

**Web 2.0 Tools and the UNCG Libraries Website:  
A Proposal**

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## Introduction

This is a proposal regarding the incorporation of Web 2.0 tools on the UNCG Libraries' web site. The tools that are discussed have been implemented at other libraries, and relevant links will be provided as evidence for their use. This paper will not make the argument that the current implementation of these tools was ineffective; rather, it will demonstrate that the current web site could be enhanced with features known to Web 2.0 users.

## Staffing Issues

*Develop a Social Media Policy.* Having a policy in place is one way to ensure users that the content that is encountered on a library website as well as defining how the content may or may not be used. Further, libraries can use this policy to ensure that all content will accurately reflect the library's mission statement. An example of this is the [blogging policy at the Western Kentucky Libraries](#), where guidelines have been outlined as well as contact information for who is monitoring those blogs.

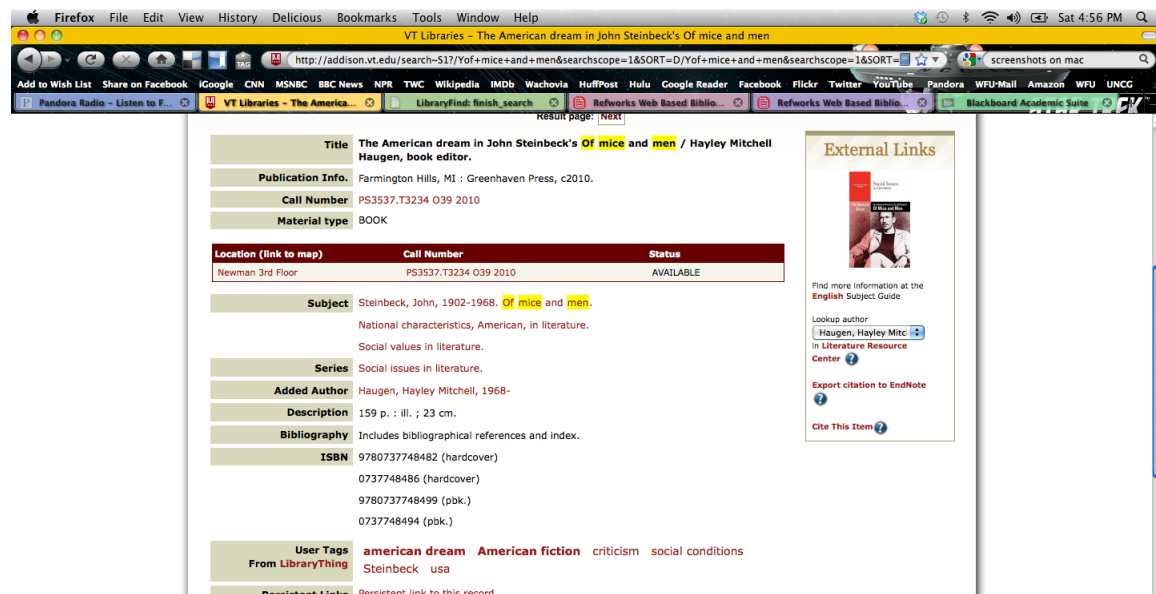


This can also be extended to staff members who have a particular interest in social media being responsible for specific aspects of the online presence for the library, as a way to distribute the responsibilities so that one staff person would not be responsible for everything. [Identifying these staff either on the web or similar means](#) will allow users to connect with a specific person and not just an anonymous person at another keyboard.



