



Blogging: so what's the big deal?

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What is a blog?

Blog noun [short for Weblog] (1999) : a Web site that contains an online personal journal with reflections, comments, and often hyperlinks provided by the writer.

- Merriam-Webster OnLine Dictionary

“A blog is a web page made up of usually short, frequently updated posts that are arranged chronologically—like a what's new page or a journal. The content and purposes of blogs varies greatly—from links and commentary about other web sites, to news about a company/person/idea, to diaries, photos, poetry, mini-essays, project updates, even fiction.”



- The Blogger.com site

“Weblogs are often-updated sites that point to articles elsewhere on the web, often with comments, and to on-site articles.”

- Dave Winer



Brief history of weblogging

- First blogs: the what's new pages at CERN, NCSA, and Netscape.
- The word weblog: coined by Jorn Barger in 1997
- Dot-com boom: brings Radio, Blogger, LiveJournal, etc.
- 2002 - 2003: blogs break into the mainstream
- 2004: Employee & corporate blogs take off

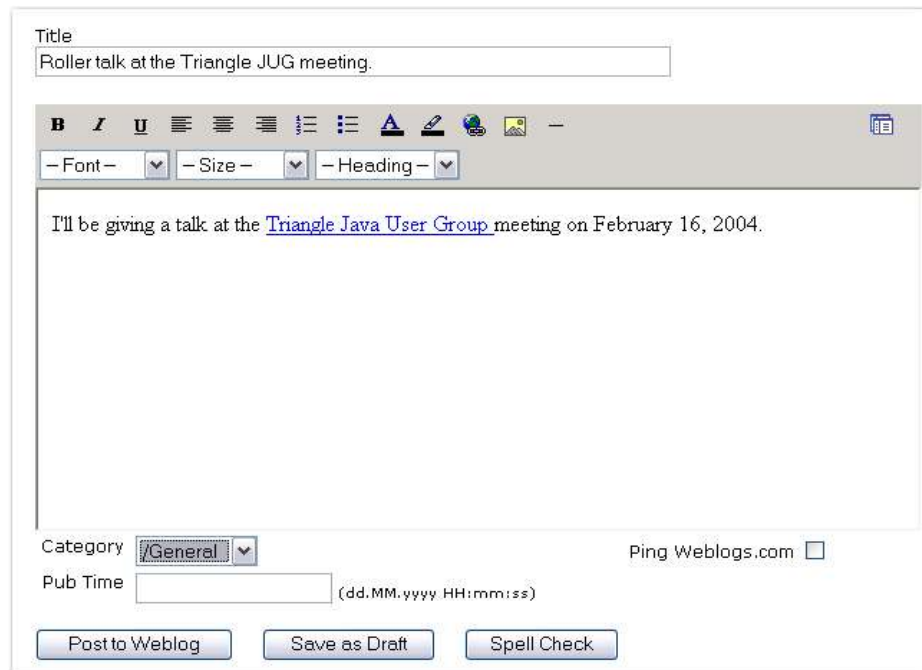


So what's the big deal?

- A blog is more than just an online journal
- Blog (and wiki) technologies provide new layer of web infrastructure
- They help to fulfill the original promise of a writeable web, they
 - Make it easy to write the web
 - Make it easy to read the web
- That's the big deal

Blogs make it easy to write the web

- It's easy to post, even if you have little or no knowledge of HTML.
- Use a WYSIWYG editor, HTML, or other syntaxes (wiki)
- And web services are enabling blogging from all sorts of applications



The screenshot shows a web blog editor interface. At the top, there is a "Title" field containing the text "Roller talk at the Triangle JUG meeting.". Below the title field is a rich text editor toolbar with icons for bold, italic, underline, bulleted list, numbered list, link, unlink, insert link, insert image, and a calendar icon. Below the toolbar are three dropdown menus: "- Font -", "- Size -", and "- Heading -". The main text area contains the text "I'll be giving a talk at the [Triangle Java User Group](#) meeting on February 16, 2004.". Below the text area, there is a "Category" dropdown menu set to "General", a "Ping Weblogs.com" checkbox, and a "Pub Time" field with a placeholder "(dd.MM.yyyy HH:mm:ss)". At the bottom, there are three buttons: "Post to Weblog", "Save as Draft", and "Spell Check".

Blogs make it easy to read the web

- Newsfeeds
 - Enable sophisticated user-friendly newsreaders
 - And make it easier for software to parse and process the web
- Newsreaders make it easy to follow hundreds of sources
- Feedback mechanisms help to connect conversations
- And to point out related writings on the web
 - Comments
 - Referrers
 - Trackbacks
- Frequent updates with lots of links: helpful to search engines

Blog software features

- Blog Editor – easy to edit blog entries
- Newsfeeds – produced automatically
- Permalinks – permanent link to each blog entry
- Feedback – comments, trackbacks, and referrers
- Blogrolls – display links to favorite blogs and other sites
- Page Templates – allow user complete control over look-and-feel

Blogs and wikis?

