



# Social Media Tools and Resources

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## Communication:

### *Blogs*

A blog is a simple webpage that consists of brief entries, or posts, which are arranged in reverse chronological order. Most blogs will allow visitors to leave comments after their posts, which make them somewhat of a collaborative tool for communication. Unlike the creation of traditional web pages which relied on coding expertise, there are many free sites that walk the user through the creation of a blog allowing even the non-expert to easily create content for the web.

Free blog creation sites:

[wordpress.org](http://wordpress.org)

[blogger.com](http://blogger.com)

### *RSS Feeds & Aggregators*

RSS refers to a web feed which contains a summary of content from a website or the full text. RSS allows people to automatically keep up with updates of their preferred websites without having to regularly check them manually. An aggregator is a piece of software that lets you read the information in RSS feeds in a quick and easy manner. Use RSS technology to keep up to date on websites you are interested in and to keep users updated on news and changes to your blog or website.

Free RSS Aggregators

Bloglines - [www.bloglines.com/](http://www.bloglines.com/)

FeedReader (Firefox) - [www.feedreader.com/](http://www.feedreader.com/)

My RSS Toolbar (Internet Explorer) - [www.myRSStoolbar.com](http://www.myRSStoolbar.com)

### Microblogging

Microblogging is a form of blogging where users send brief text updates (often 140 characters or fewer) or media, such as photos or audio clips and broadcast them to subscribers.

Free microblogging services:

[www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)

[www.plurk.com](http://www.plurk.com)

### *Multimedia Sharing*

There are many web 2.0 technologies that allow you to communicate not just through words, but also through audio, video, and images.

Photo Sharing – online photo sharing tools provide users with a storage space for their digital photos, as well as allowing for collaborative organization of photos and publishing of images to individuals, groups, or all of the internet.



Some popular photo sharing sites:

[www.flickr.com/](http://www.flickr.com/)

[www.snapfish.com/](http://www.snapfish.com/)

Podcasts - Stemming from the term 'broadcast', a podcast is a digital media file that is distributed over the internet and listened to on a portable media player (like an iPod) or on a personal computer.

Tools for finding, creating, distributing, and listening to podcasts:

[www.podomatic.com/](http://www.podomatic.com/)

For more information on podcasting:

*Poducate Me: Practical Solutions for Podcasting in Education*

[www.poducateme.com/guide/](http://www.poducateme.com/guide/)

Vodcasts/Video sharing – websites or software that allow users to easily update and share their own video content online. YouTube is probably the most popular video sharing site and allows people to easily upload and share video clips through websites, mobile devices, blogs, and email.

[www.youtube.com/](http://www.youtube.com/)

## **Collaboration:**

### *Wikis*

A wiki is a webpage or set of web pages that allows any user given access to easily create, edit, and link content. They generally have a history function which allows one to see previous versions of edited pages. Because of these functions and their ease of use wikis are used as collaborative tools and can facilitate group work and harness collective intelligence. One of the most well known wikis is Wikipedia.

Free wiki software:

Wikispaces -- [www.wikispaces.com/](http://www.wikispaces.com/)

BluWiki -- [bluwiki.com](http://bluwiki.com)

PB Wiki -- [pbwiki.com/](http://pbwiki.com/)

### *Courseware and Collaborative Software*

Courseware is a term that refers to software designed for educational use, and is often an online application, either free or commercial. Many courseware programs allow for collaboration on documents and message boards, as well as sharing of documents, links, and other information. While not necessarily designed for educational use, other online collaboration tools can provide groups with the opportunity to collaborate online on documents and spreadsheets.

Free online collaboration tools:

Sakai open source courseware -- [www.sakaiproject.org/](http://www.sakaiproject.org/)

Whiteboard -- [whiteboard.sourceforge.net/](http://whiteboard.sourceforge.net/)

Google Docs & Spreadsheets -- [docs.google.com/](http://docs.google.com/)

## **Community:**

### *Social Networking*

Social networking sites allow users to share information and connect with other people with similar interests or social/professional connections. Groups can harness the power of online

social networking to build community, share information and resources, or market their program and reach out to new audiences. You can consider creating a social networking profile that is open to the general public and will allow you a wide reach, or a private profile that is only open to a smaller community of users.

Some popular social networking sites:

Myspace – [www.myspace.com](http://www.myspace.com)

Facebook – [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)

Ning – [www.ning.com](http://www.ning.com)

LinkedIn – [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)

For more information on how you can use social networks:

*What Can Social Networking Do for Your Organization? Tips and tools to help your nonprofit get the most out of online networks*

[www.techsoup.org/learningcenter/internet/page5504.cfm](http://www.techsoup.org/learningcenter/internet/page5504.cfm)

## **General Resources on Social Media/Web 2.0:**

Anderson, Paul. “What is Web 2.0? Ideas, technologies and implications for education.” *JISC Technology and Standards Watch*, February 2007. Retrieved February 4, 2007 from [www.jisc.ac.uk/media/documents/techwatch/tsw0701b.pdf](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/media/documents/techwatch/tsw0701b.pdf)

*Center for Social Media*

[www.centerforsocialmedia.org/](http://www.centerforsocialmedia.org/)

D’Souza, Quentin. *Web 2.0 Ideas for Educators: A Guide to RSS and More.*

[www.teachinghacks.com/audio/100ideasWeb2educators.pdf](http://www.teachinghacks.com/audio/100ideasWeb2educators.pdf)

*Everything You Need to Know About Web 2.0: Learn about ways your organization can benefit from emerging technologies*

[www.techsoup.org/toolkits/web2/](http://www.techsoup.org/toolkits/web2/)

Mayfield, Antony. (2007). *What is Social Media? An e-book from iCrossing.*

[www.icrossing.co.uk/fileadmin/uploads/eBooks/What\\_is\\_social\\_media\\_Nov\\_2007.pdf](http://www.icrossing.co.uk/fileadmin/uploads/eBooks/What_is_social_media_Nov_2007.pdf)

O’Reilly, Tim. (2005). *What is Web 2.0: Design Patterns and Business Models for the Next Generation of Software.* Retrieved January 31, 2008 from

[www.oreillynet.com/pub/a/oreilly/tim/news/2005/09/30/what-is-web-20.html](http://www.oreillynet.com/pub/a/oreilly/tim/news/2005/09/30/what-is-web-20.html)