

Link-Up@Home

Your Personal Guide to the Web

www.infotoday.com/linkup



EDITED BY
LORAIN PAGE

You will need to register with del.icio.us if you want to store your own bookmarks on the site.

A 'del.icio.us' Way to Use Bookmarks

by THOMAS PACK

Why would you want to maintain Web bookmarks online instead of inside your own browser?

According to the bookmark site del.icio.us, one of the advantages of Web-based bookmarking is that you can access your saved links from any Internet-connected computer. But del.icio.us, which has signed up more than 1.5 million users, is a "social bookmarking" site, so it also emphasizes the advantages of sharing bookmarks: "your friends, coworkers, and other people can view them for reference, amusement, collaboration, or anything else."

You also "can find other people on del.icio.us who have interesting bookmarks and add their links to your own collection. Everyone on del.icio.us chooses to save their bookmarks for a reason. You have access to the links that everyone wants to remember. You can see whether two people have chosen to remember a link, or whether it was useful enough for a thousand people to remember." And these social aspects of the site "may help you find things that are useful for you, too."

The Folksonomic Approach

Joshua Schachter, described in *Technology Review* as "a wonky Wall Street quantitative analyst," created del.icio.us in 2003 as a hobby—a way to index and share Web pages with friends. Schachter's early efforts became so popular and grew so rapidly that del.icio.us, Inc. became a company in 2005. By December of that year, Yahoo! had acquired it.

Unlike a Web browser, del.icio.us doesn't use bookmark folders. Instead, the site lets users assign tags, which are nonhierarchical descriptors that can be attached to bookmarks. "Unlike folders," according to the site, "you make up tags when you need them and you can use as many as you like."

This tagging approach is an example of a folksonomy, a user-generated classification system. "The process of folksonomic tagging is intended to make a body of information increasingly easier to search, discover, and navigate over time," according to the Wikipedia article on the topic. "A well-developed folksonomy is ideally accessible as a shared vocabulary that is both originated by, and familiar to, its primary users."

Folksonomic tagging and the other social aspects of del.icio.us allow several innovative applications for bookmarks to be used. Suggestions from del.icio.us include the following:

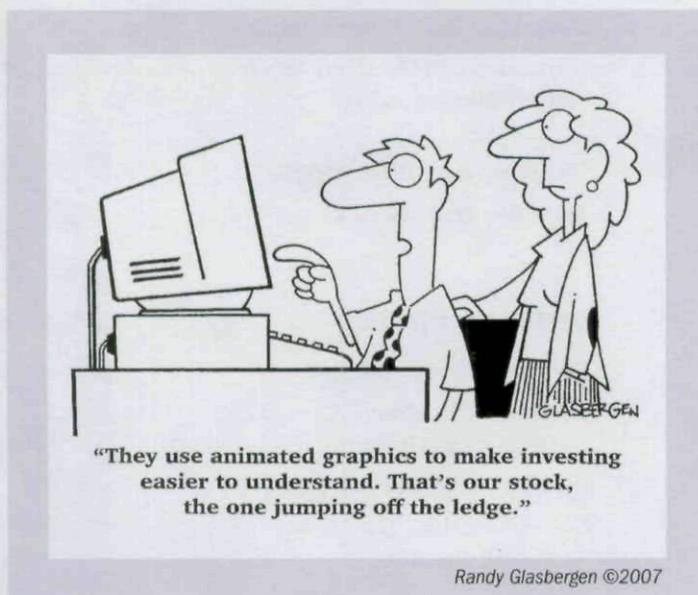
and family by using the 'for:username' tag."

- Create a linklog: "Save bookmarks to interesting websites and add a bit of commentary to create a lightweight linklog. Then, use linkrolls or the daily blog posting feature to include your del.icio.us bookmarks on your blog or website."
- Develop an online cookbook: "Whenever you find a great recipe on a website, save it to del.icio.us. Tag it with the recipe's ingredients or style of cooking, and then when you're wondering what to make for dinner, you can use your saved bookmarks to help you remember the perfect recipe."
- Podcast: "Want to hear some great podcasts? Visit the mp3+podcast tag combination and start listening. Are you a podcaster? Start posting your mp3 files to del.icio.us and we will create an RSS feed for you."
- Collaborate: "Friends, coworkers, and other groups can use a shared account, special tag, or their del.icio.us networks to collect and organize bookmarks that are relevant—and useful—to the entire group."

