OExchange
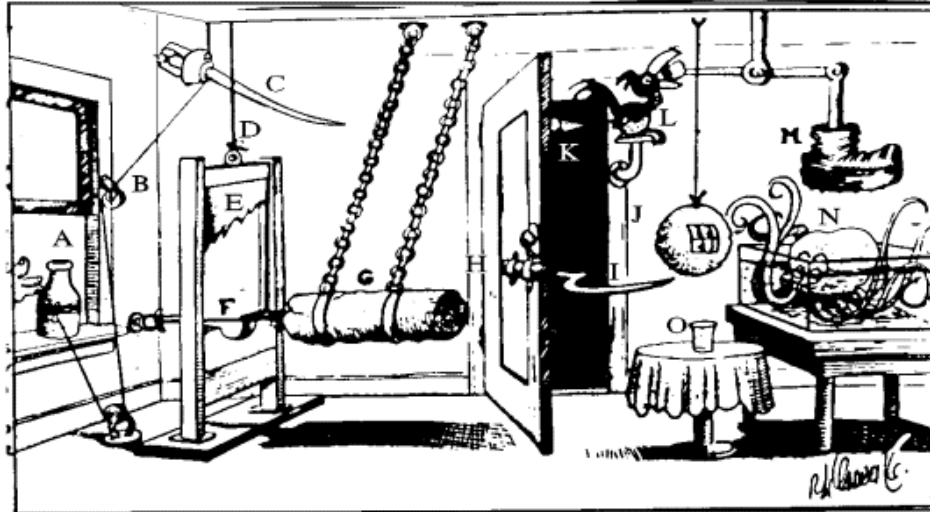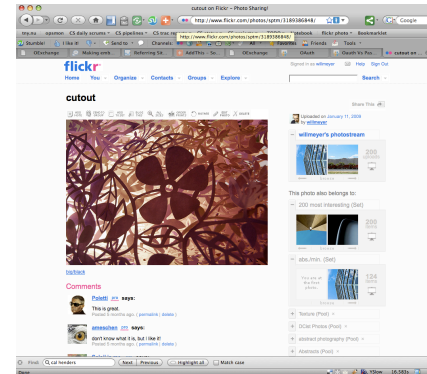
Duh.

How cross-site sharing (mostly) works today…

A User…

Is browsing the web...
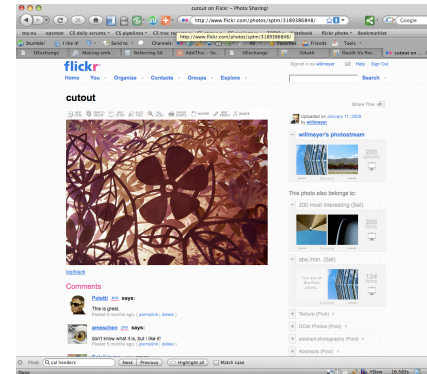
Is browsing the web…

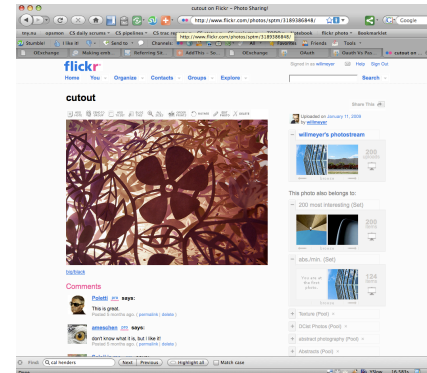Is browsing the web…

And decides to share something….

