What’s New at RI.gov

Dan Chapman, Webmakers Group
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What is RSS again?

• Stands for Really Simple Syndication
• A streamlined way to “push” Web site content
• Users can manipulate RSS content in desktop clients, other Web sites, applications, widgets start pages and mobile devices
• Publish once, publish everywhere
• For more information visit: www.ri.gov/rex/
RSS at RI.gov

- RI.gov toolbox
- www.ri.gov/toolbox

Quickly and easily post news highlights and press releases to:
  - Your Web site
  - An RSS feed
  - RI.gov
Toolbox Quick facts

- In use by over 40 agencies and municipalities
- Over 2,271 press releases posted in 2007
- Over 5,134 press releases posted since launch
Agencies on Board

Governor’s Office
Department of Business Registration
Rlte Care
Economic Development Corporation
Division of Motor Vehicles
DoIT
Department of Administration
Emergency Management Agency
Office of the Secretary of State
Department of Corrections
Office of General Treasurer
Rhode Island State Police
Office of the Attorney General
Lt. Governor’s Office
City of East Providence
What it means
Publish once, view everywhere.
Log in

Username
Password

Forgot your password?
To Get Started

• Contact RI.gov for a toolbox account
• Learn more about RSS and REX at www.RI.gov/rex/
• Start posting!
What the heck are Microformats?

Microformats are:

- Good clean semantic markup
- Very easy to implement
- A no-brainer
Microformats are not

• Completely open or extensible
• An attempt to reinvent the wheel
• A way to define all our content types
“Designed for humans first and machines second, microformats are a set of simple, open data formats built upon existing and widely adopted standards.

“Instead of throwing away what works today, microformats intend to solve simpler problems first by adapting to current behaviors and usage patterns (e.g. XHTML, blogging)”

and they play nice with others

- Valid HTML or XHTML
- Styled easily with CSS
- Good clean semantic markup
Think of it this way

“You marked-up something this way, so I’ll do it that way too”

- hCard
  For people and organizations

- hCalendar
  For calendaring information

- hReview
  For opinions, reviews and such
A little nitty gritty

hCard

<span class="adr">
  <span class="street-address">One Capitol Hill</span>,
  <span class="locality">Providence</span>,
  <span class="region">RI</span>
  <span class="postal-code">02908</span>
</span>
How it looks

<span class="adr">
  <span class="street-address">One Capitol Hill</span>,
  <span class="locality">Providence</span>,
  <span class="region">RI</span>,
  <span class="postal-code">02908</span>
</span>
That’s nice and all, but what’s the point?

Commonly agreed-upon markup doesn’t mean much unless we start doing things with it.
Huh?
Huh?

Think of it this way:
If we markup the *same* kinds of data in the *same* ways:

Users and user agents can **aggregate** and **manipulate** our content in new and interesting ways.
For Example

Operator Plugin

• A Firefox plugin, designed to look for Microformats (among other things)
• Allows users to quickly add contact information to their address book
• Or, view an address on a map
• https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/4106
All that work for a lousy plugin?

For now.

Future browsers will have built-in support for Microformats

- Internet Explorer
- Firefox
- Safari? Opera?
Why do all this work now?
Why do all this work now?

- It’s incredibly easy
- Takes very little time out of your day
- Makes your Web site future proof
- Adds value to your Web site
The Real Question is
The Real Question is

Why not do it?
Microformats in the Wild

- Twitter  www.twiter.com
- White Pages  www.whitepages.com
- Golf Digest  www.golfdigest.com
- Cork’d  www.corkd.com
- Brown University  www.brown.edu
- 30 Boxes  www.30boxes.com
- Harvard Business School  www.hbs.edu/faculty/dspar/

Source: http://microformats.org/wiki/hcard-examples-in-wild
Resources

- Microformats Web site
  www.microformats.org

- Wiki
  http://microformats.org/wiki/Main_Page

- Operator Plugin

- Tails Plugin

- Safari Plugin
  http://zappatic.net/safarimicroformats/
Calendars
iCal: Calendaring for the Web
iCal: Calendaring for the Web

iCal is:

