

# Social Tools That Students Use and You Should Know About

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## Why Social Tools?

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- Versatile communication
- Facilitates collaboration
- Creates communities
- Close to nine in ten teens are Internet users
- Brings the library to the user
- Uses same tools that students use
- Makes the library interactive

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## Blogging (Weblogs)

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- Online, personal or group diaries
- Chronologically ordered, Most recent at top
- Provides a way to syndicate (push) content
  - See RSS below
- Example: Eastern Kentucky University (<http://ekurefdesk.blogspot.com/>)
- Example: Bluegrass Comm. & Tech. College (<http://lclrc.blogspot.com/>)
- Example: Ball State University (<http://www.bsu.edu/reallife/>)

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## Really Simple Syndication (RSS)

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- A way to aggregate data from multiple sources
- Used mostly to stay current with blogs
- Being used by libraries
  - News, Programming, new materials, etc.
- Example: Northern Kentucky University (<http://library.nku.edu/>)
- Example: University of Louisville (<http://www.library.louisville.edu/users/mopurc01/rss/index.asp>)
- Example: Public Library of Cincinnati & Hamilton County (<http://www.cincinnati.library.org/feeds/>)

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## Instant Messaging

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- Requires client software
- Allows real time communication with many
- Several services: AOL, MSN, Yahoo, etc.
- 75% of online teens use IM
  - Most prefer IM over email
- Example: Ohio University (<http://www.library.ohiou.edu/libinfo/ask-im.htm>)
- Use a multi-service IM client: Trillian (<http://www.ceruleanstudios.com/>), Gaim (<http://gaim.sourceforge.net/>)

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## Text Messaging

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- AKA: SMS messaging
  - Short Message Service
- One-on-one messages with mobile phones
- Popular for informal communication
- Backup for virtual reference?
- Example: Google SMS (<http://sms.google.com/>)
- Example: Southeastern Louisiana University (<http://www.selu.edu/Library/ServicesDept/referenc/textalibrarian.html>)
- Backup for virtual reference?

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## Wikis

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- User-editable web pages
  - Create, edit, and delete content
  - Maintainers moderate changes
- Facilitate collaboration
- Documentation, projects, reference
- Example: Wikipedia (<http://en.wikipedia.org/>)
- Example: Butler University ([http://www.seedwiki.com/wiki/butler\\_wikiref/](http://www.seedwiki.com/wiki/butler_wikiref/))
- Example: Ohio University ([http://www.library.ohiou.edu/subjects/bizwiki/index.php/Main\\_Page](http://www.library.ohiou.edu/subjects/bizwiki/index.php/Main_Page))

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## Folksonomies / Tagging

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- Collaborative (mob) categorization
- Users pick descriptive terms for content
- Example: Technorati (<http://www.technorati.com/>)
- Example: Del.icio.us (<http://del.icio.us/>)
- Example: Flickr (<http://www.flickr.com/>)
- Example: LibraryThing (<http://www.librarything.com/>)
- No authority control

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## On the Edge

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- Online gaming
  - Eight in ten wired teens play games online
  - Example: Public Library of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County (<http://www.news14charlotte.com/shared/print/default.asp?ArID=98447>)
  - Example: Bloomington Public Library (<http://www.bloomingtonlibrary.org/gamefest/>)
- VoIP: Voice over IP
  - Potential for distance learning?
  - Example: Skype (<http://www.skype.com/>)
- P2P: Peer-to-Peer
  - Does file sharing have a roll in education/libraries?

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## Promotion

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- Remember to promote
  - Don't assume students will stumble on it
- Make e-services mobile friendly
  - PDA/phone friendly web pages
- Use WiFi/hotspots in the library
  - So students can use these services on site
- Get staff involved
- Partner with others in your institution