

**Publisher's Report on the "Pilot to release metadata for content provided by a consortium of engineering trade information publishers" Project, one of strand A of the JISC Metadata & Interoperability Projects (5/03). Project lead by EEVL, the Internet guide to engineering, mathematics and computing.**

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**Brief Summary of Involvement:**

The experience of producing RSS feeds has been a good one. It is not something GoJobsite intended to do before this project and we will probably only come to use RSS when a partner or client requests a feed.

There have been no downsides, and it has been very quick and easy to implement.

The project has raised some issues:

There is currently no intention to use RSS feeds other than with EEVL. The reasons for this is we would need to have some general guidelines about the use of RSS feeds, so that we have control over the:

Target audience

Tracking the number of applications

Tracking the visitor numbers and applications from each publisher.

To do this there is some development work that we will need to do.

For instance the next time we work on the feeds, a parameter will be added to the links in the feeds so that we can simply monitor the number of applications coming from the feed. A further development would be to create a database table to store the application information and extract and store the referrer information some how from the log file so we can see who the most effective publishers are.

It was a good experience for the IT & Marketing departments to have an understanding of RSS in the eventuality that the need will arise in the future to use RSS.

**Benefits of RSS:**

Outside of the EEVL project, we think the benefit will for GoJobSite of RSS will be to provide more exposure to our client's vacancies and gaining extra traffic from a targeted audience. Targetted because GoJobsite can choose who to provide the link to. It is important that GoJobsite have this level of control as the job board market is very competitive.

How successful releasing content via RSS may be in the future for GoJobSite will be wholly dependant on the partner/publisher we provide the link to.

For other content providers to use RSS successfully, it may depend on the provider's business drivers and what they hope to achieve. If it is exposure to content than RSS seems like a great mechanism for this.

We would advise other content providers to investigate RSS. From doing research about it on the internet it seems that RSS feeds are already popular. They do not really take a great deal of time to set up with the right tools (Perl or Java module that has a XML::RSS module). RSS is a very efficient way of sharing content.

RSS is very appropriate in terms of widening access to content as it is so easy to implement into a site. Organisations that do not have a dedicated on site IT department but can access and develop their website, they could probably integrate a feed.

We found no downsides to producing RSS.

#### **Future Usage of RSS:**

We are not planning any further use of RSS at the moment, and for the reasons stated above, we are not planning to promote the feeds.

We are comfortable with the prospect of our feeds being utilised by sites such as EEVL, RDN portals and institutional portals, but we feel it is important to know how the feeds will be utilised before any changes are made. If links to the feeds are placed elsewhere on a website it would be useful to have this information.

It is important for GoJobsite to know which sites are exposing our content and which sites we might be receiving visitors from. Our Marketing department spend a lot of time researching sites to find targeted traffic that will help the application rate and try to ensure a quality application for the client. This is very useful commercial information for a job board.

### Technical Implementation:

IT used the XML::RSS Perl module from CPAN. It already has the relevant object encapsulating the RSS syntax. Without this the project may have been trickier. If other publishers are not Perl compliant, there are also Java modules that can be utilised.

Our developer found it easy to research RSS as there are lots of articles on the internet (this was before we had the primer) and it was easy to implement.

The time spent on technical implementation was 1-2 days including research and implementation to provide a feed to EEVL. GoJobsite spent a couple more days on the project in order to ensure re-use in the future for any other publishers.

### Comments on RSS Guidelines:

The RSS Primer [http://www.eevl.ac.uk/rss\\_primer](http://www.eevl.ac.uk/rss_primer) produced by EEVL was useful. GoJobsite has a dedicated and knowledgeable IT department, so when it came to reading the primer there were many sections we simply skipped.

Perhaps the Primer could be split into 2 sections. One section that shows the benefits and the examples of using RSS (to encourage business users to use RSS) and the other might discuss only the IT related instructions and examples.