

RSS 3.0¹

Introduction (you should probably read it first). *This spec is not yet finalized. Feedback appreciated.*

Format

An **item** consists of a series of **lines** separated by "\n". Each **line** is a series of letters, numbers, "-", ".", or "_" (called the **name**) followed by ": " followed by a series of characters (called the **value**). No two lines should start with the same name. If a line starts with a space or tab character, then it is a continuation of the value on the previous line. The newline in between is preserved. UTF-8 encoding is always used. An item ends at the first blank line (that is, a line with no characters).

Document

An RSS 3.0 document consists of one head item followed by zero or more body items.

Head

The head is an **item**. Names for the lines are globally assigned. Names are case-insensitive. The assigned names are:

title
description
link
generator
errorsto
creator
created
last-modified
language
rights
license
guid
uri
subject

¹ Originally posted September 06, 2002 02:51 PM

Most properties refer to the whole feed in addition to the item. i.e. last-modified is the last-modified date of the feed.

Body

The body is a series of zero or more items. Names for the lines are globally-assigned and case-insensitive. The assigned names are:

- title
- description
- link
- generator
- creator
- created
- last-modified
- language
- rights
- license
- guid
- uri
- subject

Tokens

title

The title of the item.

description

A short description of the item.

link

A link to the item.

generator

The person or program that generated the item.

errorsto

An email address, optionally followed by a space and a name, of the person to send error reports about the feed to.

creator

An email address, optionally followed by a space and a name, of the person who created the item.

created

The date (in W3CDTF format) the item was created.

last-modified

The date (in W3CDTF format) the item was modified.
language The language of the item, using the language tag format specified in RFC 3066.
rights The copyright statement for the item.
license A URI for the copyright license of the item.
guid A globally unique identifier for the item.
uri A globally unique identifier in the form of a URI for the item.
subject The topic of the item.

Example

title: RSS 3.0 News
description: Latest updates on RSS 3.0.
link: <http://www.aaronsw.com/2002/rss30>
creator: me@aaronsw.com Aaron Swartz
errorsTo: me@aaronsw.com Aaron Swartz
language: en-US

title: Spec Introduced
created: 2002-09-06
guid: 00795648-C1E0-11D6-9AA6-003065F376B6
description:
The spec was introduced to the world.

A few people noticed.

Title: Zooko Likes It
Created: 2002-09-06
GUID: 0894CB2F-C1E0-11D6-9649-003065F376B6
Description: Zooko says he likes the spec.

[Introduction] The Road to RSS 3.0²

Edd Dumbill: RSS Moves Forward. "The goal of RSS 1.0 has been to fix some problems, provide an extensible framework for the future, and bring RSS into community ownership. [...] RSS 1.0 provides a solid framework on which to build."

Dave Winer: The Road to RSS 2.0. "And further, there's talk all over the place about RSS 2.0, a belief that now's the time to really get RSS on a strong foundation, one that's solid and frozen, and at the same time extensible."

There's been a lot of talk in the community about how RSS 2.0 is too complicated. I haven't heard any objections, so I'm going to move ahead with the following changes that will result in RSS 3.0.

1. Remove XML. XML is just too complicated and is against the spirit of RSS, which is Really Simple Syndication. I don't want people to have to buy one of these 200 page XML books to understand RSS. And XML sucks up bandwidth like nobody's business. Instead, we'll go back to RFC822-style fields. There are lots of available parsers for those.

2. Remove namespaces. Namespaces are just a waste of time. If people want to add an element to RSS, then just send it to me and I'll add it to my list of all elements in use. This system is easy to use and doesn't result in any wasteful URIs all over the place.

3. HTML forbidden. No one needs HTML. Email has been just fine for years before Microsoft introduce their stupid rich HTML extensions. HTML is for those loser newbies. Any intelligent Internet user deals in plain text.

I'll leave some time for comment and then put up a spec. Then we'll deploy.

² From <http://www.aaronsw.com/weblog/000574>

Resources

We also have a cool icon: . Thanks to Mark Pilgrim for the Movable Type Template