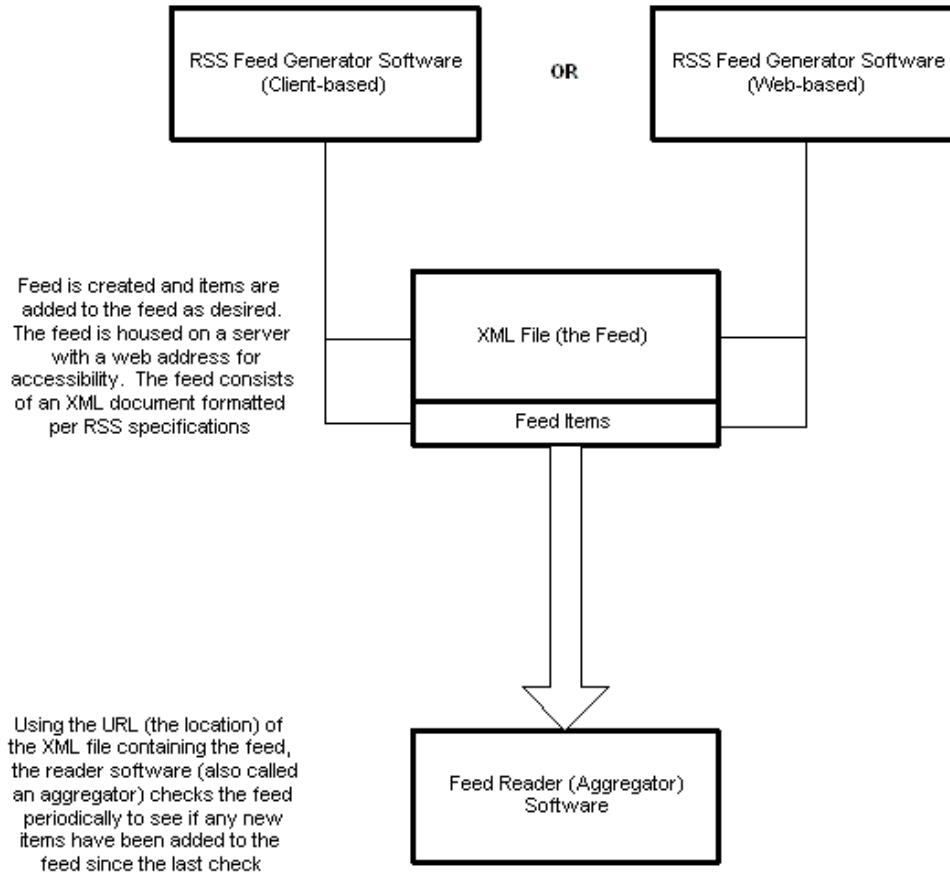


Anatomy of an RSS Feed



What is an XML file and what does it look like? XML stands for Extensible Markup Language and is a very flexible markup language that can be used for multiple purposes. As an RSS feed, the file follows certain protocols, defined in the various RSS standards, and looks something like this:

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="US-ASCII" ?>
<rss version="2.0" xmlns:media="http://www.feedpublish.com">
<channel>
<title>Test Channel</title>
<language>en-us</language>
<link />
  <description>
    <![CDATA[
      This is a test channel
    ]]>
  </description>
<lastBuildDate>Fri, 19 May 2006 10:28:29 MST</lastBuildDate>
<ttl>5</ttl>
```

```
<item>
  <title>Test Item</title>
  <link>http://www.feedpublish.com/rss.php?idlink=605</link>
  <guid isPermaLink="false">9fe7185e305e7cd8f0a559d33b92f16e</guid>
  <pubDate>Fri, 21 Apr 2006 00:00:00 MST</pubDate>
  <description>
    <![CDATA[
      This is a test item in my test feed
    ]]>
  </description>
</item>
</channel>
</rss>
```

You will note that the tags look similar to HTML. Indeed, XML, like HTML, is a *markup language*, a plain text file that uses tags to indicate instructions or format. The difference is that XML is much more flexible than HTML.

This file has only one item in it. As items are added, the XML is revised to include the new items and it is uploaded (or posted) to the web site, replacing the old feed. When an aggregator (reader) accesses the site, it checks for items that have been added since its last visit and displays those items in the reader.