- Share similar goal: make it easy to write the web
- Many of the same features and technologies
 - Newsfeeds, XML-RPC, HTTP, HTML, markup, comments, trackbacks, etc.
- Strong evidence that blogs and wikis are merging
 - Confluence, SocialText, wiki-blog integration “plugins”
- Different enough to complement each other

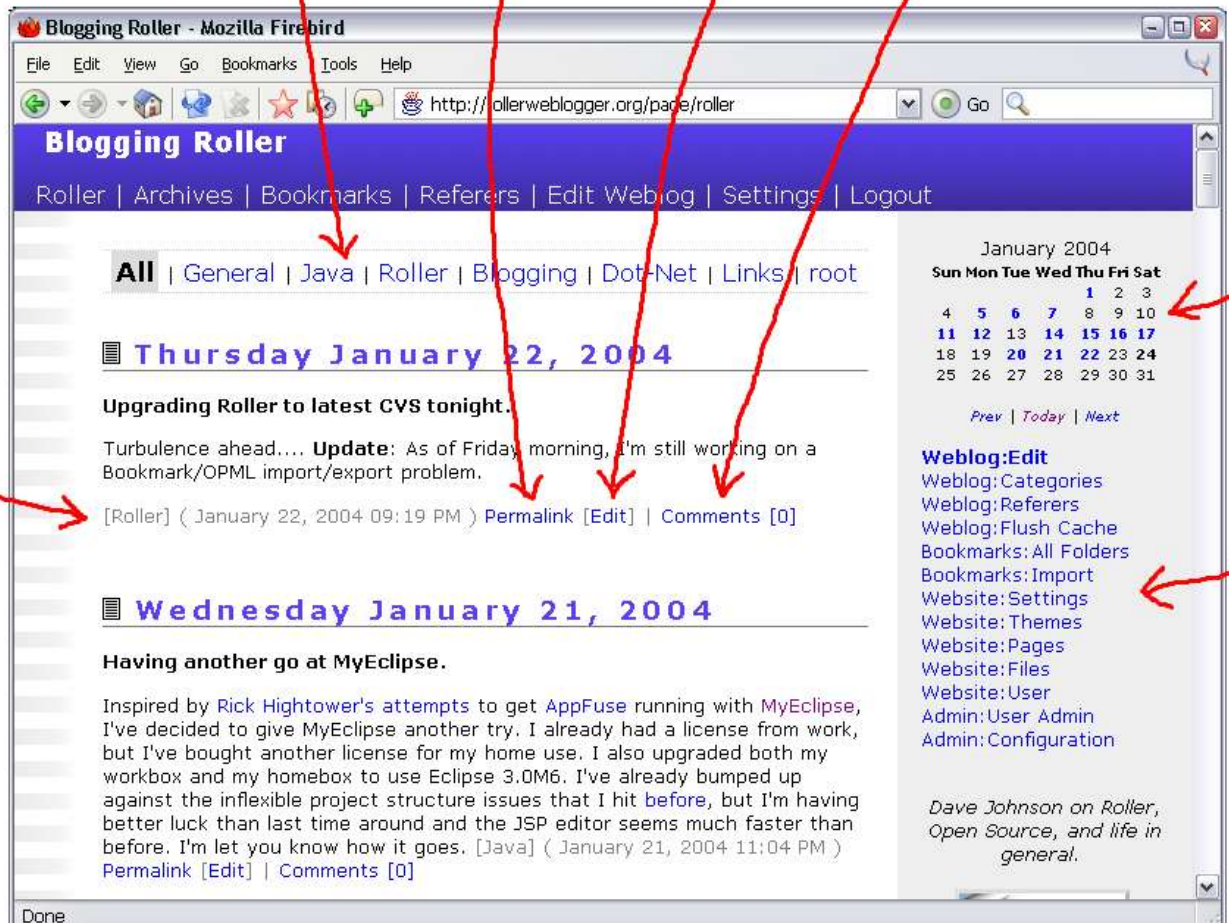
Blogs

Journal format
Group oriented
Entry oriented

Wikis

Free-form, except for recent changes
Solo or controlled group oriented
Page oriented

Anatomy of a blog



Category chooser

Permalink

Edit link

Comment link

Calendar for navigation

Editor menu

Category

Blogging Roller - Mozilla Firebird

File Edit View Go Bookmarks Tools Help

http://rollerweblogger.org/page/roller

Blogging Roller

Roller | Archives | Bookmarks | Referers | Edit Weblog | Settings | Logout

All | General | Java | Roller | Blogging | Dot-Net | Links | root

Thursday January 22, 2004

Upgrading Roller to latest CVS tonight.

Turbulence ahead.... **Update:** As of Friday morning, I'm still working on a Bookmark/OPML import/export problem.

[Roller] (January 22, 2004 09:19 PM) Permalink [Edit] | Comments [0]

Wednesday January 21, 2004

Having another go at MyEclipse.

