

Web 2.0 Glossary

Avatar: A digital representation of an individual shown along with a screen name, typically in a virtual reality environment or on a social networking site.

Aggregator/Aggregation: A website that keeps track of blog posts, news feeds or other information. Gathering information from multiple websites, typically via RSS (Really Simple Syndication), an aggregator pulls together the most recently published information from a variety of sources.

Blog: Originally short for “weblog”, a blog is a web page that contains entries in reverse chronological order, with the most recent entry on top. Blogging software and services — like Blogger, TypePad and WordPress — make it easy for people to enjoy a constantly updated web presence. In addition to classic text blogs, there are also photo blogs, audio blogs (or “podcasts”) as well as video blogs (sometimes called “vlogs”).

Blogosphere: A common term used to describe the large and diverse community of bloggers.

Creative Commons: A nonprofit organization that promotes free public licenses to content (<http://creativecommons.org>). Provides specific conditions through which content can be reused, such as attributions, links or other notification methods to correctly identify the original source.

Freemium: Typically a site that offers basic services free, but charges a premium for advanced or special features.

Instant Messaging (IM): Instant Messaging or “chatting” is a popular method of exchanging text messages in real time. Popular IM applications include AOL’s Instant Messenger (AIM), Microsoft’s Messenger, Google Talk (GTalk and GChat) and Yahoo’s Messenger. IM (including text messaging) is fast replacing e-mail, especially among students.

VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol): Technology that allows telephone calls (and even “video calls”) to be made over the Internet instead of the traditional systems. Skype is one of the more popular iterations to bypass typical phone lines with VoIP.

Mashup: Web application where content, data, or other services are combined from more than one source into an integrated experience. For example, you could arrange a series of news stories about your favorite athlete, politician or performer — or any topic — on a graphical timeline.

Microblog: A blog on which one posts brief, frequent updates on one’s activities. A popular example is Twitter.

Peer to Peer (P2P): A computer network that takes advantage of the cumulative bandwidth of network participants rather than conventional servers. These networks are popular for sharing content files containing audio, video, data or anything in digital format.

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Posting (or Post): Information added to a website. For example, if someone adds new information to their blog, that would be their latest posting. Also, “Comments” are opinions, thoughts and links that site visitors add to posts.

RSS (Really Simple Syndication): A form of syndication that lets users “subscribe” to receive new or updated content from blogs, news, or other frequently updated online content sources.

Social Bookmarking: Social bookmarking services such as Diigo or del.icio.us enable users to store lists of Internet resources they find useful and make them accessible to others with similar interests.

Social Networking: Sites that connect individuals in a community, allowing them to communicate with friends, colleagues and even strangers. The most popular examples are MySpace, Facebook and LinkedIn.

Tags: An informal approach of using keywords to classify content and a primary method for organizing content stored in Web 2.0 applications and environments.

Tag Cloud: A visual depiction of content tags used on a website. Typically, the more commonly used tags are displayed with a larger font or stronger emphasis. Each term in the tag cloud is a link to the collection of items that have that tag.

User-Generated Content (UGC): Refers to media content produced or primarily influenced by end users (vs. traditional content publishers). Much of the content on YouTube.com is UGC. This is a broad term that describes online tools that allow users to share and express content, such as blogs, wikis and podcasts.

Widget: A “mini-application” embedded within a web page that provides specific information (weather, sports scores, movie times, etc.)

Wiki: Hawaiian for “quick,” a wiki is a website that allows users to create, edit and collaborate content. Wikis are a powerful collaborative authoring tool for non-technical users, with the best-known example being Wikipedia.org, the online encyclopedia that leverages the knowledge of thousands of people worldwide.