
RSS Made Easy

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Zero Spam! How to Subscribe to News without being spammed ... RSS Feeds.

**This eBook is brought to you by:
Colleen Redman
<http://www.mymultistreamincome.com>**

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Why should you subscribe to RSS Feeds?

Simple, it frees up a lot of your browsing time, and more importantly, it's a perfect solution for you if you're tired of being spammed each time you sign-up for new ezines.

But first, what is RSS Feed? It's essentially "news items or headlines" or updates from a site that you want receive news from.

1. Saves you LOTS of TIME!

For example, if you want to read the latest news from CNN, you'll have to start up your browser, head over to www.cnn.com and then browse the news headlines on the site.

However, if you've subscribed to CNN's RSS feed, you need not do that – your RSS reader software will automatically retrieve the news headlines from CNN.

You can then browse through the headlines (and brief excerpts) and just click on the link to read more if a particular news item interests you.

Similarly, if you're interested in a particular topic (e.g. health, motoring, hobbies, etc), you can just subscribe to their RSS feeds (if they have one) and have all the updates and news delivered right to your desktop each time you go online.

RSS is a real time saver if you visit a number of sites each day. If, like most people, you've limited time for surfing the internet, you can use your RSS reader software to quickly discover what your favorite sites have to offer (it will automatically download all the news items and updates for you).

You can then zip straight to news items that pique your interests. With RSS, you're less likely to miss something truly interesting or important as it not always possible to visit 10 or 20 websites everyday!

Now, you can use the extra time for more profitable tasks instead of browsing through pages and pages of different websites.

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2. Tired of SPAM? Subscribe to RSS feeds.

RSS fees are SPAM-PROOF. Right now, most net users are bombarded with so much spam that they have to take drastic measures to protect their email addresses.

Perhaps you are one of them and are afraid to subscribe to ezines – even though you’re interested in the topic?

Or perhaps you’re wondering why you’re no longer receiving your favorite ezine? Blame it on the spam filters. Some overzealous ISPs have opted for super-strict ant-spam filters which blocks out legitimate emails and ezines.

According to August 2002 Editor and Publisher article by Steve Outing, up to 38% of all opt-in email messages are blocked by spam filters.

However, when you subscribe to RSS feeds, you can receive your favorite ezines, subscribe to hundreds of others WITHOUT having to give out your email addresses.

How does it work? First, you install a RSS reader software. It will then automatically download the news (RSS feeds) items from the publisher’s website. You need not reveal your email address – thus, there’s no more spam!

If you don’t like a particular news (RSS) feed, you can easily “un-subscribe” from a RSS feed simply by pressing the delete button.

Ok, let’s get started on how to install your RSS reader software and subscribe to a feed that you’re interested in.

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How to Subscribe to a RSS Feed?

Here's a simple Email (ezine) analogy - An ezine publisher of Widget ABC sends out his weekly newsletter. He is the "**Publisher**" in this case. You (the subscriber) receive the ezine in your favorite email program (e.g. Outlook Express).

In the case of RSS, the publisher publishes a "**news feed**" instead of an ezine - and you receive the news feed (instead of an ezine) via RSS reader software (or aggregator)

Examples of RSS reader software are FeedReader, SharpReader, Newsgator, etc.

- **Publishers:** anyone who uses RSS to publish updates to web-based content. It can be an **online marketer**, an **ezine publisher**, **webmaster** in charge PR, news reporter, editor, or simply anyone who is interested to distribute news (updates) on any topic under the sun.
- **News Feed:** RSS contents (news/updates) from a publisher, when viewed in one of these aggregators (readers) is often called a 'news feed' or simply, a 'feed'
- **Subscribers:** recipient of the 'news feed' from the RSS publishers. All the feed are conveniently consolidated in the RSS reader application. See Chapter 5 for more details.
- **RSS Readers (Aggregators):** These are applications which retrieve the news feed. They could be a desktop application, a web-based service, plugin-software or built into your favorite web-browser (e.g. Opera).

The first step is to download and install a RSS reader software.