Inspired by Rick Hightower's attempts to get AppFuse running with MyEclipse, I've decided to give MyEclipse another try. I already had a license from work, but I've bought another license for my home use. I also upgraded both my workbox and my homebox to use Eclipse 3.0M6. I've already bumped up against the inflexible project structure issues that I hit before, but I'm having better luck than last time around and the JSP editor seems much faster than before. I'm let you know how it goes. [Java] (January 21, 2004 11:04 PM) Permalink [Edit] | Comments [0]

January 2004

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |

Prev | Today | Next

Weblog:Edit

- Weblog:Categories
- Weblog:Referers
- Weblog:Flush Cache
- Bookmarks:All Folders
- Bookmarks:Import
- Website:Settings
- Website:Themes
- Website:Pages
- Website:Files
- Website>User
- Admin:User Admin
- Admin:Configuration

Dave Johnson on Roller, Open Source, and life in general.

Done

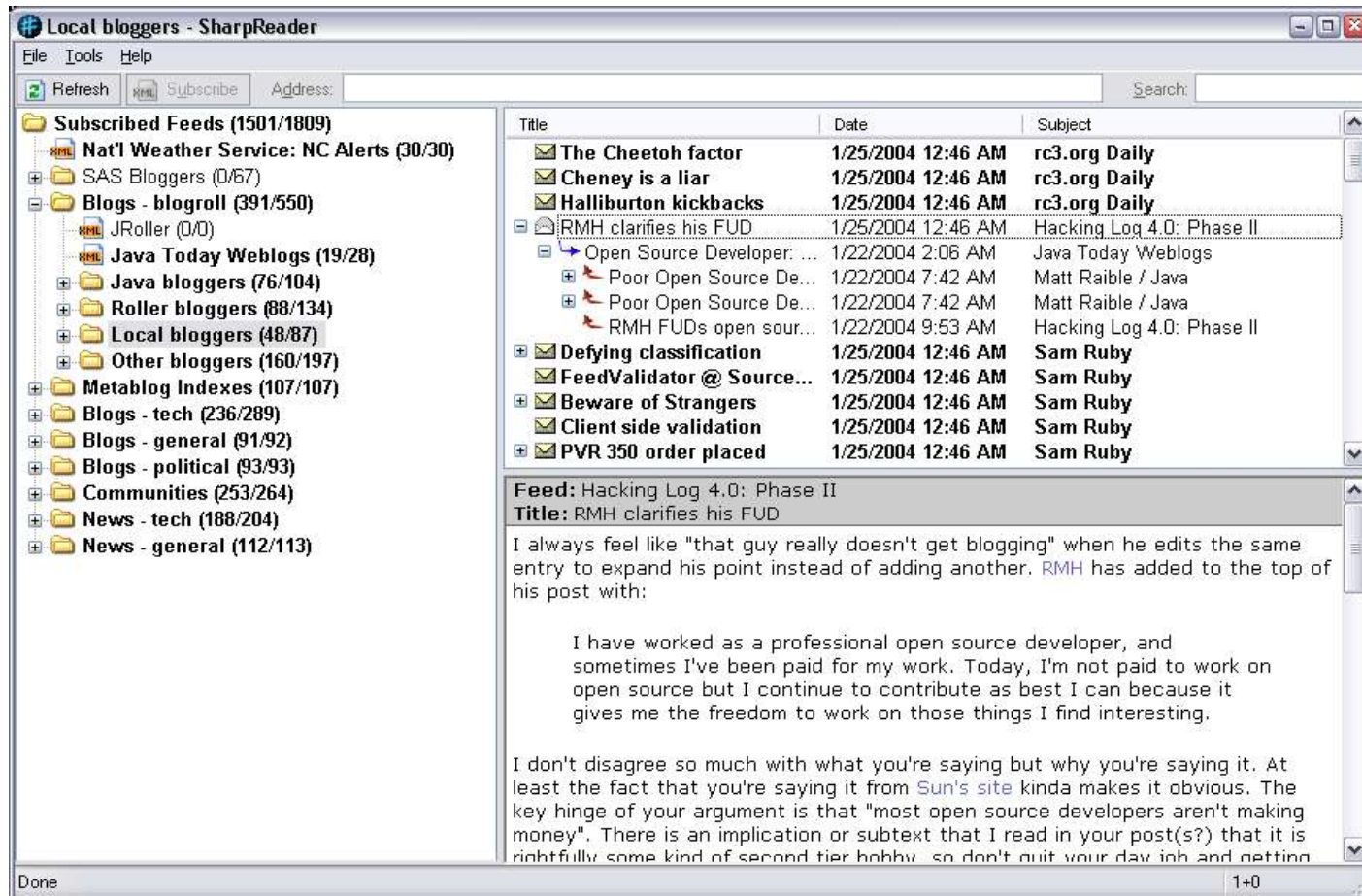
What exactly is a newsfeed?