Is browsing the web…

And decides to share something….so they click a link, button, or a menu like this:
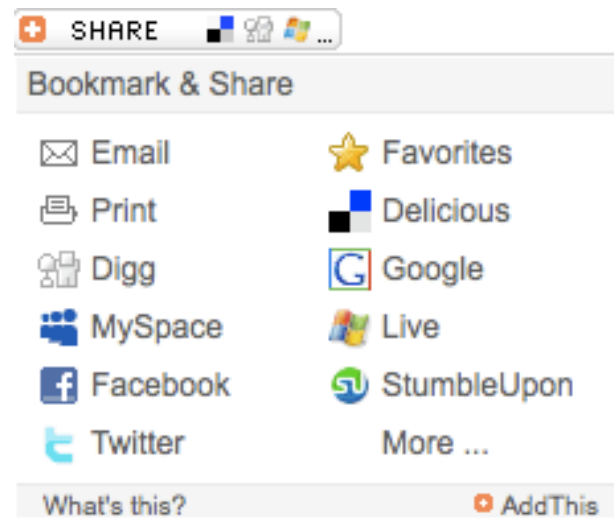
Or this:
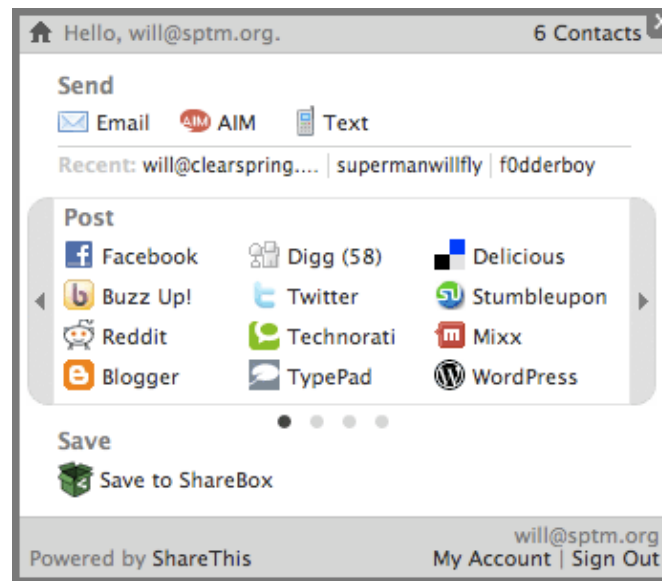
Or this:
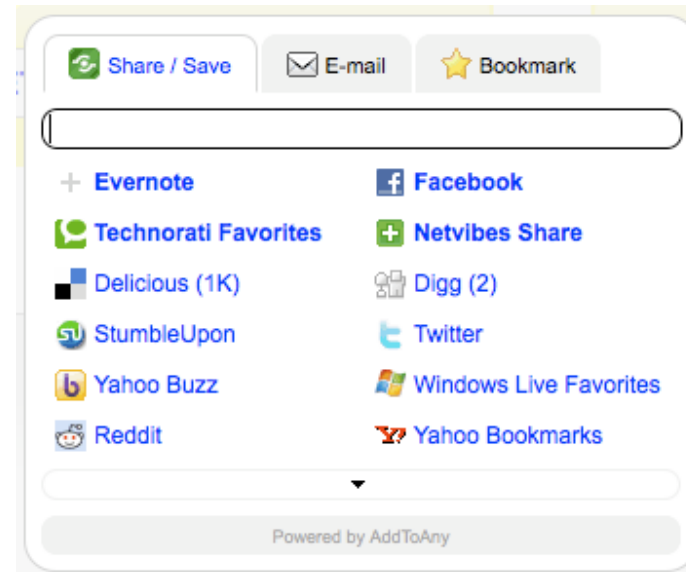
Or even just a row of impersonal service links (though they might be pretty):

Sharing is caring!

Posted in Uncategorized | Tags: Debt, Mortgage | 2 Comments »

To do the share, we take the URL of the current page:

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`http://www.example.com/something`

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And the service the user picked…

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`http://www.example.com/something`

And the service the user picked…

And send the User's browser to a URL specific to that service…

...like this:

