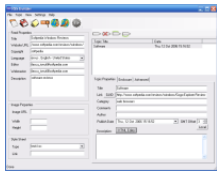


12 October 2006

By: Ionut Ilascu, Editor, Software Reviews



## [Feed RSS to Your Readers](#)

### *RSS feeds created with minimum effort*

RSS is relatively new in the web business. Many computer users do not know that the initials RSS stand for three standards: Really Simple Syndication (RSS 2.0), Rich Site Summary (RSS 0.91, RSS 1.0) and RDF Site Summary (RSS 0.9, RSS 1.0). I am going to present a software that builds the RSS feeds for your website or blog. The application is developed by W. Bokkers and its name is pretty blank and once you see it you will soon understand its field of action. The name is RSS Builder, and all it does is build RSS news feeds and podcasts for your website. The application is free of charge and the zipped installation kit is 1.8MB large. A software called news reader or aggregator can check a list of feeds from a website and then will display the updated articles it finds. They are usually built as stand alone programs or extensions to existing programs like web browsers. The minimalist interface of the software will not pose any problems to the user and a webmaster should have no trouble utilizing it. The main screen of the application is divided into three sections; Feed Properties, Image Properties and the Topic window. In the first window (Feed Properties) the first bar to be filled is the title of the feed. Next is Website URL, where the user has to specify the URL to the HTML website corresponding to the feed. The copyright text is also needed as well as the language. If you want to give away the editor's email address or that of the webmaster's so that readers can send their suggestions or message than you can type them in the next two options. The user can also provide a brief description of the feed, a simple word or phrase will suffice. In Image Properties the first option is typing in a link to an image to be displayed with your feed. The style sheet type can be either text/css or text/xsl. The window in the right is as complicated to fill out as those described above. There are three tabs in here: Topic Properties, enclosure and Advanced. I'll take them one at a time, beginning with Topic Properties. The first field you have to fill is again the title, not the title of the news feed but the one of the news topic. The URL of the topic must also be specified and if you click on the GUID (Global Unique Identifier) button you will create a unique identifier of the topic. The Publish date can be set by the author of the RSS feed and you can choose the day, as well as the hour. The GMT offset will display the offset to universal time in hours. Clicking on the Local button will fix the hour according to the local time. The last option in here is HTML Editor where the user can edit the topic description. The window that pops up will allow you to add a table (define the number of columns and rows and if you want a border, set its width). The text supports a pretty basic formatting (bold, italic or underline). URL for pictures can also be added and each item in the description can be aligned to the left or right or centered. In the second tab (Enclosure) the user can add an annex to the feed and you will have to provide the URL to that file, its length in bytes and specify its type (audio, video or image). The next step in here is uploading the file itself. The only option in the Advanced tab is GUID (Global Unique Identifier) and, if you want it to also be a permalink, feel free to check the PermaLink box. After doing all this "hard work" it has come the time to put it on the FTP server. The software will allow the user a XML preview in order to be sure that everything is OK. **The Good** The software is free and extremely easy to use. I liked the exclamation marks that warned me when I skipped an obligatory field. **The Bad** The simplicity of the application does not justify the lack of a Help menu. And a little color would not hurt. **The Truth** I am sure that the software is an asset for many bloggers out there. *Here are some snapshots of the application in action:*