- A newsfeed is simply an XML representation of news items made available at a URL.
- Most newsfeeds are RSS 1.0 or RSS 2.0, Atom is coming soon
 - The simple fork of RSS: 0.91, 0.92, 0.93, 2.0
 - The RDF fork of RSS: 1.0
 - The new IETF standard: Atom Format
- Newsfeed newsreader software hasn't yet hit the mainstream, but...
- On JRoller 70% of requests come from newsfeed newsreader software

An example newsfeed

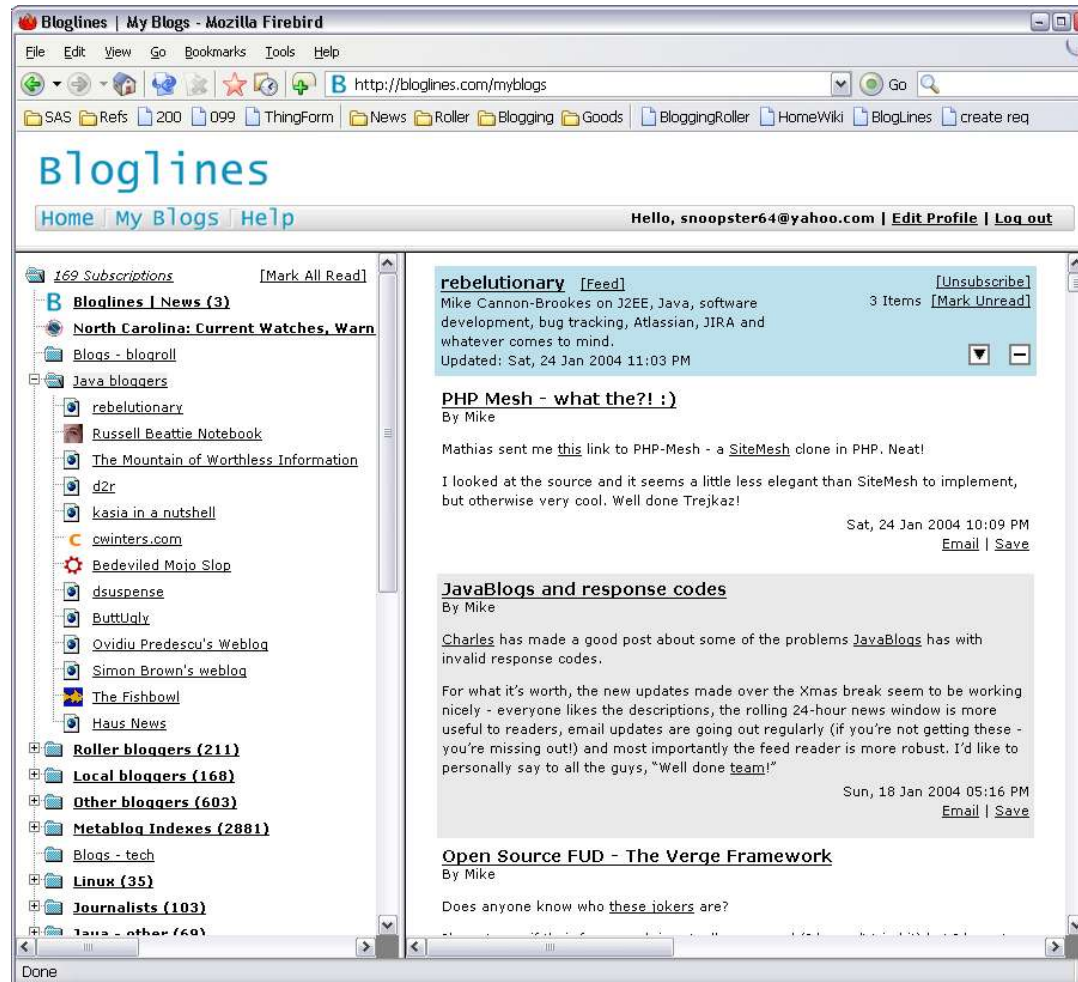
```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="utf-8"?>
<rss version="2.0">
<channel>
  <title>Blogging Roller</title>
  <link>http://www.rollerweblogger.org/page/roller</link>
  <description>Dave Johnson on Roller, Open Source, and life in general.</description>
  <language>en-us</language>
  <copyright>Copyright 2004</copyright>
  <lastBuildDate>Fri, 6 Feb 2004 21:16:02 EST</lastBuildDate>
  <generator>Roller Weblogger 0.9.9-dev (20040427110452:dmj)</generator>
  <managingEditor>snoopdave@nc.rr.com</managingEditor>
  <webMaster>snoopdave@nc.rr.com</webMaster>
  <item>
    <title>#roller</title>
    <description>&lt;p /&gt;Despite that busy week, I&#39;ve been making time for Roller development in the evenings. I&#39;ve also been keeping a window open on the &lt;a href=&quot;irc://freenode.net/roller&quot;&gt;#roller&lt;/a&gt; IRC channel on freenode.net. Stop by for a chat if you have Roller questions or just to say hi.
  </description>
    <category>Roller</category>
    <guid isPermalink="true">http://www.rollerweblogger.org/page/roller/20040206#roller</guid>
    <comments>http://www.rollerweblogger.org/page/roller?anchor=roller</comments>
    <pubDate>Fri, 6 Feb 2004 21:16:02 EST</pubDate>
  </item>
```