`http://www.facebook.com/share.php?u=http://www.example.com`

Now the user is just interacting with that site to complete the share…
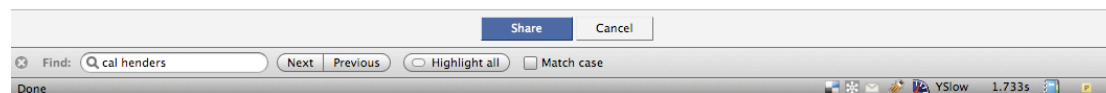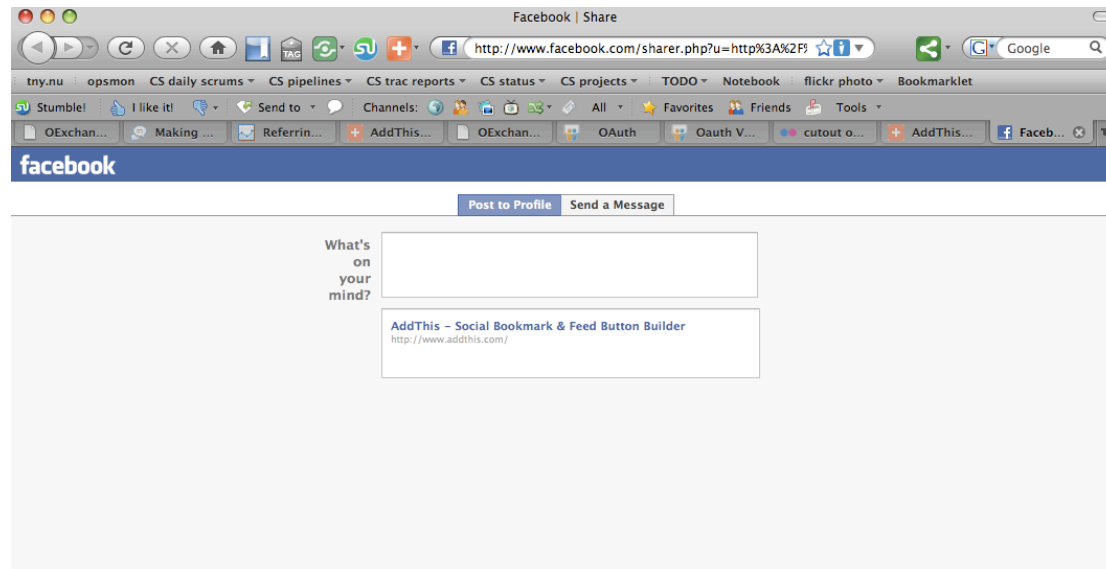
So basically those buttons **just format requests** to specific URLs for each site...

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…or the site has to.

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(oh, except for the tools that scrape, or encourage "the password anti-pattern")

So basically those buttons **just format requests** to specific URLs for each site...

And it works like this for LOTs and LOTS of different services, which are **all pretty close**, but different.

http://www.facebook.com/sharer.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.example.com

/sharer.php?u={the url}

Google™

http://www.google.com/bookmarks/mark?op=add&bkmk=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.example.com

`/mark?op=add&bkmk={the url}`

`http://www.stumbleupon.com/submit?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.example.com`

`/submit?url={the url}`

http://www.myspace.com/Modules/PostTo/Pages/?u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.example.com

`/PostTo/Pages/?u={the url}`

And none of this is really personalized to the user.

This is just silly

URL-sharing links, buttons, and menus proliferate the web.

They are occupied with URL translations.

They should be focused on solving real user problems.

Users shouldn't have to navigate piles of chiclets (for options they don't care about).

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(even really fancy chiclets)

f Share 1   27 retweet

Users would have a better experience if the options were **personalized**.

And link-sharing tools could be more interesting **if the actual exchange was standardized**.

A larger sharing network, with more traffic, and happier users.

And, the places a user is sharing *to* should control the interface/experience

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Sort of like how the providers control the experience in open authentication flows

Plus, "share this link" is really a combination of many verbs (post/send/share/tweet/save).

Not to mention things like "translate this".

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For identity, access control, service discovery, contact data, application formats, social stream I/O, and more…

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And this can be leveraged to make sharing better. But we still need the simple link-sharing part.

How it should be

- The simple process of sharing/posting/sending links (and more) **should be standard**

- Users should have a more targeted experience

- Sharing tools should **focus on user value**, not on proxying URL formats between sites

*Sharing increases with **targeted** and personalized choices for the user, **minimal intermediate UI,** and **tighter browser and page integration***

What's really needed?

• Simple **agreement on how to exchange (send/ share/post)** semi-typed "link" content, replacing today's hodge-podge

• A way to **discover places to share** the content to

•A way for users to indicate the services they prefer

What am I sharing? A page? A video? An image?

