



# CONNECTIONS™

Lowe's believes it can help make home improvement simple by providing new ways for employees to connect with each other employees and information. Employees will use new tools like blogs, wikis, forums, profiles, etc., as part of a new way of connecting with other employees. **Connections** is Lowe's browser-based software that enables

colleagues to communicate, collaborate, and share resources within a unified space. Connections features a series of tabs containing the software's main content modules — mini-applications designed for a specific business purpose, such as collecting important links and bookmarks, setting up and tracking team items, and more.

*It takes a connected enterprise to make home improvement simple. – Integrated Workforce Experience (IWE)*

## Logging In and Out

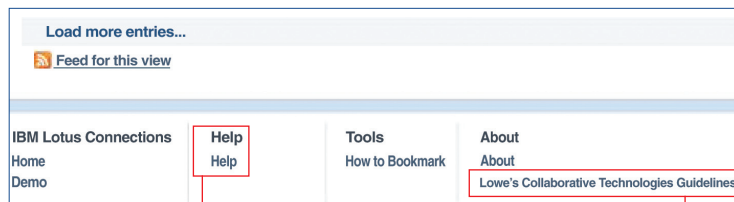
Connections 2.5 can be found on **LowesNet ▶ MyLowe'sLife**. Type your user name and password in the appropriate fields (your connections user name and password are the same as your MyLowe'sLife user name and password). Select **Log In**. To log out, select **Log Out**, located in the top-right corner of the page.



Select to access Connections.

## Lowe's Collaborative Technologies Guidelines

These guidelines provide the governing rules of usage for all Lowe's employees regarding the use of collaborative media in connection to their official job responsibilities, as well as private communications. You can find a link to **Lowe's Collaborative Technologies Guidelines** at the bottom of each Connections page. The **Help** link is also located at the bottom of each Connections page. It is a great resource for hints and instructions related to **Profiles, Communities, Blogs, Bookmarks** and **Wikis**.



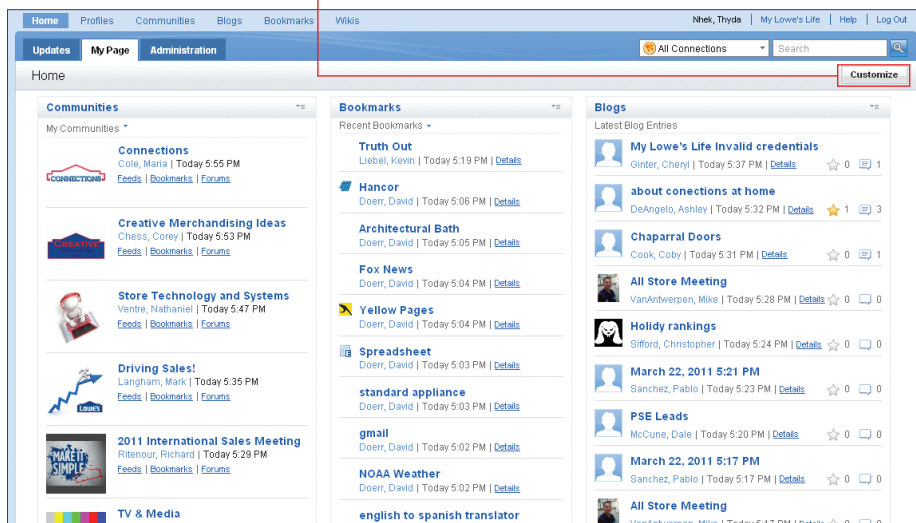
The Lowe's Collaborative Technologies Guidelines and Help links are located at the bottom of each Connections page.

## The Home Page

Serves as an overview of activity within Connections, providing several ways to keep track of recent updates to site areas. It also houses all the Communities you've joined, recent blog posts, Bookmarks, etc.

**To access the Home page:** in the application menu bar, select **Home**.

Select **Customize** to change the number of items that appear in each module on your My Page.



## My Page Tab

Under the Home page, the **My Page** tab uses editable content modules to organize content updates by application (e.g. **Profiles, Communities**). See the image of the selected My Page tab, right.

Select a content module's title to navigate to the application, or select a link within the module to view the related item, user profile, or page.

**To move a content module's location on the page:** select and drag the module's title bar to the new location. Release the mouse button to drop the module into place.

