer RSS readers are Firefox, Internet Explorer 7 and above, Safari, Chrome and Opera. Other services such as Google Reader maintain your feeds online. These services need to be checked for accessibility. Web based aggregators <http://www.newsonfeeds.com/fag/aggregators> .
- **Accessible RSS is an accessible RSS reader.** It is provided with Webbie3, an accessible text-based web browser. Accessible RSS provides an interface that allows all users to access their subscribed feeds. <http://www.webbie.org.uk/accessiblerrss/>

Additional Resources

- Web2Access has an accessibility check list for Google Reader <http://www.web2access.org.uk/product/151/>
- Common Craft provide a screencast about RSS feeds, and how they can be used. http://www.commoncraft.com/rss_plain_english
- The American Foundation for the Blind discusses the accessibility of subscribing to blogs using RSS. <http://www.afb.org/Section.asp?SectionID=57&TopicID=167&DocumentID=2916>