

# *User Motivations and Contributing Behavior in Social Bookmarking Websites*

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## **Abstract**

Social bookmarking websites have become popular in the last few years as part of the Web 2.0 environment. Social bookmarking sites (such as [del.icio.us](http://del.icio.us), [Simpy.com](http://simpy.com), and Yahoo!'s MyWeb) allow users to store bookmarks and index them with descriptive words called tags on a web server instead of their client computer. This enables storing, organizing, and classifying those resources to make it easier to find them in the future. At the same time, most of these sites give users the option to make the tagged bookmarks and their tags publicly available to all other users. The aggregation of public tagged bookmarks creates a collective taxonomy of the web, also known as a "folksonomy." The nature of these tagged bookmarks as public goods, which can be consumed without the need to contribute, raises some interesting questions on the motivations for contribution by the users. I am presenting an ongoing research project where we draw from public goods theory, social exchange theory, and discretionary database theory among others, to understand why and how users of social bookmarking sites contribute. I will report on some early results of two field studies we have conducted with users of some established social bookmarking studies.