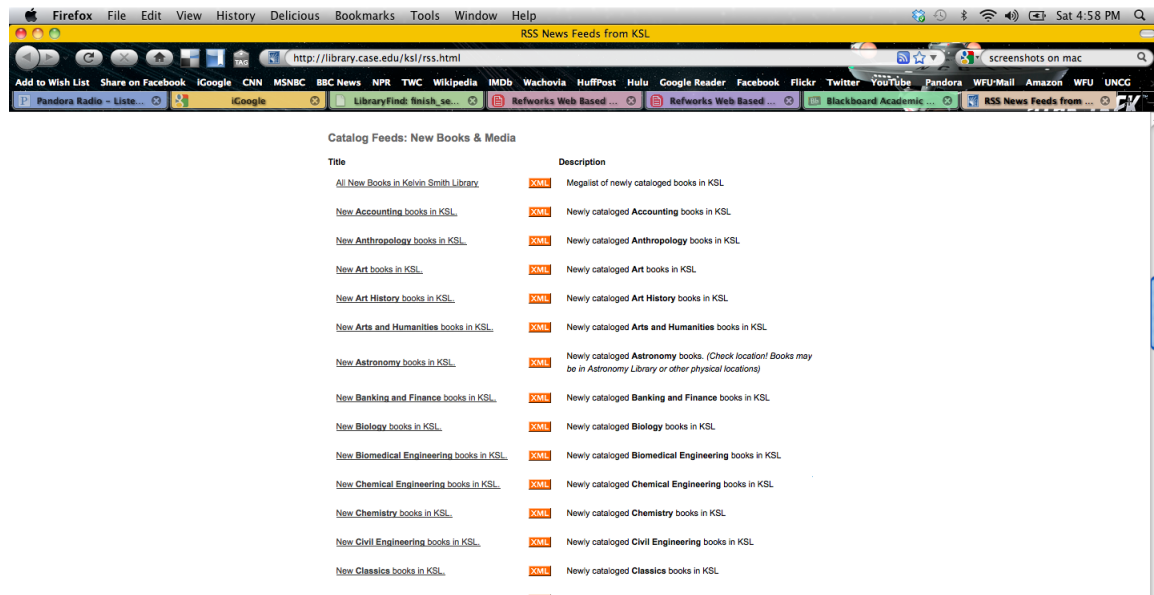
## Integrated Library Systems

*Incorporating folksonomies.* For many users, the online catalog for a library can be daunting. The MARC record, with little changes possible unless a problem emerged, has presented information in a standard format. However, this can present a challenge for users who are not familiar with the subtleties of MARC subject headings. Incorporating software that can incorporate user-generated folksonomies, or tags, can bridge this potential gap in content. [Virginia Tech has incorporated Library Thing](#) into its online catalog, adding content tags which users may identify more easily in their searches.

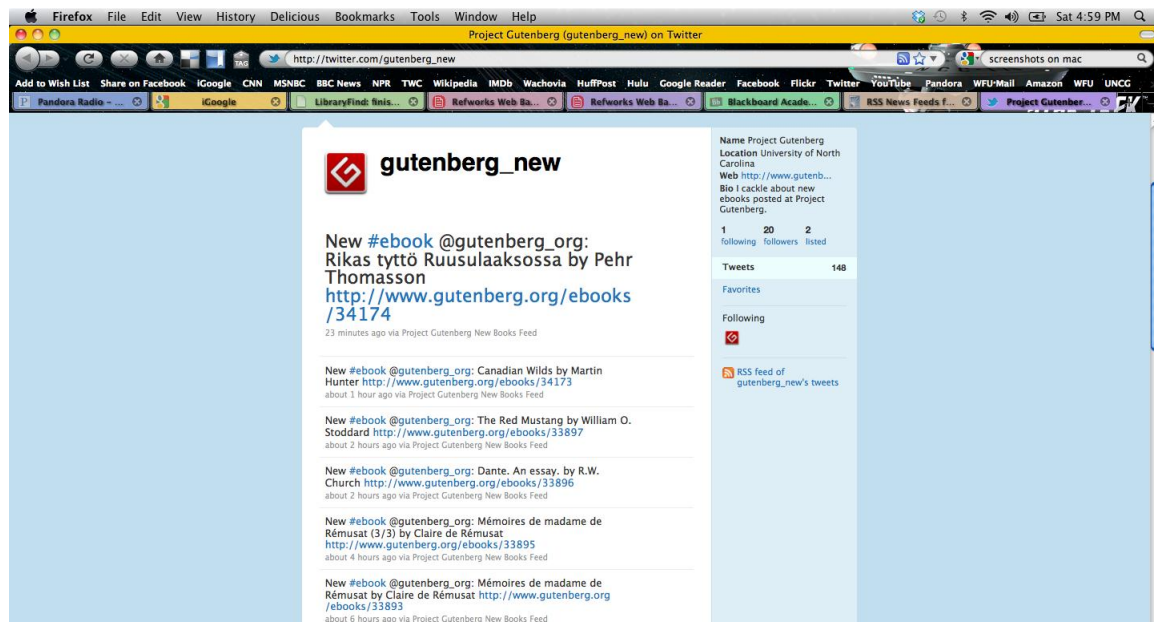


## E-Books

*Feeds to inform users of new e-books.* Libraries are often faced with the problems of informing users of their new items, but e-books can be problematic since there is no shelf or physical space that they can occupy. In this instance, RSS feeds can be configured to run to present these items to users whenever they have been added to the online catalog. So far, more vendors and booksellers than libraries have used this technology, but Case Western University has [a list of several RSS feeds](#) to inform users of new content.



