5 Minute Guide...

Social bookmarking

What is social bookmarking?

Have you ever sat down at a new computer and wished you had access to the bookmarks you already gathered? Social bookmarking is an online method of organizing websites that you want to find again, but it is open to the public so that other people can see your bookmarks and you can see theirs. Of course, you don't have to share them, but that's what puts the "social" into the bookmarking!

How does social bookmarking work?

Social bookmarking is a way of sorting and organizing websites by using "tags." Tags are usually short descriptions of the resource that the user applies. Unlike the controlled vocabularies used in the library catalogue, these tags are user generated so they use informal terms. Each tag is connected to the person who created it, so you can access all of their bookmarks, which then connects you to the other user.
Twitter (like Facebook).

Who uses social bookmarking?

Anyone who finds themselves with an unwieldy "favourites" menu would welcome social bookmarking. It can make your bookmarks much cleaner, better organized and easy to use!

Does social bookmarking have drawbacks?

One of the biggest disadvantages of social bookmarking is that there is no controlled vocabulary. The same resource could end up with tags that appear similar but are actually different due to things such as misspellings or different spellings, singular vs. plural, or differences in punctuation. Social bookmarking can also become an avenue for spreading misinformation or spam.

Why is social bookmarking useful?

One of the greatest features of social bookmarking is that you can access your bookmarks from any computer terminal or mobile device; they are no longer tied to your own computer. Another aspect is their sociability – you can use other people's bookmarks by searching tags for the subject you are interested in. It is useful if you plan on collecting a set of resources on one subject that you want to share with others.

How can libraries use social bookmarking?

Libraries can make lists of materials through the use of tags –someone interested in "mysteries" or "dvds" can search through tags to more easily locate something of interest to them.

Explore More

Educase: Social Bookmarking
http://net.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/ELI7001.pdf

D-Lib Magazine: Social Bookmarking Tools (I): A General Review
http://www.dlib.org/dlib/april05/hammond/04hammond.html

Google Videos: Introduction to Social Bookmarking (video)
http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=3934368635322966760

Common Craft: Social Bookmarking
http://www.commoncraft.com/bookmarking-plain-english

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http://delicious.com/