

# Exploring the Application of RSS for Library Staff Professional Development

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## Overview

- Project goals
- Implementation & challenges
- Outcomes & next steps

# Professional Reading Room

A professional reading and discussion area for USQ Library staff

## Looking Behind Bad Decisions

Tuesday, January 31, 2006

In a recent HBS Working Paper, HBS professor **Max Bazerman** and colleagues explore how biases and human psychology impede policy-making efforts that could vastly improve people's lives.

[Link to post on: Harvard Business School Working Knowledge](#)

Posted in [HBS Working Knowledge](#) | [No Comments »](#) | [Email this post](#)

## The Case of the Mystery Writer's Brand

Tuesday, January 31, 2006

A look behind how professor **John Deighton** developed a case study of mystery writer John Patterson. From the *HBS Alumni Bulletin*.

[Link to post on: Harvard Business School Working Knowledge](#)

Posted in [HBS Working Knowledge](#) | [No Comments »](#) | [Email this post](#)

## Lessons From Privately Managed Schools

Tuesday, January 31, 2006

Kennedy School senior fellow **Steven Wilson** was in the thick of a movement to form private ventures to manage public schools. Most education management firms have not met expectations. What are the

 

### Pages

- » [Reading Room Policies](#)
- » [Acceptable comments](#)
- » [Selection of new feeds](#)

### Archives

- » [January 2006](#)
- » [December 2005](#)
- » [November 2005](#)
- » [October 2005](#)
- » [September 2005](#)
- » [August 2005](#)
- » [July 2005](#)
- » [June 2005](#)
- » [May 2005](#)
- » [April 2005](#)
- » [March 2005](#)

### Categories

- » [Cataloguing \(RSS\)](#)
- » [Catalogablog \(RSS\)](#)
- » [Current Events \(RSS\)](#)
- » [Alia News \(RSS\)](#)
- » [LISNews \(RSS\)](#)
- » [Employment \(RSS\)](#)
- » [Alia Jobs \(RSS\)](#)
- » [Higher Education Sector \(RSS\)](#)
- » [ACRLog \(RSS\)](#)

## Project Goals

- Experiment with new technologies in-house
- Provide staff with a useful resource
- Address Library's workforce planning issues
- Encourage culture of reflective practice



*"I used to panic if any trend passed me by,  
but now I have a service which alerts me  
to everything."*

## Technical Implementation

- **Based around a WordPress blog**
  - Same platform as the Library Blog  
<http://library.usq.edu.au/wordpress>
- **Plugins for additional functionality**
  - FeedWordPress for XML aggregation
  - Bad Behavior for Spam prevention
- **Adopting an Intranet solution**
  - Additional layer of spam prevention
  - Measure of privacy for discussion

## Reading Room Structure

- Sources grouped into parent categories
- Each source is a child category
- Each category has an XML feed
- Users can select the categories of interest to them

### Categories

- » [Cataloguing \(RSS\)](#)
- » [Catalogablog \(RSS\)](#)
- » [Current Events \(RSS\)](#)
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- » [LISNews \(RSS\)](#)
- » [Employment \(RSS\)](#)
- » [Alia Jobs \(RSS\)](#)
- » [Higher Education Sector \(RSS\)](#)
- » [ACRLog \(RSS\)](#)
- » [DrAlb \(RSS\)](#)
- » [Syndication for Higher Ed \(RSS\)](#)
- » [Journals \(RSS\)](#)
- » [Ariadne Magazine \(RSS\)](#)
- » [Cites And Insights \(RSS\)](#)
- » [D-Lib Magazine \(RSS\)](#)
- » [Library Services \(RSS\)](#)
- » [Library Marketing \(RSS\)](#)
- » [Management \(RSS\)](#)
- » [HBS Working Knowledge \(RSS\)](#)
- » [New Technologies \(RSS\)](#)
- » [Cutting Through \(RSS\)](#)
- » [hangingtogether.org \(RSS\)](#)
- » [LibrarianInBlack \(RSS\)](#)
- » [Lorcan Dempsey's weblog \(RSS\)](#)

Direct link to an XML feed

Parent Category with three child categories

A child category

## Reading Room Statistics

- Number of posts: 4,896
- Number of aggregated feeds: 22
- Most popular category:  
Syndication for Higher Ed

## Technical Challenges

- **Identifying appropriate sources of information**
  - Not all sources have XML feeds
  - Not all XML feeds contain required information
- **Preventing comment spam**
  - Needed to avoid the possibility of spam
- **Enabling access from home**
  - Some users required access from home
- **Technical support**
  - Determining support responsibilities

## Meeting Technical Challenges

- Identifying appropriate sources of information
  - Investigating alternate sources
  - Robust aggregating solution
- Preventing comment spam
  - Restrict access to USQ network only
  - Implement an anti-spam plugin
  - Adopt comment moderation against the “Acceptable Comments” policy

## Meeting Technical Challenges

- Enabling access from home
  - Integrate the Reading Room with EZproxy
- Technical support
  - Creating a Library policy on XML aggregators
  - Defining support roles

## Organisational Challenges

- Information Overload
  - Could not be “yet another source of information”
- Discussion Space
  - Comfort level of those commenting on posts
  - Keeping discussions on track

## Meeting Organisational Challenges

- **Information Overload**
  - Only relevant sources are included
  - Relevancy determined by peer review and usage
  - Those found not to be relevant are removed
- **Discussion Space**
  - A clear and simple “Acceptable Comments” policy
  - Measures to encourage rather than inhibit
  - Investigating holding facilitated discussions

One of the conditions for reading what is good  
is that we must not read what is bad;  
for life is short and time and energy are limited.

Schopenhauer “On Reading and Books” *Parerga and  
Paralipomena* 1851

## Progress against Original Goals

- Experiment in-house before public use
- Provide staff with a useful resource
- Address workforce planning issues
- Encourage culture of reflective practice

## Next Steps

- Expanding and reviewing sources
- Faculty Librarian blogs
- Integration into work processes

## Questions?

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## Additional Library Statistics

- Average of 47 requests per day
- Majority for category specific RSS feeds
- Most popular feeds
  - Syndication for Higher Education
  - Reading Room Main Feed
  - Harvard Business School Working Knowledge
  - Reading Room Homepage