SharpReader: desktop newsreader



<http://sharpreader.com>

Bloglines.com: web-based newsreader



<http://bloglines.com>

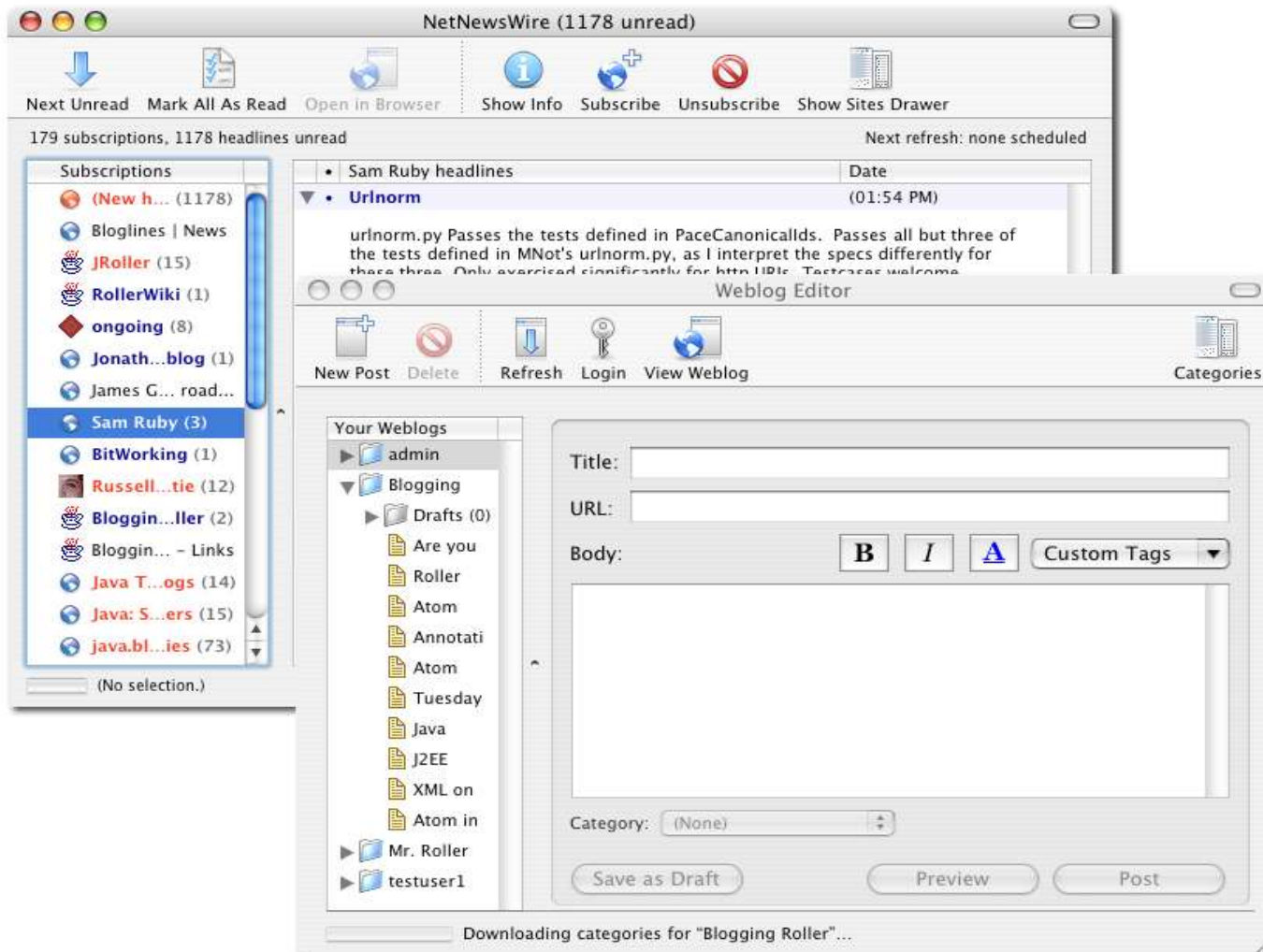
Other newsfeed use cases

- Weather reports
 - Intel alerts
 - Auction bids
 - Podcasts
 - Newly posted links (del.icio.us)
 - Newly posted photos (Flickr.com)
 - Source code checkins
 - OS / Network errors and events
 - Recent changes to a wiki
 - Mailing lists
 - Newly posted Bit Torrents
 - Search results
 - New downloads in file depot
-
- Anything that changes over time is a candidate for a newsfeed