Other People's Bookmarks

You don't need to register with del.icio.us (which you also can access using www.delicious.com) to benefit from bookmarks that other users have posted to the site. The home page includes a hotlist, which displays links that have been recently bookmarked by several other users.

The page also includes a tags to watch section, which shows some of the most frequently used tags. del.icio.us also offers a popular page,



Link-Up Digital

is a semimonthly updated, Web-only section featuring articles, reviews, and more for savvy users and producers of electronic information products and services.

Visit **Link-Up Digital:**

www.infotoday.com/linkup

which is similar to an expanded hotlist. A recent page lists bookmarks saved by users within the past few minutes.

You also can search the site. The del.icio.us search engine looks through users' bookmark descriptions, notes, and tags. There's a search box on the top right corner of most site pages. The search engine supports Boolean queries, even those that include the XOR operator. For instance, searching "(bacon XOR ham) cheese" gets you bacon and cheese, or ham and cheese, but not bacon, ham and cheese," according to the site.

If you want to search tags only, you can use the tag: prefix (e.g., tag:bacon).

Create Your Own Bookmarks

You will need to register with del.icio.us if you want to store your own bookmarks on the site. During registration, you'll install a button on your Web browser that makes saving links easy: When you visit a site that you want to bookmark, you just click the button and a screen will pop up that lets you attach notes and tags.

A potential drawback of a folksonomy is that there is no controlled vocabulary.

Someone may tag a cat Web site as "cats," while another may tag a similar site as "felines." So if you're tag searching for "cats," you'll find the site labeled as such, but you won't find the "felines" site.

This tagging approach is an example of a folksonomy, a user-generated classification system.



del.icio.us offers users some help for this problem by giving them the option of contributing to a de facto controlled vocabulary. When you bookmark some sites, you'll be able to use popular tags and/or recommended tags. As you would expect, the most popular tags are those that other people have used. Recommended tags are a combination of popular tags and tags you've used before. But you don't have to use any of these. You always can tag a site any way you

want when you bookmark it. (del.icio.us also helps users overcome the no-controlled-vocabulary drawback by providing a list of related tags in search results.)

To display your saved bookmarks, simply click another button on your browser. If you're using a friend's computer, you can go to the del.icio.us home page and click "your bookmarks" to see your links. To save bookmarks on a friend's computer, you can click a "post" link. You can edit or delete bookmarks whenever you like.

A Little Privacy, Please

del.icio.us also lets you upload your existing bookmarks from your browser. If you're anti-social, you'll be happy to know that the bookmarks you upload are private by default, and any new bookmarks that you store on the site can be marked "do not share" so only you will be able to access them.

But it's the social features that make the site innovative. For instance, if you're a registered user, you can take advantage of the del.icio.us subscription feature. When you add a tag to your subscriptions,

del.icio.us will deliver everyone's bookmarks that are saved with the same tag to your subscriptions page. The site also offers a network feature that lets you track bookmarks saved by specific users.

A page of third-party tools (aka the Neat unofficial tools page) offers several services and applications that an online community of del.icio.us users created to provide even more options for using bookmarks. For instance, Populicio.us lists popular links within the last day, week, or month. Thumblicio.us shows you screen shots of popular sites within tags that you choose.

And there are other uses for online bookmarks. Visit the del.icio.us help page for clear, straightforward explanations of other ways to find, use, and share information. Who would have thought that something as simple as a bookmark list could become a significant tool for navigating the vast reaches of today's infosphere?

Thomas Pack is a writer who lives near Louisville, Ky. His email address is thomaspack@aol.com. Send your comments about this article to itletters@infotoday.com.

Fans Flock to DIY Video Highlights

CyberSports

by DAVID KING

Watch out, ESPN. Keep an eye on your backs, assorted Fox Sports Nets. Stay on guard, all those other cable sports channels that think they can't be replaced.

Remember, it happened to us at the Word Factories—made obsolete by that Internet thing—and it can happen to you.

Just after the NBA's All-Star break, the league's official site launched a project that lets fans put together their own highlight videos, complete with editing tools, logos, and music. Don't laugh, you TV types. This is the momentum of YouTube and MySpace rolled into one, because the Internet generation has already decided the printed word is basically good for nothing but lining the cat box.

NBA fans can go to <http://MyVideo.NBA.com> and turn into digital editors with a 2-minute registration and a 30-minute practice.

