



HOW TO USE SCOOP IT TO CURATE THE WEB

The following is an approximate guide for gathering and displaying websites on Scoop.it! (<http://www.scoop.it/>), a platform for organizing links to websites onto a centralized page, known as a 'magazine'. Each magazine, which is displayed as a set of web-pages that you can scroll down and through, is a 'topic' and has a particular theme or subject. Our project magazine (or topic) is called 'Studying and Teaching History' (<http://www.scoop.it/t/studying-history>). Collating pre-existing web-pages and sites in this manner is known as 'curating' – it is creation through collation. With a free Scoop.it! account, you are allowed up to five such topics, and there are other limits to what you are able to do with the free version of a Scoop.it! subscription.

Each website that you 'scoop' for your centralized magazine, or topic, appears on the webpage in its own self-contained box. You can personalize this box, to a certain degree by adding a short description and some tags. A tag is usually a word-long indicator of what a particular piece of information is referring to. It is a summary – or a label – which allows quick categorization and facilitates search processes in Scoop.it!. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tag_%28metadata%29). The only way you can search between individual 'scoops' is by typing in tags into the basic search engine that Scoop.it! uses. For this reason you will also need to tag the name of the website itself.

Please note these are rough guidelines and that the key to successful 'scooping' is flexibility. Some stages of the process described below will not be relevant, while you may find that additional tags are needed for the particular topic that you are engaging with.

INITIAL STAGES

1. ***Set up an account.*** The first step to curating on Scoop.it! is to create an account. To create an account you will need an email, Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn account. Following the instructions of the website, use any of these logins to sign in (the password associated with each of the aforementioned websites will be the password you use to log in to your Scoop.it! account). You can then choose a name for your topic(s).
2. ***Install Scoop.it! bookmarklet.*** At this point it may be useful to install what is called the Scoop.it! 'bookmarklet'. This is a simple application that fits into your browser's toolbar and makes it easier to 'scoop' websites as you browse them. This means you will not have to constantly switch back to your Scoop.it! account in order to collect websites for your topic.
3. ***Begin scooping!*** Now that you have installed all the necessary software, you can begin scooping for your topic. To do this you simply find a website that you think will be suitable for your topic and, using the guidelines outlined below, decide whether the website is appropriate for inclusion in your topic. If you wish to collect it for your magazine, use the bookmarklet you 'scoop' the site. The site is collected and displayed on your Scoop.it! magazine online.



REFINING SELECTION OF WEBSITES FOR INCLUSION IN YOUR 'MAGAZINE'

4. ***Make an initial survey of the website you are considering for inclusion.*** Explore the site and particularly the 'FAQ' and 'about us' links that are present on most websites. These are usually accessible via the home page. This will help to establish what kind of website it is, what resources it offers, and will help in constructing a description for inclusion in your magazine. Explore what type of information is available on the site, what sort of format it is in. If there is a database function, browse the resources to see how results are presented. The first tag that is needed here is the title of the website itself, because the Scoop.it search engine does not search scooped website names/titles as they are displayed on the individual Scoop.it! magazine interface. You should also add a tag with the name of the service provider/curator at this stage.

5. ***Determine the overall function of the website.*** Does the website:

a) Provide links to information at other sites? Is the website primarily a repository of links to other websites? This is a 'gateway website' - a site whose primary function to collate and list existing online resources.

TAG: 'gateway website'

Note: gateway websites may take a while to tag because there is a lot of variety in the types of data available. The range of information available on these kinds of website is vast and can be difficult to sift through and categorise. Thus in some cases sub-sections of the website may be better scooped separately: e.g. if there is a sub-section of a general history website that covers medieval or Russian history. Also notes that if the website contains a database, it may be unclear what types of sources it contains. In such a case it is best for the curator to determine whether there is any Russian history, or anything that covers the late antique/medieval periods in a search function and then to tag for these topics only. When searching for these topics, make sure to utilize any alternative terms such as 'middle ages' or 'late antique,' as such terms are often used interchangeably online.

b) Provide the information first-hand? (As opposed to directing/linking you to other websites on the internet that contains the information) Are the information/sources required available to analyse and use on the site itself?

TAG: 'resource destination website'.

c) Perhaps it is a combination of the two.

TAG: 'resource destination website' and 'gateway website'.

d) If this website is predominantly a teaching and learning website, tag this.

TAG: 'teaching and learning'.

6. ***Determine the nature of the data available on the website.*** Does the website:

a) Provide digitized/non-digitized versions of primary sources.

TAG: 'primary sources'.

- b) Provide digitized/non-digitized versions of secondary sources.

TAG: 'secondary sources'.

Note: whether the website provides the information itself, or through a third party, the above tags remain the same. If the searcher is able to eventually reach this information by navigating the website, then the website is said to provide either tag: secondary sources and/or primary sources.

7. **Determine specific forms of data present on the website.** These fall into the following categories and tags:

- a) Audio – TAG: 'audio'.
- b) Video – TAG: 'video'.
- c) Images – TAG: 'images'.
- d) Manuscript – TAG: 'manuscripts'.
- e) Illuminated manuscripts – TAG: 'illuminated manuscripts'.
- f) Maps – TAG: 'maps'.
- g) Translations – TAG: 'translations'.
- h) Online tools – TAG: 'online tools'. (Including online visualization tools, linguistic tools, etc.)
- i) Artefacts – TAG: 'artefacts'.
- j) Papyrus – TAG: 'papyrus'.
- k) Bibliography- TAG: 'bibliography'.
- l) Database – TAG: 'database'.
- m) Inscriptions – TAG: 'inscriptions'.
- n) Articles – TAG: 'articles'.
- o) Ebooks – TAG: 'ebooks'.
- p) Transcriptions – TAG: 'transcriptions'.
- q) Archaeological site – TAG: 'archaeological site'

Note: Especially in the case of gateway websites, it may not be possible to accurately discern (without spending a long period of time) the form of data or media that the website leads to. In such cases the scooper/curator should include as many forms of data that is obviously evident from the website. In event of a user search, the time period (see point 8 below) should root out the desired websites.

8. **Determine how to tag the historical time period covered by the website.** This is particularly important in regards to tagging and searching because most users will seek to search and filter the websites. The following rough guide (which may not be applicable in every instance) is suggested:

- a) 1800 CE - present = modern; TAG: 'modern'.
- b) 1500 CE - 1800 CE = early modern; TAG: 'early modern'.
- c) 4/500 CE - 1500 CE = medieval. TAG: 'medieval';
- d) 4/500 CE - 1000 CE = early medieval; TAG: 'early medieval'.
- e) 300 CE - 800 CE = late antiquity; TAG: 'late antiquity'.
- f) pre-400 CE = ancient history; TAG: 'ancient history'.



Muzna Rahman and Jamie Wood, University of Lincoln

Note: these parameters are rough, and often more than one time period tag will need to be added in order to take account of the content that is present on the website. Also note that alternative terms such as 'middle ages' and 'classics' have not been used to streamline the process of tagging.

9. **Determine the place/country/region covered in the website.** There are too many tag options available here, but it is vital that the tags are used consistently throughout this process.

Note: The tagging system on Scoop.it! remembers tags that have been used previously entered, so it should be relatively easy to remain consistent during this process.