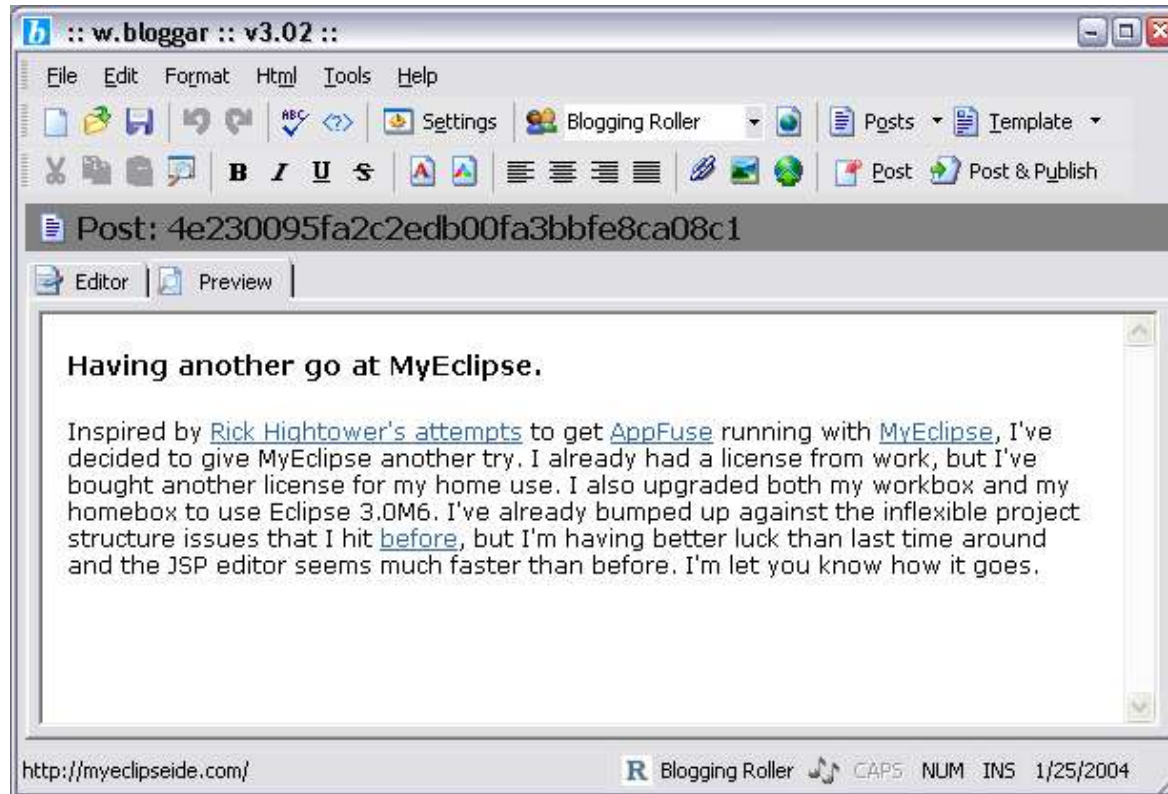
Blog and wiki web services protocols

- Existing XML-RPC based protocols
 - Blogger API
 - Post, edit post, delete post, get recent posts
 - Get and set page templates
 - MetaWeblog API
 - Represents post as RSS item in XML-RPC struct
 - Adds support for categories
 - Movable Type API and others
 - Adds support for server specific features
 - WikiRPCInterface
 - Explore wiki, but doesn't supporting posting/editing
- The new IETF standard: Atom Protocol

Net News Wire: newsreader & blog client



w:bloggar: desktop blogging client



<http://www.wbloggar.com>

Other blogging client possibilities

- Moblogging
- Photo blogging
- Build script blogging
- Chat blogging
- Log blogging
- Email to blog gateway

Blogs at work

- Some use cases:

- Status blog
- Personal notebook blog
- Topic blog
- Workgroup web site
- Development dashboard
- Corporate news site
- Public relations

and...

