

Discussing WordPress for Scientists

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Regular readers of this blog know about my current interest in WordPress as a tool to create scholarly content. In the last few weeks I have released several WordPress plugins for reference management and to create ePub files. Obviously I'm not the only person having this idea. Some interesting projects are:

- Knowledge Blog – a JISC-funded project for light-weight scientific publishing
- Code4Lib – a journal that provides practical solutions for technologists working in libraries, using WordPress as publishing platform
- My obsession with WordPress – Peter Sefton's thoughts on WordPress as a scholarly publishing platform
- Mendeley Related Research – a plugin that finds academic research related to your blog posts
- Annotem – an open-source journal authoring and publishing platform based on WordPress

WordPress is by far the most popular blogging platform, and many science bloggers (including us here at PLoS Blogs) use WordPress. And science bloggers have some specific requirements, e.g. easy to use tools for linking to scholarly papers or aggregators of blog posts about a particular paper (ResearchBlogging) or science blogging in general (ScienceSeeker). A number of people use WordPress as a lab notebook (e.g. Carl Boettlinger). There is no clear difference between WordPress as a scholarly writing tool and WordPress as a blogging tool, and I expect that the amount of scholarly writing done with WordPress will only increase.

Two days ago Ed Yong published an interactive timeline of research into reprogrammed stem cells. John Rennie yesterday cited Ed Yong and this post as a wonderful example of the future of science news. The future of science news depends on many things (not least brilliant writers such as Ed and John), but I think we also need better tools to make science writing fun and exciting.

In the hope that this will improve WordPress as a science writing platform, Mark Hahnel from the Science 3.0 blogging network and me today created the WordPress for Scientists Google Group. We invite developers who are working on scholarly plugins and themes for WordPress to join this group, but

also researchers that need specific WordPress tools (e.g. to hook up their lab equipment to WordPress), and science bloggers that have cool ideas on how to improve WordPress for their needs.