



# NoseRub

## Executive Summary



## What is NoseRub?

I always tell people, that NoseRub is only a protocol and what currently can be downloaded at <http://noserub.com/download/> is just an example implementation.

NoseRub uses already available standards like OpenID, RSS and FOAF to provide the goal of having a truly decentralised social network.

Decentralised means, that people may be able to store their social network on their own server and those servers to interact and synchronize automatically.

Before going into too many details, I would like to give you a short overview about how NoseRub currently can be used.

## What does it look like?

After registering an account and logging in for the first time, you would start to either add contacts to your social network, or add RSS feeds to your profile, to »define« your own activities. For a bunch of services, there is already a wizard available to make it easier to add a feed and also import already existing contacts from that service. Let's see an example of that. I will add my del.icio.us account to my profile and as there already is a wizard available for it, I just need to provide my username:

### Enter username for del.icio.us

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**Details**

Username in del.icio.us:

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[Preview >](#)

After that, I get a little preview of the feed just to see, if this is the correct one and I did not mistype anything. I skip that screenshot and come to the more interesting thing:

importing your contacts from del.icio.us. The wizard parses your del.icio.us profile and shows all your contacts from the service to import into NoseRub.

### Import your social network from del.icio.us

Name: amario <input type="checkbox"/> ignore <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> create as amario <input type="text" value="amario"/> <input type="checkbox"/> assign to agenturblog	Name: cakebakery <input type="checkbox"/> ignore <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> create as cakebakery <input type="text" value="cakebakery"/> <input type="checkbox"/> assign to agenturblog	Name: fab1An <input type="checkbox"/> ignore <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> create as fab1An <input type="text" value="fab1An"/> <input type="checkbox"/> assign to agenturblog
Name: fukami <input type="checkbox"/> ignore <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> create as fukami <input type="text" value="fukami"/> <input type="checkbox"/> assign to agenturblog	Name: ix <input type="checkbox"/> ignore <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> create as ix <input type="text" value="ix"/> <input type="checkbox"/> assign to agenturblog	Name: julia.janssen <input type="checkbox"/> ignore <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> create as julia.janssen <input type="text" value="julia.janssen"/> <input type="checkbox"/> assign to agenturblog
Name: poolie <input type="checkbox"/> ignore <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> create as poolie <input type="text" value="pooie"/> <input type="checkbox"/> assign to agenturblog	Name: rednix <input type="checkbox"/> ignore <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> create as rednix <input type="text" value="rednix"/> <input type="checkbox"/> assign to agenturblog	Name: teemow <input type="checkbox"/> ignore <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> create as teemow <input type="text" value="teemow"/> <input type="checkbox"/> assign to agenturblog
Name: maccdet <input type="checkbox"/> ignore <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> create as maccdet <input type="text" value="maccdet"/> <input type="checkbox"/> assign to agenturblog	Name: rikman <input type="checkbox"/> ignore <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> create as rikman <input type="text" value="rikman"/> <input type="checkbox"/> assign to agenturblog	

[Add contacts](#) [Skip adding friends](#)



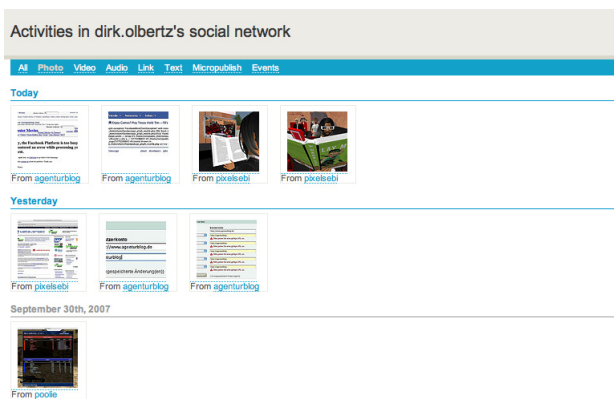
Contacts that are imported like this, are called »private« contacts, because they are only visible to yourself. The nice thing is, that your friends do not need to know about NoseRub, but you can still aggregate their actions in NoseRub.

When you already have private contacts (eg from former imports), you can assign a del.icio.us account to an already existing private contact.

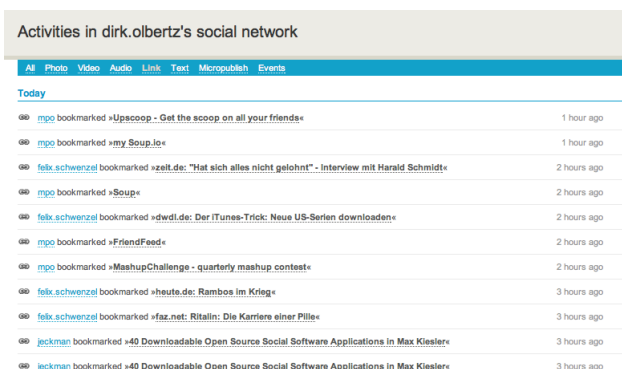
Upon importing, your friends del.icio.us accounts are created, too. This way, you can have a network view of all your friends bookmarks, just like on the network page on del.icio.us itself.

