

Users Report and Feedback on the JISC Blogs Pilot

Stuart Yeates

OSS Watch

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Introduction

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on the JISC
Blogs Pilot

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- Who
- What
- Why
- Successes
- Failures
- Point of View
- Voices
- The Way Forward
- Aggregators

Who

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- The OSS Watch Team
- Ross and Stuart main authors

What

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- Short articles
- Open source relevant
- Not necessarily directly OSS Watch relevant
- An article every week
- Explicit ban on "me too" articles
- Tags
- ~ 100 articles + some in queue
- Non-exclusive

Why

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To communicate with the wider JISC community

- What kinds of things OSS Watch does
- What kinds of things happen in open source contexts
- What's happening *right now*
- Aggregation

Successes

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- Feedback suggests people are reading the blog
- A number of posts have had comments from "the right person"
- The RSS is independently repurposed by a number of websites
- High visibility (as measured by volume of comment spam)

Failures (our end)

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- Not as many articles as we would like (time)
- When moving to the JISC blog we lost established readers (esp US readers)
- The content not as tidy as we might like

Failures (hosting end)

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- *Lack of resource / Lack of control*
- Setting up, maintaining and resetting user accounts
- Handling spam
- Styling / branding
- Plugins (RDF)

Point of View

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I believe that the point of view and subject matter are
(nearly) all that matters

Be clear on what you're writing about and stick to it

Know how the blog fits into you communications strategy

Voices

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- Different people write differently
- Copy-editing / approval mechanisms are slow
- Each blogger needs to maintain their own standards and speak about their own area of expertise

The Way Forward

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- 1 *Easier account management (shibboleth?)*
- 2 *Better spam management*
- 3 Engaging with more writers (guest authors, Advisory Committee, Mike, etc)
- 4 Engaging with more readers (web analysis, better rdf, better tagging, better syndication, etc)
- 5 Cross-blog tagging

JISC and OSS Watch evaluation

Aggregators

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- Alternative approach to blogging
- Collect RSS feeds (usually from blogs)
- Reflect a single community or topic
- Came of age in the Apache, Debian and RedHat communities
- Blogs, bookmark engines, mailing lists, version control repositories, image archives, ...

Questions?

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- (The closest good pub is The Honey Pot, 8 Hollybush Row, OX1 1JH)