**To edit a module's display properties:** on the module's title bar, select **⌵** and choose **Edit** from the menu. Make changes as desired and select **Save**.

**To remove a module:** on the module's title bar, select **⌵** and choose **Remove** from the menu.

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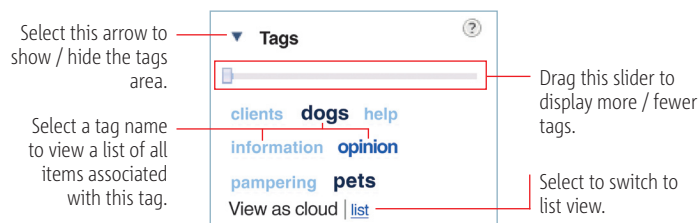
## On The Flap:

- RSS Feeds
- The Bookmarks Tab
- Trackbacks

## Using Tags

Tags are keywords assigned to a wide variety of items (e.g. profiles, bookmarks, communities, blogs). Tags allow users to search for topics and words related to Communities and blog entries.

Most Connections applications will have a **Tags** area in the navigation bar on the left side of the screen. In the default cloud view, tags that are used more frequently will appear larger, while lesser-used tags will appear smaller.



## The Updates Tab

Under the Home page, the **Updates** tab displays relevant news in a 'feed' list. Five sub-pages are available:

- **Top Updates** page displays updates from your personal network.
- **Discover** page displays public updates from the entire network.
- **Watchlist** page allows you to track specific tags or people, and displays updates from these selected sources.
- **Notifications** page is a basic messaging service, displaying notifications received from various content modules and other users.
- **Saved Stories** page allows you to review updates that you save from other pages (e.g. **Top Updates**, **Discover**).

**To save an update item:** select [More](#) beside the update, and then select [Save this story](#). The update will be copied to the **Saved Stories** page.

## The Watchlist

Found on the Home page, this tab offers a stream of updates for the people and tags you follow. By adding people to your Watchlist who aren't in your network, you can view their activities, changes, and contributions within Connections. Similarly, tracking tags from your Watchlist can help you find content related to your topics of interest. There is no particular limit to adding people to your list.

## Searching

**To perform a quick search:** from the drop-down menu, select the site area you want to search within (e.g. **All Connections**, **My Communities**). Type your search keywords into the text box and select or press ENTER to begin searching.



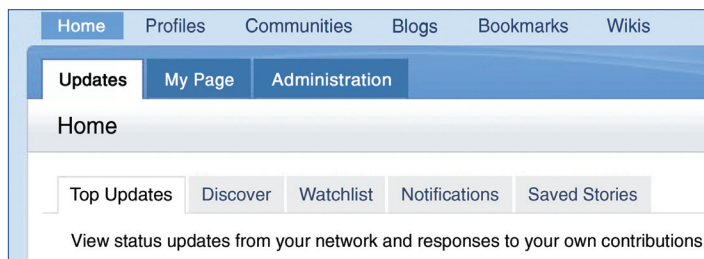
**To perform an advanced search:** choose **Advanced** from the menu. On the **Search** page, fill in the form information as desired and select .