- Community building

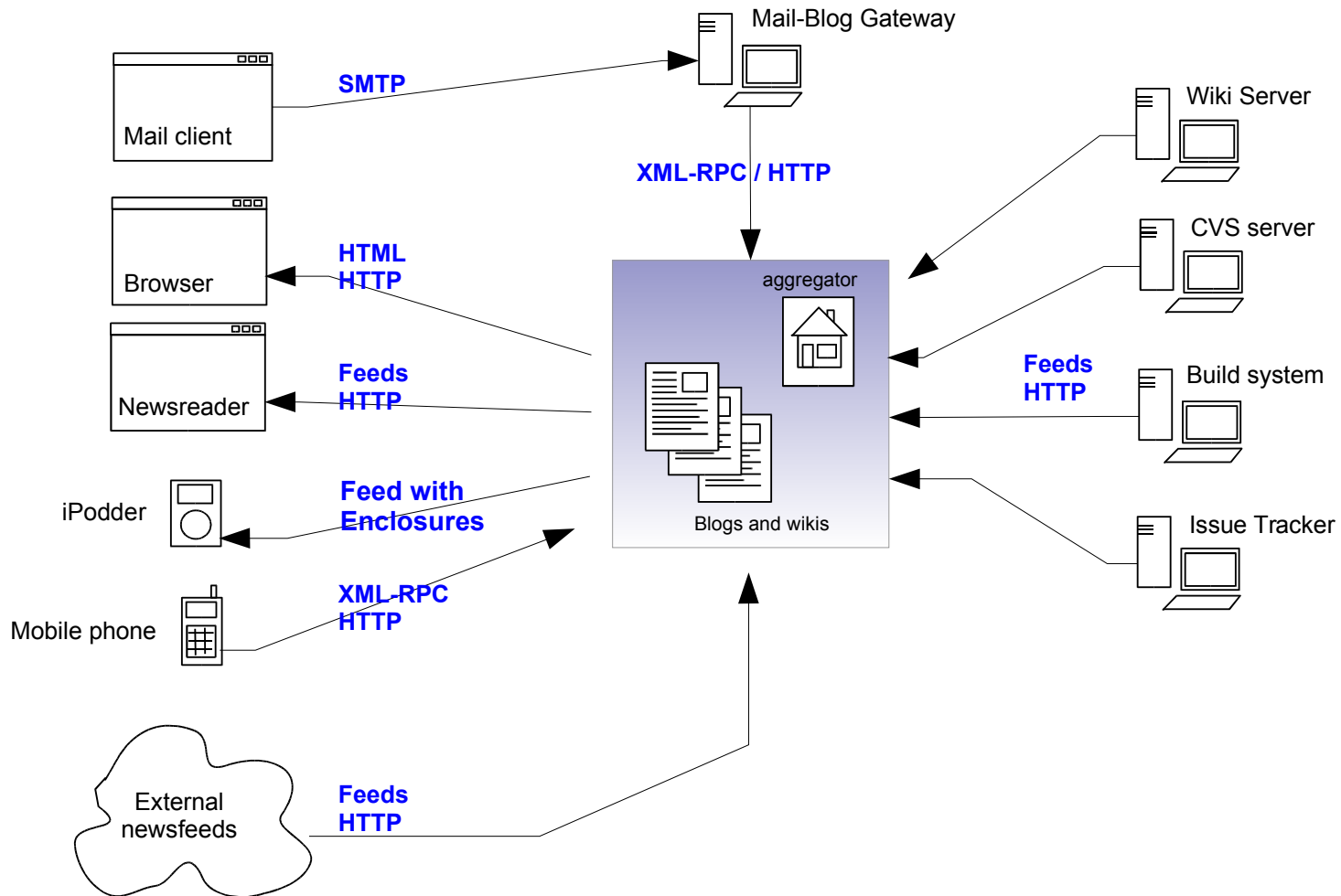
K-logging

- K-logs: weblogs for knowledge management
- Term originated by Jon Robb former CEO of UserLand.
- Every employee blogs on a daily basis
 - Goals and progress
 - Opinions and links to outside news and analysis
- Managers subscribe to employee weblogs, directors subscribe to their manager, and so on up the chain.
- Weblog archives act as knowledge base
- Comments, referers, trackbacks add value

