

The official
Google Reader Blog
News, tips and tricks from the Google Reader Team



Turning off the track changes feature

Wednesday, September 22, 2010 by Brian Shih

As of September 30th, we'll be turning off [track changes](#) in Reader. While this isn't a widely used feature, we wanted to let you know in advance so you can set up a suitable alternative (such as <http://page2rss.com>). Your previous updates will not go away, but you will stop receiving new updates from any custom feeds you have set up.

We apologize for any inconvenience this causes -- and as always, please feel free to visit our [help forum](#) if you have any questions.

Update: You can use the Page2RSS transition tool to convert your feeds here: <http://gtrtransition.page2rss.com/>

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Archives

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Things about feeds and other things

[Atom Enabled](#) - [in Reader](#)

[Bokardo](#) - [in Reader](#)

[Louis Gray](#) - [in Reader](#)

[Moonwatcher](#) - [in Reader](#)

[Nick Bradbury](#) - [in Reader](#)

[Read/Write Web](#) - [in Reader](#)

[The RSS Blog](#) - [in Reader](#)

[Robert Scoble's Scobleizer](#) - [in Reader](#)

[Robert Scoble's Link Blog](#) - [in Reader](#)

[Scott's "SiteExperts" Place](#) - [in Reader](#)

[Scripting.com](#) - [in Reader](#)

[Yahoo! Search Blog](#) - [in Reader](#)

[BlogSearch for "Google Reader"](#) - [in Reader](#)

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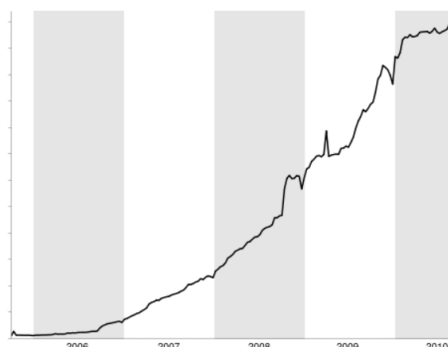
A welcome and a look back

Monday, September 13, 2010 by Mihai Parparita

The Reader team was saddened to hear that [Bloglines](#) will be shutting its doors on October 1. Bloglines was a pioneer in the feed reading space, and for Web 2.0 in general.

We know that nothing will be quite like Bloglines in the hearts of its users, but if you're looking for another online feed reader, we encourage you to give Reader a shot. All you need is a [Google account](#) (you already have one if you use Gmail) -- and here's a [video](#) to help you get started. It's also very easy to bring your Bloglines subscriptions over, you just have to [export them](#) from Bloglines and [import them](#) into Reader.

Since Reader's fifth anniversary is also approaching (though it feels like yesterday, Reader was [launched on October 7, 2005](#)), we thought it might be a good time to reflect on how Reader has grown over the past few years. While we were busy [redesigning \(twice\)](#), making friends with [Buzz](#) and [iGoogle](#), [translating](#), [breaking up](#), [gossiping](#) and [playing](#), more and more people picked up the Reader habit. Here's a graph of Reader users over time (where "user" is defined as someone who has used Reader at least once a week).



And as we found out this past April, Reader users sure do like to [read lots of items](#). Here's another graph, this time of the number of items read per day.



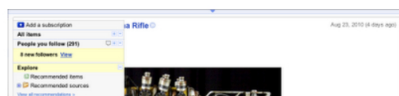
To all our users, new and old, thanks for making a great 5 years!

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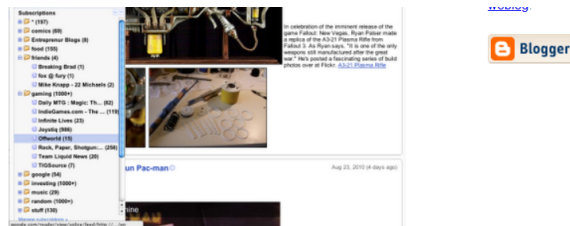
Fullscreen and more!

Thursday, August 26, 2010 by Arif Siddiquee

As Google Reader is all about reading, we thought we should give our users a chance to maximize their screen space whenever possible... thus fullscreen mode was born. You can toggle the fullscreen mode through the 'f' key. Additionally, you can use 'shift + u' to show and hide the navigation panel so you can easily change what you're reading without leaving fullscreen mode.