Where am I sharing it to? A social bookmarking site? A blog?

How close are we?

- Defining the content is coming along on its own (well, sorta)

- Content "targets" mostly all **share a model** (e.g. share.php?url=) for simple link sharing

- **Personal discovery** is starting to be real

- We just need a **few** connecting bits

OExchange

http://www.oexchange.org/spec

A **super simple** protocol for sending content to a site. Where the target **site controls the user experience**, not an intermediate tool.

This includes:

- A common **URL syntax** for the share operation

- Simple agreement on a URL "plus more when you have it" **type** model

- Basic **discoverability** of endpoints available on a given host

- Recommendations on how to leverage WebFinger for **personalization**

How it works...

Our faithful User...

Is using a site (or other app), and wants to share some content.

That site, either itself or by using an intermediate tool, has a known set of OExchange endpoints

These endpoints are called **Targets**.

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(the targets can be discovered dynamically, but more on that later)

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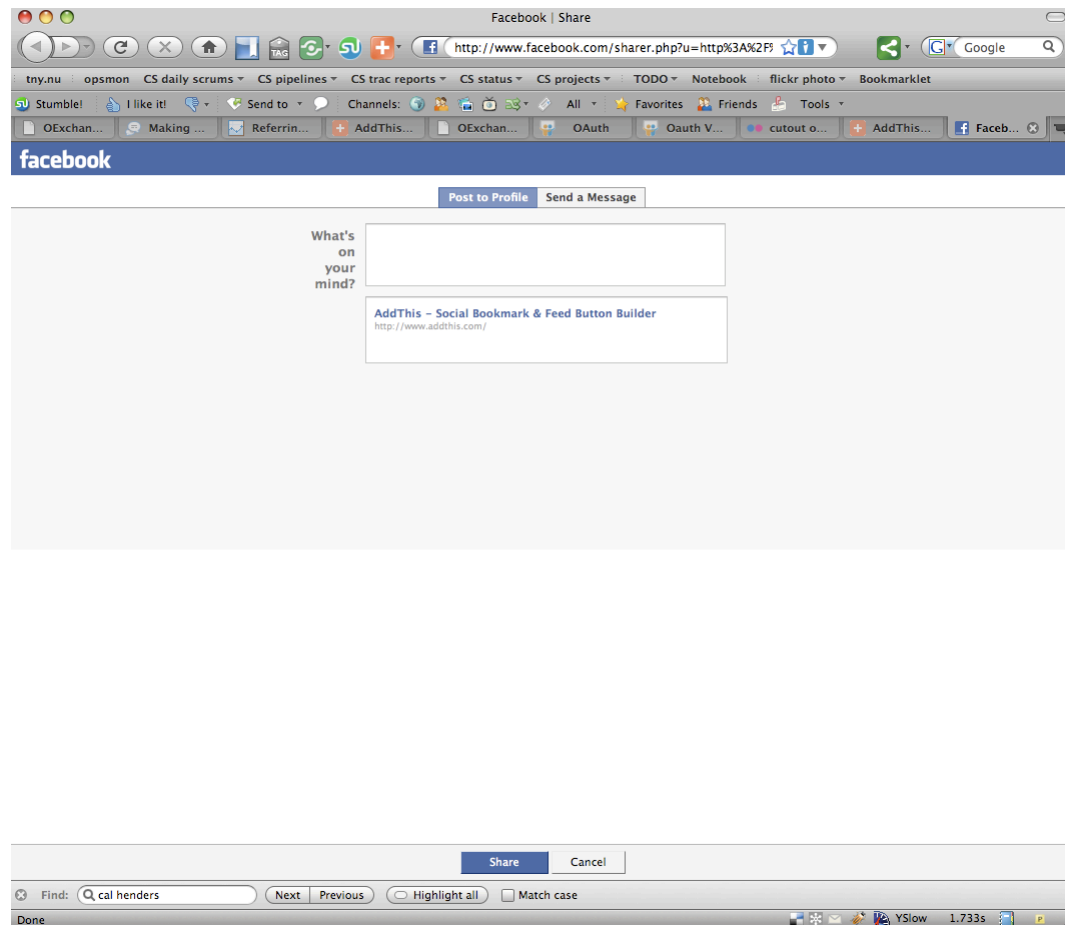
The targets have defined metadata, like:

- **friendly name:** *my cool bookmarking site*

- **endpoint:** `http://www.example.com/oexchange/share`

The site or tool forms a **standard** HTTP request to the target, like:

```
http://www.mcbs.com/oexchange/share?ctype=link
&url=http://www.example.com/thing-to-share
```

...and just sends the browser there.