This could also be extended to using a Twitter stream for the same purpose, as [Project Gutenberg has done](#) with their latest acquisitions.



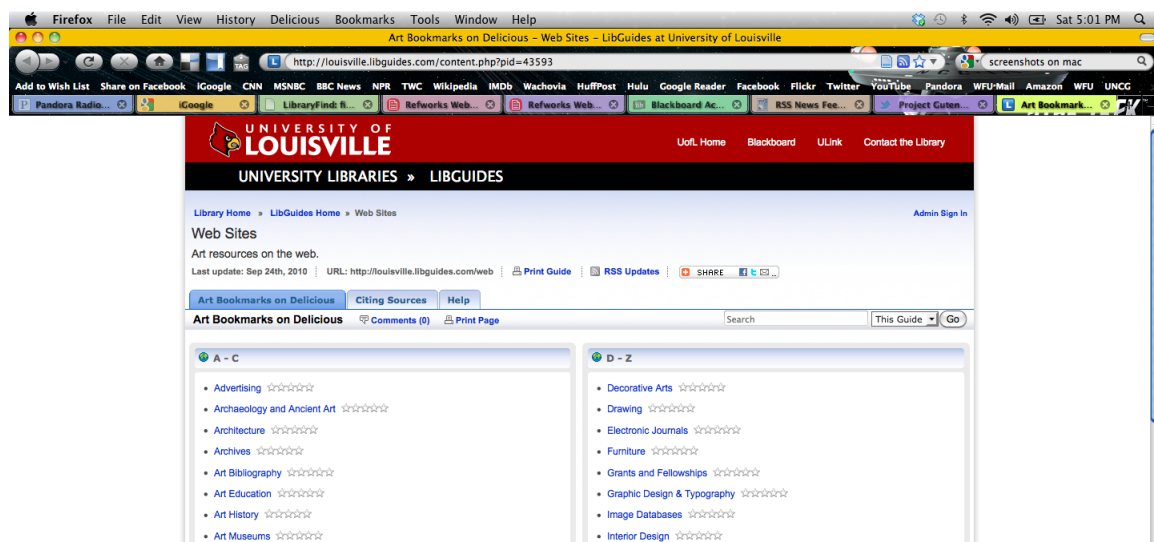
## Meeting Spaces and Information Commons

*Knowing when computers and meeting spaces are available.* Students coming to the library who may not have brought a laptop with them may need to use a desktop computer in the main lab. At peak periods during the day, having a resource to know when computers are available can be helpful as many students can descend on these facilities. The Learning Commons of D.H. Hill Library at UNC has information about [available computers on its homepage that is in real time](#) for easy reference.

To check the availability of study spaces, a Google Calendar on the landing page for a specific space can show when they are unavailable for specific reasons, as seen at the [Lamont Library at Harvard University](#). An extension of this can be for library study spaces with real time information, but has not been utilized on a wide scale. Such a system is currently being tested at [Johns Hopkins University](#).

## E-Journal Management

*Subject guides with the underpinnings of social bookmarking.* As library guides for specific subjects areas continue to grow, some resources that may be utilized may not come from academic journals. Open source journals that are peer-reviewed and “born digital” are becoming more common but lack the features of their print-based counterparts. Also, content may be located on a website that does not fit into the classification of database or similar resource. Social bookmarking sites such as [Delicious](#) can serve as the foundation of the next generation of subject guides and can easily be shared amongst users with Delicious accounts. The University of Louisville is one institution that has used Delicious for the disciplines it supports, such as [this one for the art department](#).



*Using VuFind.* The expectations of users regarding the library catalog have grown with the constant refinement of Google and Amazon. The catalog, which had been a repository for the cataloged resources of a library, has fallen behind the growing number of databases and related online resources that exist outside of the catalog. Products such as the [open source VuFind](#) have been able to step into this gap by providing features that a traditional ILS would lack. [Falvey Memorial Library at Villanova University](#) (the home of VuFind) has used this technology to incorporate features familiar to an Amazon user, such as a resource type, tags, and even book jackets.

*Using LibraryFind.* The goal of a working metasearch feature has almost been the “impossible dream” for many libraries. Many products available for libraries do not have the functionality of Google, Yahoo or similar commercial products. Products from commercial vendors frequently cannot search across all of the records for a particular library, limiting its ability to be a true discovery tool. Further, the searches would often be slow and cumbersome. [LibraryFind an open source product developed by the Oregon State University Libraries](#), has been the latest attempt to resolve this ongoing concern but from a perspective that was built for libraries by libraries.



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