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Eagle-eyed viewers might have also noticed we've added a new category to [the trends page](#): clicked trends - now you can see which sources you click on the most. And finally, something many of you have asked for before...we now show you your lifetime read item count. That's right. Every. Single.* Item.**

Trends
 From your 95 subscriptions, over the last 30 days you read **1,212 items**, clicked **70 items**, starred **7 items**, shared **4 items**, and emailed **8 items**.
 Since **November 30, 2005** you have read a total of **141,802 items**.

*Only things you've scrolled by, or clicked on - doesn't count mark all as read.
 **Okay, that's not quite accurate - once you hit around 300K (which we know some of you are already over) we stop counting for performance reasons. Consider that "beating the game".

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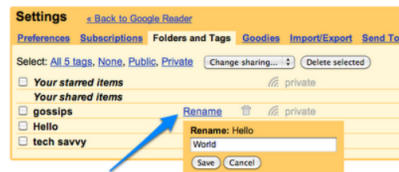
Folder and tag renaming

Tuesday, June 01, 2010 by Brian Shih

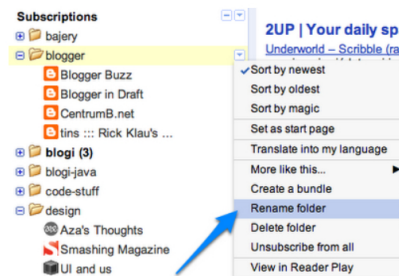
Post by Wiktor Gworek, 20% task force (Krakow, Poland)

Last year we [announced](#) that we wanted to hear [your wish list for features](#) in Google Reader, and one of most highly requested features was the ability to rename folders and tags. Today we are rolling out this feature with a [little bit of Polish](#) help from Krakow.

You can rename folders and tags on [the settings page](#):



And you can also edit these names right from the contextual menu in your subscription list.



Also, as we [announced last week](#), today we've disabled offline access through Gears, and phased out support for older browsers.

As always, if you have any questions or comments, please head over to [our help forums](#), or send us a message on [Twitter](#).

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Spring Cleaning: Comments, offline, and older browser support

Monday, May 24, 2010 by Mihai Parparita

Springtime is a great opportunity to clean up, take care of loose ends, and generally spruce things up. Since we still have a few weeks of spring [left](#), the Reader team is taking this opportunity to clean things up a bit.

Simplifying comments

Ever since we [launched](#) support for comments on shared items, one of the most frequent points of confusion has been "who can comment on my shared items?" (or rather, "why can't I comment on my friends' shared items?"). Up until now, someone had to be in a designated sharing group to be able to comment on a post, even if you were sharing publicly. To make things a lot simpler, we've made it so that if you can see a shared item, you can comment on it.

For those of you who are sharing publicly, the next time you log in to Reader you'll get a choice between continuing to share publicly and allowing anyone to comment on your shared items, or switching to protected sharing:

Comments on your shared items
 We've simplified commenting to make it easier to discuss the items you share. Anyone who can see your shared items will be able to comment on them. [Learn more](#).
☒ **Keep my shared items public.**
 Anyone can view your shared items and comment on them.
☐ **Make my shared items protected.**
 People in your Chat contacts and Friends groups can view your shared items and post comments.

Nothing will change for users who already had their shared items protected, since visibility and commenting for their shared items was already consistent. Keep in mind that you can always update who can view and comment on your shared items on the [sharing settings](#) page.

Phasing out support for older browsers

Reader is joining [Docs](#) (and many other sites) in removing support for older browsers, notably Internet Explorer 6, Firefox 1.0 and 2.0, Safari 2.0 and 3.0, and Chrome 1.0, 2.0, and 3.0. Reader is a cutting edge web application, and this will allow us to spend our time improving Reader instead of fixing issues with antiquated browsers. Starting on June 1, users of older browsers will begin to see a notification encouraging them to upgrade to any of Reader's [supported browsers](#).

Discontinuing offline access via Gears

We launched [offline support](#) three years ago, but only a minority of Reader users actively use it today. Because supporting offline access requires a large ongoing engineering effort, and because Gears itself is being [surpassed by HTML5](#), we've decided to remove offline support in Reader starting on June 1.

