

LCC3705 Project 2 Proposal

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The Problem:

There are many technologies that are supposed to help web users keep track of new stories and events taking place online. The most popular of which is RSS, an acronym for Really Simple Syndication, that utilizes XML to convey these stories and website posts to users. Unfortunately, many web users aren't sure how to even use RSS. According to a 2005 Yahoo survey, only 12% of internet users are aware of RSS and a mere 4% have knowingly used RSS.

The Audience:

As mentioned, the audience for my proposed solution would ideally be users unaware of RSS and how to use it. However, it will be designed so that even the RSS-savvy will have a use for it.

The Solution:

I plan on creating a simple, fast-loading RSS aggregator. The website design will allow users to easily keep track of multiple RSS feeds. The site will be PHP powered but would utilize MySQL for user accounts. Users will be able to create accounts, allowing them to manage their own list of RSS feeds. The site will be divided into 2 columns, the left having a list of the RSS feeds with the right pane displaying the feed contents.



Layers:

Taking various aspects of Garrett's layers into account, the RSS aggregator will have thought-out ideas for

Strategy, Scope, Structure, Skeleton and Surface. The strategy for the whole project will be for users to turn a more complex activity of reading various websites into one simple interface where they can access all of the same content. Scope relies on this activity of RSS aggregation allowing users to create accounts and manage their own feeds. Structure is based upon PHP for the site, MySQL for keeping track of users, XML for parsing feeds and possibly AJAX if I integrate on-the-fly feed retrieval. The skeleton will be formed around a simple 2 column layout for scrollable areas of feeds and feed posts. Finally, the surface will be sleek with a focus on speed, dependence on CSS styling and minimal use of images.