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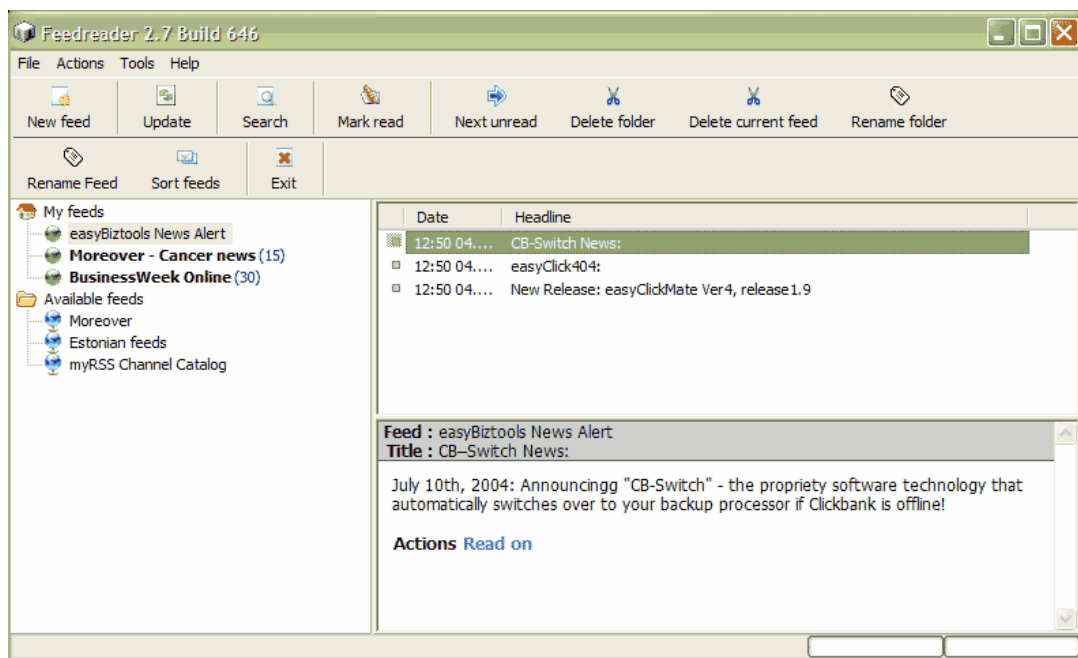
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There are 4 types of Readers –

1. Desktop applications (e.g. FeedReader),
2. Plug-in-Software (eg. NewsGator and Pluck)
3. Online Service/web-based service(e.g. Bloglines.com, MyYahoo)
4. Built-In Software such as Opera 7.5x

1. **Stand-alone software applications**, such as FeedReader. This is similar to your Email application. You download the application from the Net and install it on your PC. Here's a screen capture:



