

Social Bookmarking as a Library Reference Tool

- **DEFINITION**

Also called “folksonomy,” social bookmarking is the practice of tagging – conjuring up descriptive terms – to describe an idea, object, or place, etc. In this case we’re describing online resources.

Taxonomy is the practice and science of classification. The work comes from the Greek *taxis* (meaning ‘order’, ‘arrangement’) and *nomos* (‘law or ‘science’).

Folksonomy is the practice and method of collaboratively creating and managing tags to annotate and categorize content. Folksonomy describes the bottom-up classification systems that emerge from social bookmarking. In contrast to traditional indexing tags are primarily by creators and consumer of the content. Folksonomy (from folk + taxonomy) is a user-generated taxonomy.

See also: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_bookmarking

- **THEORY**

Social Bookmarking, on Library Success: A Best Practices Wiki
http://www.libsuccess.org/index.php?title=Social_Bookmarking

Structure and form of folksonomy tags: The road to the public library catalogue
<http://webology.ir/2007/v4n2/a41.html>

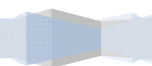
Tags Help Make Libraries Del.icio.us
<http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA6476403.html>

Tagging, Folksonomy & Co – Renaissance of Manual Indexing?
http://arxiv.org/PS_cache/cs/pdf/0701/0701072v2.pdf

The Hive Mind: Folksonomies and User-Based Tagging
<http://infotangle.blogspot.com/2005/12/07/the-hive-mind-folksonomies-and-user-based-tagging/>

- **URLS**

Assumption College for Sisters Library - http://delicious.com/ACS_library
Beaufort County Library - <http://delicious.com/bclrefdesk>
Dublin City Public Libraries - <http://delicious.com/DublinCityPublicLibraries>
McMaster University Library Web Team - <http://delicious.com/libweb/>
Menasha Public Library - <http://delicious.com/menashalibrary>
University of Michigan Health Library - <http://delicious.com/UMHealthSciencesLibraries>



- **SAMPLE**

First let's look at the tags on a page. The default ordering is predicated on the date the tag was saved, but the tool allows for a more useful organization (see below). The tags portion of the page offers the name of the site and a search interface, as well as counts of the number of tags in a given site and the number of other people using the same tag. The last item allows users to locate taggers with similar interests.

The screenshot shows a list of tagged sites. Annotations with red arrows point to the following elements:

- Site name:** Points to the 'menashalibrary' header.
- Search for a tag:** Points to the search input field.
- Number of bookmarks in the site:** Points to the 'Bookmarks 1338' count.
- Link:** Points to the 'Link' text at the bottom of the list.
- Number of other people tagging the same link:** Points to the '71', '5834', '13', and '173' counts.

Visible site entries include:

- Juju:** 23 DEC 08, 71 bookmarks. Description: 'A very easy-to-use job search engine.'
- DailyLit:** 20 NOV 08, 5834 bookmarks. Description: 'Receive short book installments when you want them. You specify the days and times that work best for reading the installments. The site also offers discussion forums and book lists. Some of their titles are free while others are fee based.'
- GotATeenager:** 13 bookmarks. Description: 'This British parenting site specializes in parenting teenagers. The site offers sections on boundaries, bullying, drugs, health, risky behaviors, school, self-confidence and sex. Parents can join in message boards or find email support groups.'
- Triprr.tv:** 173 bookmarks. Description: 'Reviews of hotels around the world complete with video tours. The bulk of hotels are in North America and Europe.'

Next, see the tag lists that appear on the right side of the page. Each library can select sites of interest to its clientele, then name and order them appropriately.

Tags	
▼ Top 10 Tags	
Authors	168
ChildrensLit	67
Magazines	55
Education	37
Government	35
Science	30
Wisconsin	29
Children	28
Business	26
Environment	23

To the left we can see the Menasha librarians tagged web sites of interest to their patrons.

On the right are the tag bundles that group tags by subject

Librarians at the Menasha library can use this tool to organize web sites for ready reference.

▼ Tag Bundles	
Animals	4
ArchitectureandHomes	4
Arts	8
Business	5
Comics&Cartoons	3
ComputersandTechn...	13
Education	15
EmailServices	3
Entertainment&Rec...	16
Families&Lifestyles	9
Film	3
Food	7
ForeignCountries	8
Health&Medicine	36