This is not that impressive, but if some of your friends don't use del.icio.us, but rather use ma.gnolia.com, you can also add them to your social network on NoseRub. And because NoseRub defines several Service Types (photo, video, audio, text, link, micropublish and event), you can filter your network view by »link« and then see all of your friends latest bookmarks. This is something, you cannot do with del.icio.us or ma.gnolia.com itself. You need some kind of aggregation for this.

Here some screenshots of my network view:



In this example, photos from flickr.com and ipernity.com are shown in just one activity stream.



This screenshot shows bookmarks from different social bookmarking services.



## What else can NoseRub do?

Right now, you just saw how to add your existing social network accounts to NoseRub and how to import contacts from those services. The network view is nice, but right now it is nothing more than a specialized feed reader.

When I started NoseRub, I did want to get rid of defining my social network over and over again. This is exactly what I did here, too: I added my friends as private contacts, so I can keep up with what they are doing. But what if they start a new blog, or sign up for a new social network I never heard of? My friends would have to tell me and I would need to add their new RSS feeds to NoseRub again. Wouldn't it be better, if those new RSS feeds are just added automatically? In order to do that, your friends would need to have a NoseRub-ID, too. Let's have a look at the form for adding new contacts:

A screenshot of a web form titled "Add a contact to your social network". The form has a light gray header with the title. Below the header, there is a small line of text: "You can either enter a valid NoseRub-ID (noserubserver.com/my.buddy) or just a new username, that then will be created for your access only (a private contact).". Below that, another line of text says: "Whenever you have a NoseRub-ID from someone, you should use that to add a new contact." The form is divided into two sections. The first section is titled "Add a contact with a NoseRub-ID" and contains a text input field with the value "identoo.com/poolie" and a blue "Add" button. The second section is titled "OR Create a private contact" and contains a text input field for "Username" and a blue "Create" button.

A NoseRub-ID is formed like an OpenID, because you should be able to use your NoseRub-ID as an OpenID. In fact, this already works for some services, but we're still working on complete coverage of the standard. When you add a contact with his/her NoseRub-ID, like »identoo.com/poolie«, the NoseRub server fetches this page (<http://identoo.com/poolie>) and parses the embedded FOAF information. In this FOAF RDF data, the profile data of that user is stored and also the accounts he/she added to his/her NoseRub profile. When you take a closer look, I did some non-standard thing, when you just add a RSS feed to your profile. I need to store the Service Type somewhere in order to have 1:1 copy of your friends profile on your server. I'm sure that can be fixed with real FOAF RDF. I currently also don't parse the FOAF information, but use a few regular expressions to extract the desired information. As you can see from the screenshot above, I used a local NoseRub instance on <http://noserub/> and now can add a NoseRub-ID from another server!

This is, why I call NoseRub a decentralised social network. Each server in this hopefully worldwide social network keeps information about profile data for each of the contacts that are locally used. These profiles get synchronised on a regular basis.



## Why OpenID?

The support for OpenID is not just a thing of coolness, but necessary for the steps to come. When privacy issues are met in NoseRub, you might allow only a few people to »see« your flickr feed. As NoseRub only uses the public feeds, the verb »see« is not quite correct. It rather should be like this: you might allow only a few people to know, that a specific flickr feed belongs to you.

So, when someone, who is not logged in, accesses your NoseRub profile page, we would hide that feed/account. When you give another NoseRub-ID holder the permission to see that feed, he can do so on his server. But when he browses to your server and sees the NoseRub profile page, he needs to be able to log in there, although he has no account there. This is just what OpenID is all about. So it is the primary choice.

## Is that all, my dear?

Yes, currently this is all. Only already existing standards are used, but the following things have been done in order to have this decentralised social network:

- A unique url with profile information about a user
- Decentralisation with embedded FOAF to exchange profile data
- OpenID support to have some kind of global session handling
- RSS for syndication and aggregation content



## What's next?

There are a lot of things that can come next. The order will probably be determined by what is requested most. Here some points from the ToDo list:

- Providing data in RSS and JSON, so that people can use their activity data for their blogs
- Activity messages like » ... added .... as friend«
- Discussion about what to do with tags, comments and ratings.
- Should they be part of NoseRub, or is his content that should be handled outside?
- Automatic match of account names from identities that are used in private contacts. Example: I add » poolie's« flickr account to a private contact. When he creates a
- NoseRub account and adds his flickr account, I should get a message that there is a NoseRub-ID for one of my private contacts. Privacy issues need to be taken care of here!
- Distributed search. The search for such NoseRub-IDs for my private contacts should be able over several servers.
- Messaging system. Everyone should be able to send you a message, without knowing your identity. What about Spam here?
- Ability to » design« your profile page.
- Adding » interests« that then could directly match to a group functionality, where you can tag some of your already existing content with that interest and you can subscribe to interests to get content from there.
- Grouping your contacts to make it easier to manage: family, friend, work, hobby, etc.



## **The End**

Thanks for taking the time.

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