

How to Add Your Blogs RSS Feed to Your HTML Site

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Sample of Content:

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Content:

One of the advantages touted by blog proponents is the ability to use your blog (and/or other blogs) to automatically add "fresh" content to your site. Search engines like regularly updated content, and will get in the habit of dropping in to see whats new! However, as you will have quickly discovered if you've had a go at this already, getting the content flowing is somewhat tricky. Everybodys talking about it... but nobody's saying hey, you can do it this way! It depends a little on how your site is constructed. For normal people (read non-technical types) who are intent on good search engine rankings, you've probably had the good sense to build your site in HTML. That actually makes it a litle bit harder! :-) It just seems that all the web-geeks out there use PHP or similar arcane web construction processes, and of course they make this stuff look easy. However, us normal people can be left sucking air a bit... RSS to HTML - to use

JavaScript or not? There are quite a few JavaScript RSS to HTML applications available - some free, some at modest cost. My advice? Don't go near them! The problem with JavaScript here, as in any other area, is that the search engines will simply skip right on by that section of your page. Yep, that's right - a complete waste of time if you are trying to deliver "fresh" content that a search engine spider will find and index. RSS to HTML - use a hybrid PHP solution? Nothing worth having comes easy... but hey, you know that already! Until someone comes up with a better/easier solution, you are going to have to get your hands dirty with code! What I found, after a day of searching down dead-ends, was a nifty little application called CaRP. Its a PHP-based tool, there is a free version, and it actually works! Achieving this took an hour or so - uploading CaRP, installing a MySQL database for it, running the configuration file, and tweaking settings to display the feed as required. A small block of PHP code must be installed in the HTML page where you wish to display the feed. Execution of PHP scripts within an HTML page has a couple of requirements. - First, your Hosts server must be configured to allow this. - Second, you will have to edit (or create) the .htaccess file in your site's root directory and add a small block of code that allows script processing for your site. This can be configured as site-wide, or for a single page only. CaRP allows multiple ways of customising the way feeds are displayed. For a start, you can set global formatting to apply to all feeds from within the config file. E.g. you might want to set a default font size on channel titles, and a different size on text within items. You might also want to change the total number of items displayed per listing, and set all links to open in a new window. (Recommended!) Then, within the individual HTML page where you specify the feeds to be displayed, you can add different formatting attributes to different feeds. The CaRP application has good documentation, which you will probably have to read... yes, when all else fails, read the instructions! Good luck!

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