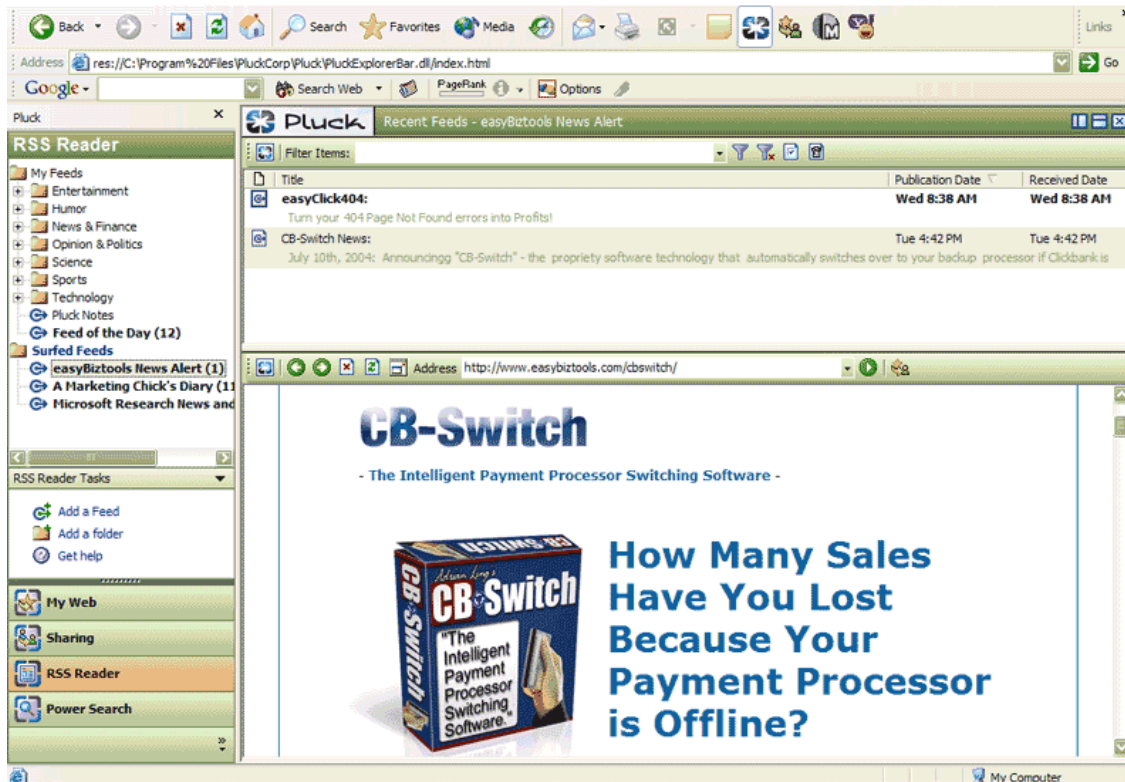
As you can see, the left pane contains all the feeds that you subscribe to (similar to your folders in your Email software, eg. Outlook Express). On the right pane, you'll see the "titles" of each feed. Click on the title and you'll see the contents (summary of the feed) in the bottom pane.

You can download it here: <http://www.feedreader.com>. Install it just like any other Windows software. Double click on it and follow the instructions on the screen.

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2. **Plug-in Software** that plugs into an existing software. For example, “Pluck” (www.pluck.com) is plugs into your IE browser and allows you to retrieve RSS feeds from your browser. Download the software and then install it. Follow the instructions on the screen. See the example subscription below:



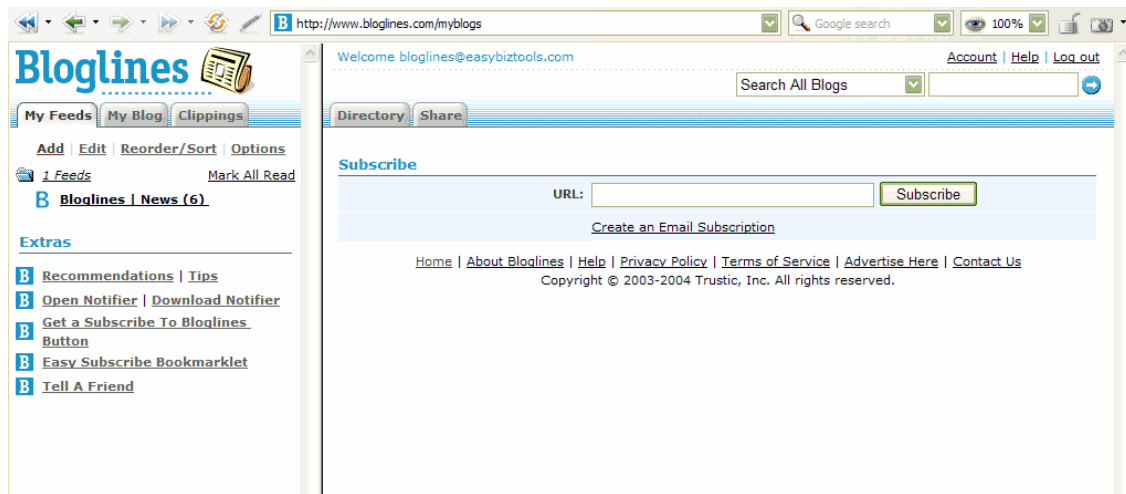
It's the familiar 3 pane windows – the left pane contains the feeds that you've subscribed, the top right pane is the “title” and “Summary” of each feed. If you click on it, then the contents of that feed (i.e your webpage/content will be shown in the bottom pane.

