

Web 2.0 – The Web’s Edge

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Tagging and Folksonomies / Using flickr – Class # 4 – Chapter 3.3

The Quest for Information

From the early days of ARPANET to Web 2.0, the Internet has changed. Yet, if we look beyond the technological developments, we will see one common trend – we use the Internet to acquire information. The format of information has changed, and its method of delivery has changed, but the search for it remains a primary goal.

Finding Information

- Tim Berners-Lee developed the Web as a means of linking information by following hyperlinks
- Directory structures, such as Yahoo and the Virtual Library, were introduced in the early 1990s. They used rigid hierarchical classification, based on human design.
- Search engine were later used to match words in the query to words in the Web page. This matching was more of a physical association, rather than a logical one, and dependent on the site owner’s choice of wording.
- Eventually better search engines were developed in order to give more meaning and relevance to the search results. But site owners still tried to find ways to fool the engines, in order to obtain a favorable rank.

Question: So what is an alternative or an additional method??

Answer: Folksonomy

**A folksonomy is the practice and method
of collaboratively creating and managing tags
to annotate and categorize content.**

Folksonomies are used to categorize Web pages, photographs, links and other Web content by using labels, called “tags,” which are chosen by the user. The information can be retrieved later on by using these “tags”. These tags are made available to the community and can be shared. Others can tag the same item thereby having “collective” tagging. Folksonomies add to the democratization of the Web by giving individuals the ability to participate and contribute.

In contrast to traditional subject indexing and hierarchical classification, metadata is generated not only by experts but also **by the creators and consumers of the content**. Freely chosen keywords or “tags” are used instead of a controlled vocabulary. The users choose their own keywords or “tags” with few or no restrictions are imposed on their choices. These tags are not chosen from a previously existing controlled vocabulary, a strict taxonomy or any other officially sanctioned method of description or organization

Thomas Vander Wal created the term “folksonomy” from folk + taxonomy. But unlike a structured, organized taxonomy classification system, a folksonomy is a user-generated way of categorization. Some websites that use folksonomies are:

- flickr.com – photo sharing
- delicious.com – social bookmarking
- youTube.com – video sharing
- librarything.com - book cataloging
- amazon.com – users can tag items to find them later

Folksonomies provide meaning

- allow members of a group to search for and retrieve documents, communicate with each other and share their knowledge in a way that means something to them.
- more likely to remember our own tags for searching than terms belonging to a predetermined system
- social communities form around tags.
 - Users can join groups focused on individual tags on Flickr.
 - Ann Arbor Library allows user to tag items (<http://www.aadl.org/catalog/>)District
 - Cite U Like (citeulike.org) – scholarly resources

Folksonomies lead to more information

- Collective tagging provides more insight into that item
- Users can discover who used a given tag and see the other tags that this person has used. In this way, folksonomy users can discover the tag sets of another user who tends to interpret and tag content in a way that makes sense to them. The result can be a rewarding gain in the user's capacity to find related content

Tagging

Tagging is giving a search term(s) or key word to a web page, photo, video, blog entry, or other Web content in order to make it easier to find. Tags are labels that allow users to associate information with particular topics. Many sites allow users to apply tags to information ranging from uploaded images to blog entries. Tags are being used by the search engines. Users can tag their information with search terms, and when another user enters a search term that matches the tag, that information will be listed as a search result. Tagging makes searching for information faster and more efficient.

Tags are an increasingly popular and increasingly effective way to organize and find information online. With the staggering amount of information online today, tags are becoming an important tool to find relevant information, especially on blogs.

Tags are...

- A keyword that is added to a digital object (website, picture or video clip) to describe it
- A form of meta data that allows users to find information on a particular topic
- A collaboratively created labeling system
- Not as part of a formal classification system
- Publicly viewable
- An example of the socialization of user generated content
- Tags are separated by “spaces” so if you have a two word tag, write it as one word ie: “palomarcollge” although you can use two separate words in the search box

palomarcollge

Note: HTML / XHTML and XML all use “tags”, but these tags are more structured and follow rules and guidelines.

What can be Tagged?

- Objects – videos, photos, audio
- Resources – URLs (web pages, links)

Tag Cloud



- A tag clouds is a way to visualize tags in a folksonomy.
- A tag cloud is a visual depiction of related tags with frequency of use displayed by larger font size.
- Tag clouds are visualizations of the most popular or most frequently used tags.
- Tags are usually single words and are typically listed alphabetically, and the importance of a tag is shown with font size or color.



Flickr is a photo and video hosting website and online community. It is one of the earliest Web 2.0 applications. Flickr allows you to upload photos, and identify them with “tags”, so that you can easily find them again. You can also search for photos using tags as keywords.

Flickr was developed by Vancouver based company and launched in February 2004. It was acquired by Yahoo in March 2005. Flickr was also an early website to implement tag clouds, which provide access to images tagged with the most popular keywords. Flickr reportedly host more than 3 billion images. Although the photos are not the property of Flickr, the data is.



Because of its support for tags, Flickr has been cited as a prime example of effective use of folksonomy.

Key Features of Flickr

- Tag-based identification and search application
- Photos can be grouped into “sets”
- Photos can be made public or private
- You can define a “licensing” for photos to determine who can use the
- Provides the ability to comment, discuss and insert “note” on photos
- Only the owner of the photo can apply tags

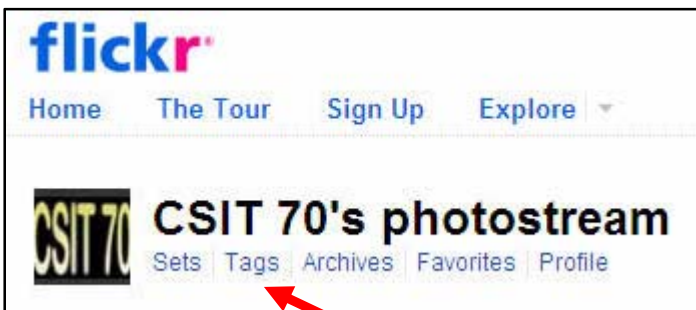
Flickr URIs

- www.flickr.com/explore - shows what Flickr feels is most interesting each day
- www.flickr.com/photos - shows the most recent photos being uploaded at that time
- www.flickr.com/creativecommons - shows recent photos licensed under Creative Commons and general CC info
- www.flickr.com/photos/tags - shows the most recent popular tags in the last 24 hrs

Explore tags directly - www.flickr.com/photos/tags/TAG_NAME

Address of a Flickr account - http://flickr.com/photos/USER_ID

Sample account - <http://flickr.com/photos/csit70>



Click to see tag cloud for this user's account