The typing thing is simple.

A "ctype" parameter indicates the type of content, and it **defaults to "link".**

So bookmarking tools don't really have to change.

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A "ctype" parameter indicates the type of content, and it **defaults to "link".**

So bookmarking tools don't really have to change.

And there is ALWAYS a browser-appropriate URL in the transaction (no type negotiation required).

There are also other defined types, which improve the user experience **when they are present** but don't hurt anything otherwise:

- Flash objects
- Iframes
- Images
- **(more as appropriate)**

That's it.

It's basically the way things work today.

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Except everyone agrees to use the same URL scheme, and on a common set of types, and makes their UI flow with their own site.

So we can all move on with our day.

Oh wait, how do you find out about these Targets? And where does personalization come in?

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There's also a simple **discovery** thing.

If you are a Target (which means you can accept OExchange shares):

- you can always tell people about your endpoint directly

- or you can leverage **XRD** on your host, so tools can find you
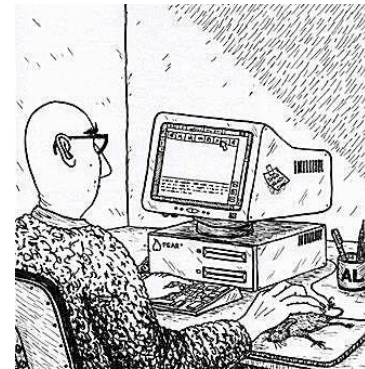
http://www.willmeyer.com/.well-known/host-meta

/.well-known/host-meta is becoming a standard location for service discovery info on a host, so we've added to it.

```
<Link
    rel="http://oexchange.org/spec/0.8/rel/hosted-service"
    type="application/xrd+xml"
    href=http://www.willmeyer.com/oexchange/bookmarks/oexchange.xrd >
    <Title>Example Bookmarking Service</Title>
</Link>
```

/.well-known/host-meta is becoming a standard location for service discovery info on a host, so we've added to it.