Another plugin software for those of you using Microsoft Outlook is NewsGator (www.newsgator.com). It plugs into Microsoft Outlook and allows you to read RSS feeds like an email.

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3. **Web-based Services**, such as Bloglines (www.bloglines.com). These are web-based readers – somewhat like your Yahoo webmail or Hotmail. Incidentally, Bloglines was voted one of **[Time Magazine's 50 Best Websites](#)**. Bloglines is more than just a RSS reader, it's also a blog tool plus a host of other cool tools. It's a free service.



All the menus such as adding/subscribing a new RSS feed, editing your options, Profiles, Blogs are located at the left pane. In the example above, I've clicked on "Add". On the right pane, I'll add the URL of the RSS feed that I want to subscribe to.

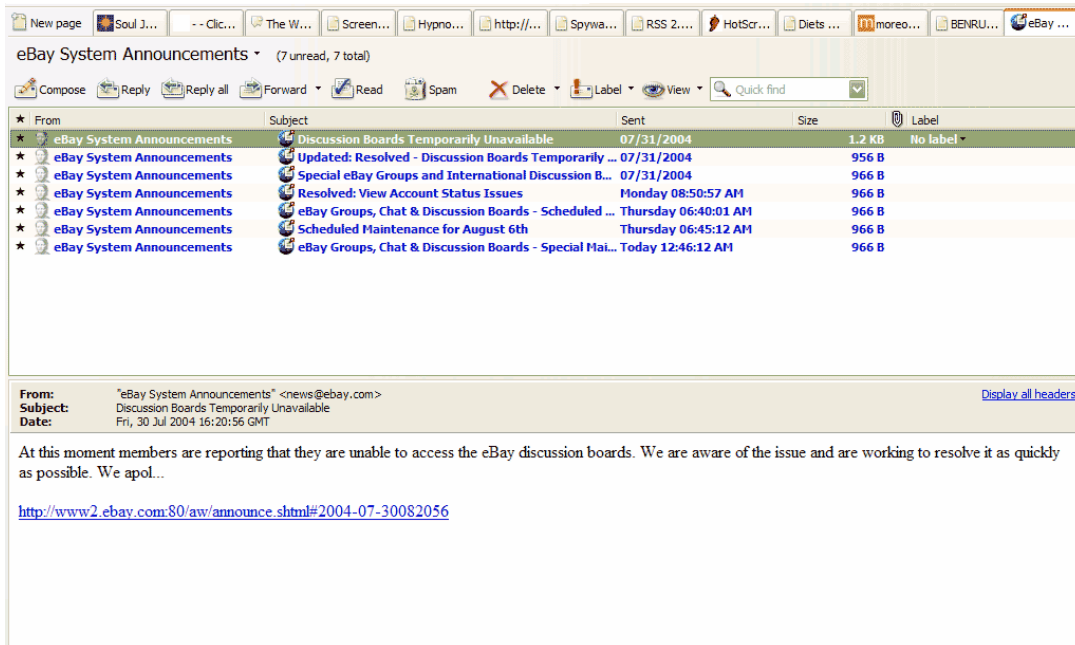
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4. **Built-In (Integrated Software).** The Opera Browser (www.opera.com) – version 7.5x) comes with built in RSS reader software. If you're using Opera instead of IE, then there's no need to install any other software. Just use the inbuilt RSS reader. Here's a screen shot from my Opera browser.

The top pane contains the 'title' of the RSS feed, the bottom pane contains the headlines and if available, an short excerpt of the news item.




The interface is not as nice as the other FeedReader or Pluck – but it does its job well. If you don't want the hassle of installing another software, then this is ideal as the Opera browser has everything – email, RSS reader and of course, the web-browser.

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RECOMMENDATION:

As most people are using the IE browser, I would recommend that you install the "Pluck" software from <http://www.pluck.com>. You can then subscribe to RSS feeds via your browser – just click on the RSS links, usually denoted by this icon: 

Subscribing to RSS Feeds.