Highlights from recent games (and there are more being added all the time) are categorized as three-pointers, assists, blocks, buzzer-beaters, and (of course) dunks. There's also a team-by-team index for stand-by-my-team types and one collection of video simply called LeBron James that is worth watching just to see a viewer's jaw hit the table.

The software that does all this is friendly (it politely asks for your patience while

it loads clips and compiles your videos), and it is also user friendly, which means that even old guys like your Field Correspondent (if he actually cared about the NBA) could compile his own highlights show. Sadly, there are no clips from the '70s, although we suspect that if we used some of the special features (one that turns video from full color to sepia-toned and another that slows the players down by about 50 percent), we could make Manu Ginobili look like Paul Griffin, if we squinted.

One drawback is that sometimes there's a line in the virtual editing room, with an accompanying countdown that is like being on hold with your bank. ("Your average wait time is ... 40 ... minutes.") But the fact that you can save, post, and share your videos usually makes up for that.

Check it out at <http://MyVideo.NBA.com>.

Old Stuff

Just the other day, we were wondering if we could find the logo for the long-departed Ozark Mountain Ducks of the long-departed Texas-Louisiana baseball league. Or how about the Amarillo Gorrillas of the Central Hockey League or the Schuylkill Syrens of the Women's American Basketball Association?

Yes, we know. We have too much time on our hands.

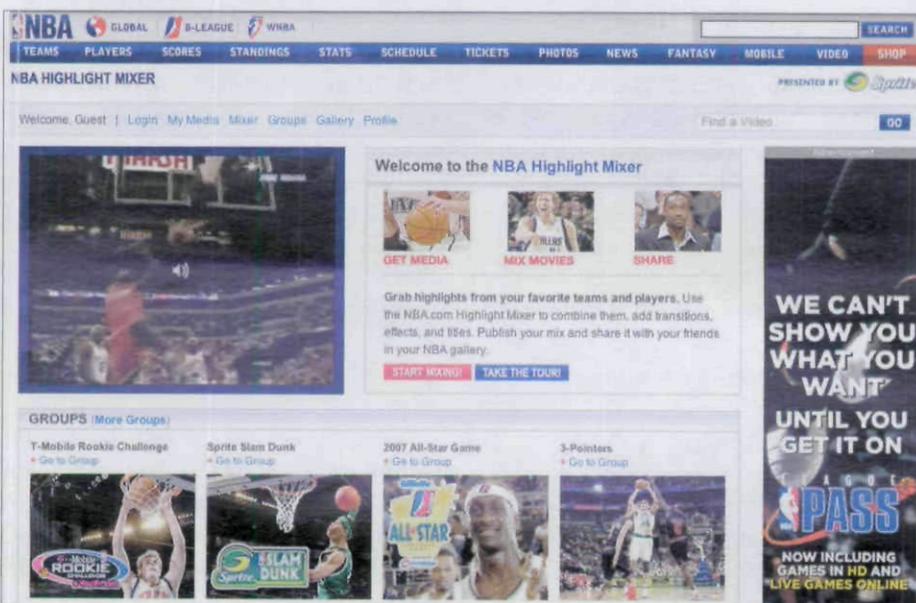
But there is a place where you can see graphic representations of teams and leagues from 11 sports, plus colleges from coast to coast. It's called LogoServer, and obviously, it's been compiled by someone with even more free time than your Field Correspondent.

Baseball logos make up a big chunk of it, since there have been pro baseball teams kicking around since the days of Abner Doubleday (and yes, we know he didn't invent baseball). But there's also artwork for professional lacrosse and volleyball leagues, plus logos for hockey leagues from one corner of Canada to another, just in case you need to see what the Sarnia Steeplejack Bees once wore. And the assortment of college logos is impressive, even the variations on a theme (six Tulane Green Wave logos almost seems excessive until you toss in a random pelican or two).

In any case, the tech-savvy out there soon will be figuring out a way to use the college logos in NBA.com videos, perhaps putting together a brief montage with players and the logos of some colleges (or the colleges they promised to attend, or attended for a semester, or thought about attending).

Go old school at www.LogoServer.com.

David King is a sports writer at the San Antonio Express-News, and the logo of his alma mater, aka Enormous State University, is at www.logoserver.com/US-NCAA-T.html. His email address is dking1@satx.rr.com. Send your comments about this article to itletters@infotoday.com.



Copyright of Information Today is the property of Information Today Inc. and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.