Of course, we know that offline access is important to some of you, and with the wide range of third party clients that sync with Google Reader, you don't need to give it up. Depending on your operating system, we recommend taking a look at:

- [NetNewsWire](#) (Mac OS X)
- [FeedDemon](#) (Windows)
- [Liferea](#) (Linux)

Each of these alternatives will sync your subscriptions and read state with Reader, and continue to provide offline access to your feeds. For more information, please see our [help center](#).

We realize that removing features and support is [not easy](#), but with this spring cleaning done, we've laid the groundwork for more Reader improvements down the line. We apologize for any inconvenience, and if you have any questions please head over to our [forum](#), or message us on [Twitter](#).

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A little bit of polish

Friday, May 07, 2010 by Mihai Parparita

Jak [wielokrotnie robiliśmy w przeszłości](#), ekipa Google Reader poświęciła czas pomiędzy wypuszczaniem wiekszych projektów na pracę nad małymi usprawnieniami i naprawę istniejących błędów.

Oh wait, not that kind of Polish, [this kind](#) of polish.

As we've often [done in the past](#), the Reader team has taken the time between major releases to work on small features and bug fixes. Here's a round-up of the changes we've made over the past month:

We've added support for the HTML5 `<video>` and `<audio>` tags, so that when you come across [an awesome video](#) you can [share it](#) in such a way that your mobile device-using friends can see it too.

We realize that our [recommended items](#) may not always hit the spot (though who wouldn't like [a water slide in their](#) [unread](#) [Not interested](#) [Add to house](#)). There is now a "Not interested" link at the bottom of recommended items, so that you can both hide that item and provide signals to our algorithms about the kinds of things you like and dislike.

Reader is the kind of application that people keep open in a tab all day. While it's flattering that our users are so dedicated, we want to make sure that they don't miss out on any new features and bug fixes that we release. We've therefore added a small banner that appears whenever we release a new version. If you're in the middle of something, you can ignore it (and it'll go away for a while), but if not, newest and shinier things are just a click away. Incidentally, today we built the 500th version of Reader, over the 5 years that we've worked on Reader, that works out to almost two builds a week.

A few improvements to [Reader Play](#): When you hit space (or shift-space), you're now automatically moved between posts, and for posts with multiple images, cycled through each image. We've also added made Play more configurable by letting you change the URL used:

- If you add `&welcome=0` query parameter, the welcome screen is skipped, even for new and signed-out users.
- An `autoplay=1` query parameter can be used to start moving through posts automatically.
- A `#feed/<URL>` fragment allows you to display a specific feed.

You can combine all these to make [automatically playing slideshows](#) of your favorite photoblogs.

Finally, we've done a few other small things, like the [Home](#) view loading faster, and the [Send to](#) functionality being less susceptible to being stymied by popup blockers when used with services such as Twitter.

The way we prioritized these tweaks and fixes was based on [forum](#) and [Twitter](#) feedback, so please keep it coming.

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A veritable boatload of read items

Friday, April 09, 2010 by Brian Shih

Wow. Who knew your hunger for points and badges was so insatiable? While [ReaderAdvantage™](#) was a joke, we actually ordered and are distributing Reader badges as part of the joke. Unfortunately, so many people ordered them that we ran through our stockpile a mere 27 minutes after we [announced the program](#). Which got us to thinking... just how much do our users read?

A few stats about the badge submissions:

- 13% of people who requested a badge ended up way over our "Totally Sweet" threshold of 314,159 items read...
- 25% of you were Platinum (133,700 read items or more).
- Even more amazing, four people had read over one million lifetime items.
- One person had read more than two million items. (Holy cow.)



For comparison, the average Reader user reads about 105 items a day, which isn't bad unless you want to get to the Totally Sweet level of over 314,159 lifetime read items - at that rate it's going to take you over 8 years to get there. And if you're aiming to join the (recently founded) One Million Club, we're talking over 26 years. So, uh, time to start reading?

While we were at it, we took a look at what users are starring, sharing, and liking the most. While many of the most-starred items are reference posts, collections of tips, or tutorials from our friends over at [Lifehacker](#), the most starred item lately is actually [this hilarious video](#). That same video also shows up near the top of the latest and most liked or shared items, along with a collection of [interesting images, designs](#), and [bizarrely useless machines](#). It's clear that the crowd is onto something here, so if you're not getting these items in your current feeds, maybe it's time to check out [Reader Play](#) or the Recommended items section in Reader.

P.S. We're shipping the badges soon. Really.

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