With ezines, you need to give your name and email address to the publisher. With RSS feeds, all you have to do is click on the RSS link, usually denoted by the following icons:

 (Most common icon. Sometimes, instead of "XML", it may show "RSS")



The URL link will look something like this:

<http://www.yoursite.com/blog/index.xml> OR

<http://www.yoursite.com/blog/index.rdf> OR

<http://www.yoursite.com/blog/atom.xml> OR

If you click on a RSS feed link, with your IE browser, but have not install pluck, then you will see goobley-gook on the page. You need to install the Pluck software in order to view and subscribe to RSS feed.

If you're using a standalone desktop application, then you would cut and paste those urls into the software (eg. FeedReader)

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Choosing the "right" type of RSS Reader.

The advantage of having a "desktop" reader (a standalone software such as FeedReader or a Plug-in software like "Pluck") is that all the latest news are retrieved directly to your PC. You'll be alerted whenever there's a item.

The disadvantage is that if you go traveling, then you won't be able to view the news.

With "Web-based" services such as Bloglines, all the news are "aggregated" (collected) in your web/news portal. You just need to login to Bloglines and all the latest news can be viewed from 1 central place. No need to visit all the sites listed in your bookmarks.

The main advantage of this is that you can access your RSS feeds from anywhere with a PC/internet terminal. It's platform generic - works with Windows, Mac, Linux, etc.

The disadvantage with this type of web-base service is that you're not notified when there's a new feed. However, Bloglines have come up with a nifty tool – a small application called "Blogline Notifies". Download and install one of these notifiers (<http://bloglines.com/about/notifier>) and you'll be alerted when there are new items. Works with Windows, OS-X, Mozilla/Firefox and Linux/KDE.

If you're interested to check out more RSS reader software, here's good resource – lots of free RSS reader here.

<http://www.lights.com/weblogs/rss.html>

Be prepared to spend some time browsing that resource!

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Summary:

This short report showed you how you can free up your time by having your favorite news delivered right to your desktop – without any risk being spammed by the publisher.

Although RSS is not that popular yet, it is slowly gaining popularity and the media spotlight from the industry giants such as Google, Yahoo and Microsoft.

See excerpts of the news report below:

Google: Google is considering renewing support for the popular RSS Web publishing format in some of its services ... marking the latest twist in a burgeoning standards war over technology that could change how people read the news. [CNET](#) – 9th June 2004

eBay: Online auction giant eBay s the latest e-commerce player to embrace the RSS (define) content syndication format to stay in touch with customers... Senior manager of developer relations at eBay, Jeffrey McManus, announced the RSS rollout said the feeds would be used to push special offers, promotions and system status messages via RSS. [Internet News](#) – 7th June 2004

Microsoft: Microsoft has already sworn support for RSS 2.0 in Longhorn, announcing that the new Windows operating system will support the specification as a core operating system service... Companies that don't have an RSS strategy in place by the end of 2004 might be behind the curve; their competitors will probably have already implemented some level of RSS support in their web sites. [Tnl.net](#) 23rd Jan 04

Yahoo: Certainly RSS has been popularized as an efficient way to aggregate blog postings. But RSS adoption in the media and e-commerce spaces is accelerating even faster. Server-based aggregation sites such as Bloglines and Yahoo are evangelizing the technology. Newsletters and direct marketing campaigns are shifting out of e-mail to take advantage of RSS' efficiencies and positive word-of-mouth characteristics. [eWeek.com](#) (25th Mar04)

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If you're an online marketer and have an online business, RSS gives you a slew of other benefits not mentioned here – such as:

- The ability to display and syndicate your articles automatically to hundreds other websites – instance increase in exposure and traffic
- Add fresh, relevant content to your web pages – **without** writing a single word!
- How to get your site listed on Yahoo's newest RSS directory FOR FREE! Yes, you read correctly. Why pay \$299 just to get your site reviewed with no guarantee of inclusion?
- And much more! ...

Find out how you can profit from RSS Now – before your competitors do! **"RSS Made Easy – For the Busy Online Marketer"** will show you everything you need to know to adopt this amazing technology now and leap-frog over your competitors. Adopt it now before your competitors do!



Click on the Link below to find out more about ...

[**RSS Made Easy**](#)