## Reviewing Search Results

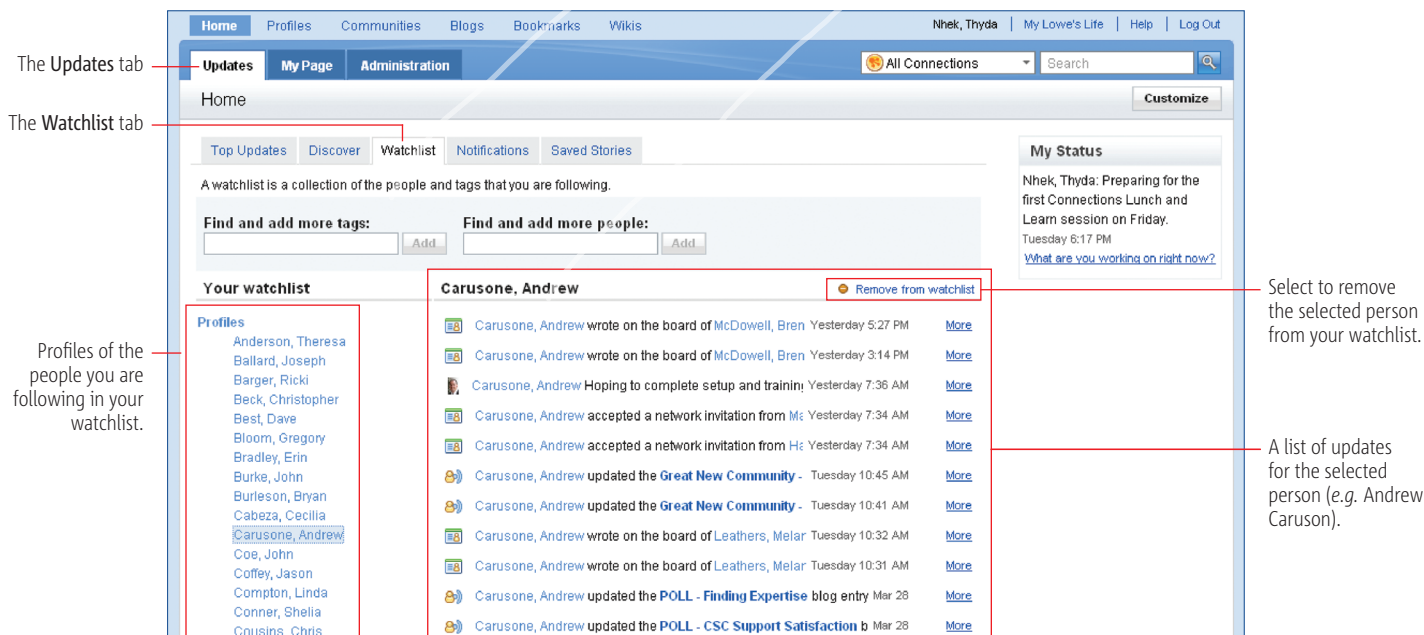
1. If too many results are listed, use the tabs at the top of the results list (e.g. **All areas**, **Profile**) to narrow your search area. You can also choose to sort your list of results by **Relevance** or **Date**.
2. Narrow your search criteria even further, using the **Dates**, **Tags**, and **People** areas at the right side of the screen.
3. Select a title in the search result list to open and review the item.

## Status Updates

The **My Status** module can be used to change your current 'status': a quick and easy way to keep team members and other users in the loop.



**To update your site status:** select [Home](#), then select the **Updates** tab. Under the **My Status** module, select [What are you working on right now?](#). In the text box, enter a new status message to publish and select .



## The Profiles Tab

Displays information about you and your colleagues.

**To access the Profiles tab:** in the application menu bar, select [Profiles](#).

### Working with My Profile

Profiles serve as a great company directory. Colleagues will find it easier to locate and interact with you, and search for your expertise. It's important to maintain your profile. Update the **About Me** section so your expertise can be fully searchable by other users.

**To edit your profile:** select the **Edit My Profile** tab. Add or change information on the **Contact Information** and **About Me** pages. select [Update](#) when finished.

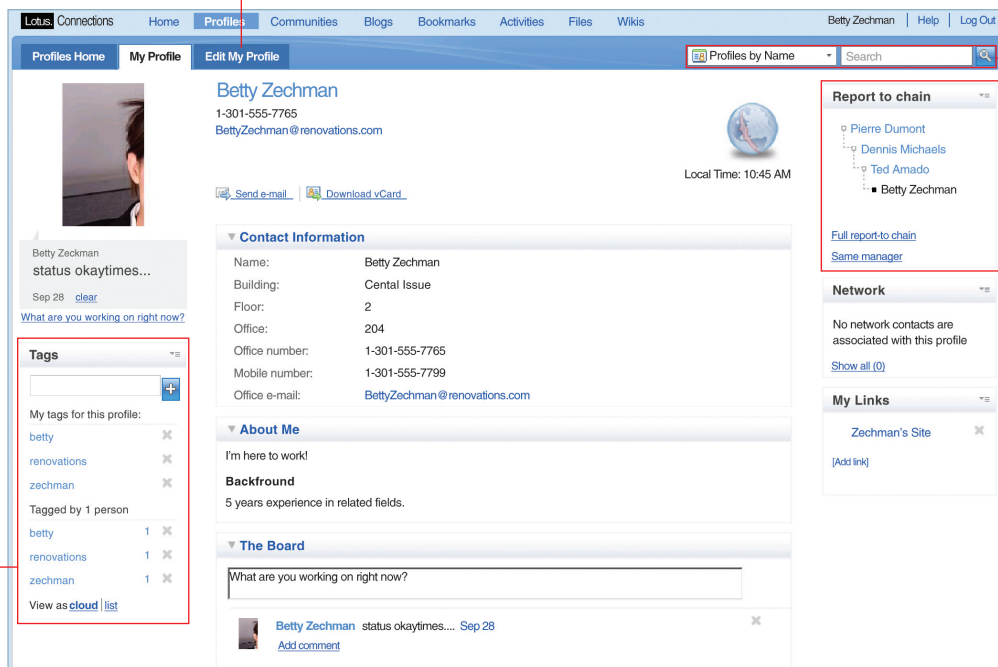
**To add tags to your profile:** select the **My Profile** tab. In the **Tags** area on the left side of the page, type a tag that will identify you to others (e.g. Technology specialist). select [+](#) to add the tag.