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    <Title>Example Bookmarking Service</Title>
</Link>
```

(this goes inside the document, along with other Link descriptors like WebFinger's)

Things that want to facilitate sending links somewhere can dynamically find and interoperate with more targets.

We also think we can add **preferred user services** to personal XRDs obtained with WebFinger (with a "I want to send links to this service" relation).

We also think we can add **preferred user services** to personal XRDs obtained with WebFinger (with a "I want to send links to this service" relation).

(which means you as a user can indicate that you use a specific bookmarking service or network, and only see that chiclet)

Hey, what about authentication?

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The target manages it (hopefully using some nice standard method), since it dictates session lifetime and auth flow for its users already

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Sharing **should NOT include scraping or intermediate password input** -- in-situ sharing buttons are cool, but ultimately not cool

...and the "open stack"?
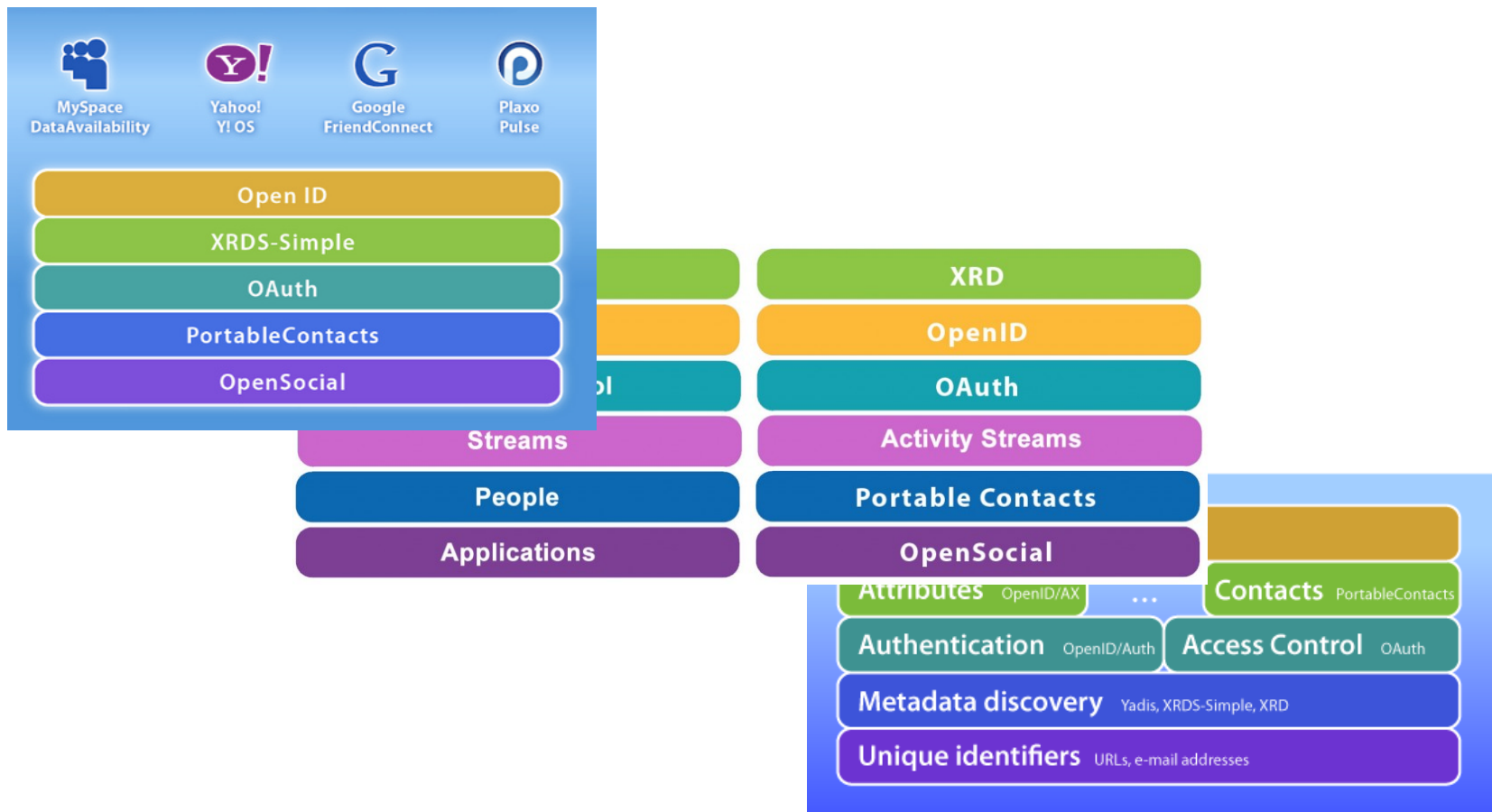
…and the "open stack"?

- The basic URL transaction doesn't have any relation to the authentication method used (so standards can be leveraged there)

- Any tag-soup standards can be supported via specific types, or simply on top of the exchange when a least-common-denominator is not required

- OExchange Discovery plays nice with XRD and Webfinger

- Activity Streams/Atom Publishing, and other application-domain-specific read/write standards represent a deeper level of integration; no need for OExchange to interfere there.

What happens now?

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…with more **long-tail services**.

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...and sharing tools can offer more **personalized sharing** prompts.

...with more **long-tail services**.

...and more appropriate/**targeted** services (like language-specific services).

And as a bonus, the **middlemen are optional**.

...so?

An increase in user sharing rate means **increased link-back lift for publishers**

A standardized sharing interface **increases the network effect of the destination**

Life gets better for users

OK, then.

http://www.oexchange.org/spec

http://groups.google.com/group/oexchange