• A calendar application made by Apple Inc.
• An open data format for calendars
• A way to share calendar information
• Also known as ics or iCalendar
Rhody iCal
Rhody iCal

- Office of Rehabilitation Services
- Waterfire
- Town of Bristol
- Rhode Island Farmers Markets
- URI Rams
Widespread adoption of:

- Facebook
- 37 Signals Backpack
- Windows Calendar
- Yahoo!
- Mozilla Calendar
- Microsoft Exchange
- Joyent
- Lotus Notes
- RI.gov
- Sun Java Server
- Microsoft Outlook 2007
- Sunbird
- upcoming.org
Widespread adoption

Facebook
37 Signals Backpack
Windows Calendar
Yahoo!
Mozilla Calendar
Microsoft Exchange
Joyent
Lotus Notes
Sun Java Server
Microsoft Outlook 2007
Sunbird
Upcoming.org
Rl.gov
Google
Google Calendar

• Part of Google’s suite of Web apps
• Free!
• Can import existing calendar feeds
• Displays multiple calendars simultaneously
• Makes creating an iCal feed quick and easy
Google Calendar

Calendar Address: [XML] [ICAL] [HTML] (Calendar ID: dannychapman@gmail.com)

This is the address for your calendar. No one can use this link unless you have made your calendar public.
Where we are right now

“The Bucket”
A way to aggregate and translate data feeds

iCal → Bucket → RSS
For Example

SOS Open Meetings feeds

SOS RSS Feeds

Bucket

RI.gov Calendar, RSS, iCal
Warm Fuzzies

Google + RI.gov = Good Things

Public dissemination of state events and meetings makes for more open government.
Calendars at RI.gov

www.RI.gov/calendar/
What this means
What this means

1. Google Calendar (or other iCal) Feeds can be converted to RSS feeds by RI.gov (Contact RI.gov to make this happen)
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3. Visitors can then subscribe to either the iCal or RSS feeds provided on your site
Where we hope to go
Where we hope to be this year

Your iCal Feed

Rl.gov toolbox

Calendar cut & paste for your site
Findability
Findability

- Site content disseminated by different means can make your content more findable
Findability

- Site content disseminated by different means can make your content more findable
- By search, browser, desktop aggregator or calendar
Findability

- Site content disseminated by different means can make your content more findable
- By search, browser, desktop aggregator or calendar
- Content is moved beyond the home page or portal, using open standards for the user’s benefit
Browser as information broker

Changing Roles

The role of the Webmaker is changing:

• Web site information streams will become more important than the static Web page

• As a result, the ways we publish information have to change
Help

Dan Chapman
Director of Creative Services
(401) 831 8099 x240
dchapman@nicusa.com

Tom Viall
General Manager
(401) 831 8099 x220
tomv@nicusa.com

Joe Alba
Director of Development
(401) 831 8099 x250
jalba@nicusa.com

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Webmaker's Resource

Welcome!
Welcome to the Webmaker's resource — the online resource for all Rhode Island State Government and municipality Webmakers. We hope you find this resource both informative and useful. If you have any suggestions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Need help with your agency's Web site?
Get a new Web site for your agency
It's as easy as 1 2 3!
1. Download our creative workbook to prepare for your agency's new Web site
   Download
2. Meet with RI.gov to discuss your Web site needs and have a template designed at no cost
   Download
Enjoy using your new standards-based Web site!
Agencies using the RI.gov Web site template:

News
Updated: 3/7/07
New AJAX code snippet!
Find out how to add a dynamic "more info" expanding link to your Web site.

Webmaker's Web 2.0 Presentation
View a presentation shared by Daniel Chapman, Director of Creative Services - RI.gov, at the most recent Webmaker's meeting.
   Web 2.0

New Agency Web site Guidebook online
Guidebook for Agency Webmaker's using the RI.gov template. Learn how to get the most from your Web site.
www.RI.gov/resource
Questions?
Thank you.