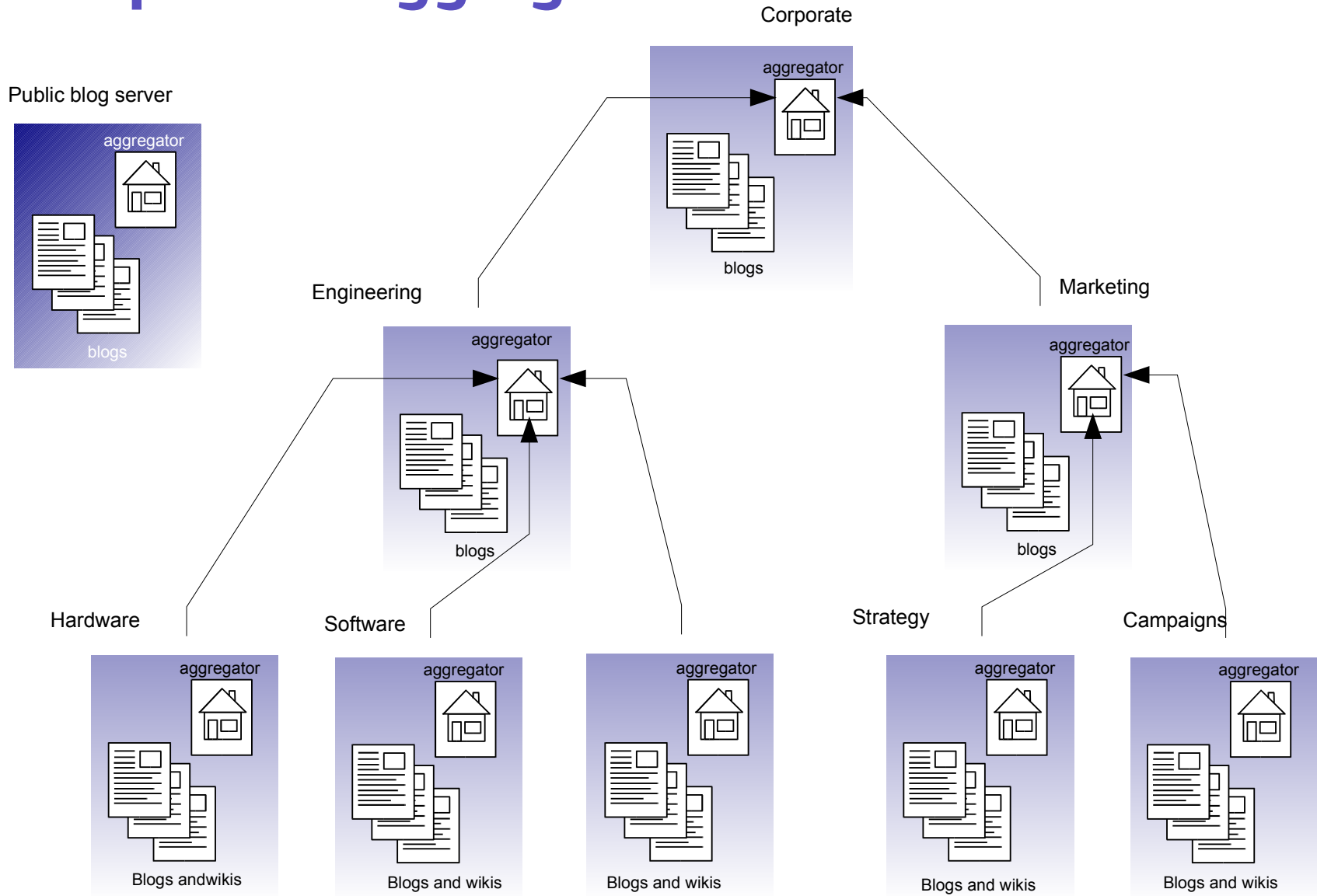
YAHOO! Groups 

[http://
groups.yahoo.com/group/klogs](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/klogs)

Blog Server Integration

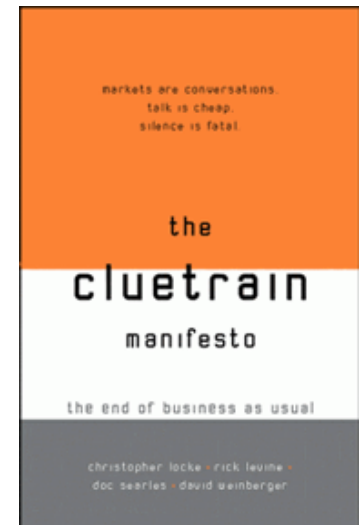


Enterprise Blogging



The Cluetrain Manifesto

- Markets are conversations
- Mass marketing doesn't acknowledge this
- The internet brought the conversations back to the market
- They're talking about your company out there
- Let your employees join the conversation
 - On forums, newsgroups, mailing lists, and blogs
 - Wherever a community exists for your products & services
 - Wherever they want to...



By Locke, Searls, Weinberger

Cluetrain in practice

- Sun & Microsoft's public employee blogs
- Sun policy on public discourse
 - In short: be interesting, but use common sense
- What is the benefit of this?
 - Bloggers get the word out in real time, routing around the press
 - Company gets an authentic human voice
 - In fact, company gets thousands and thousands of voices
 - Customers benefit honest and authentic dialog
- What are the dangers?
 - Insider information gets outside
 - Proprietary information slips out

Weblog community model

“it’s this multitude [of separate sites] that gives the weblog community model it’s strength. Because a person has control over his own piece of community landscape, he feels a powerful ownership of his space that’s lacking in traditional community sites.”

Design For Community, Derek Powazek

<http://www.powazek.com/>



Derek M. Powazek
Author, Designer, Troublemaker, Person



Weblog Community Aggregators

- You can't just “build” a community, communities grow
- But you can help them along
- A blog community aggregator is a portal-like web site that
 - Display posts from a group of related but separately hosted blogs
 - Provides newsfeeds so reader can subscribe to group as whole
- Javablogs.com, Planet Sun, Dot-Net Blogs, Planet LISP, etc.



Planet



Weblogs @ ASP.NET



The big deal?

- Blogs and wikis make it easy for anybody to write the web
- They also make it easier to read, parse, and process the web
- They enable new ways of collaborating & community building
- And plenty of opportunities for software developers