### Adding a Photo to Your Profile

Your profile picture should be a good representation of who you are. Allow others to put faces with names by ensuring the picture is of you.

**To add a photo:** select the **Edit My Profile** tab, and then select **Photo**. Select [Browse...](#). In the **Choose file** dialog box, select an appropriate image file and select **Open**. Select [Preview Image](#). Then, select and drag the edges of the crop box to choose the size of your profile photo, or select and drag within the crop box to reposition it. Select [Update](#) to add the photo to your profile.

Select to edit your profile.



Search for other user profiles.

The Report to chain area shows this person's place in management hierarchy.

View and add tags to this profile.

## Locating and Working With Colleagues' Profiles

**To search for a profile:** in the [Profiles](#) tab, type part or all of a Connections user name in the search box. Select **Profiles by Name** from the drop-down menu, and select [Search](#) or press ENTER. On the results page, select on a user name to view their profile.

**Customer Service Associate IV**  
**Dept:** STRBU-0111  
**Cubicle Code:**  
**Work Location:** 2335 LOWE'S OF MARTELL, CA

[Send e-mail](#)
[+ Invite to My Network](#)
[Download vCard](#)

Select to add a person to your network.

## Adding Contacts to Your Profile

**To add a person to your network:** navigate to the person's profile. Select [+ Invite to My Network](#), located beside the profile picture. Type a custom message to send with the invitation, if desired, and select [Send Invitation](#).

**Note:** Adding a person to your network makes them and their updates more visible within Connections, as well as adding them to the **Network** area on the right side of your own profile page.

**Tip:** You can view and respond to requests through the [Home](#) page, either in the **Blogs** section under the **My Page** tab, or on the **Notifications** page under the **Updates** tab.

**To download a person's contact information as a vCard:** navigate to the person's profile. Select [Download vCard](#), located beside the profile picture. Choose a vCard format and select [Download](#). Select **Save**, choose a location to save to, and select **Save** again.

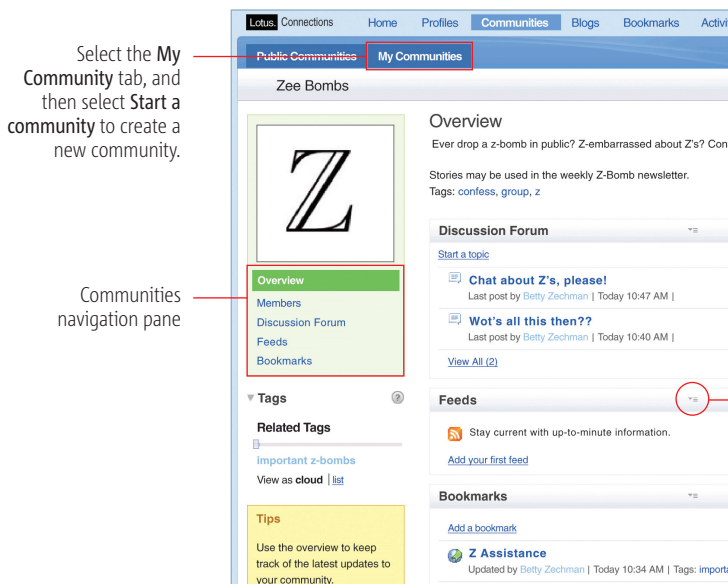
**To view a person's position in their organization's chain of command:** navigate to the person's profile. In the **Report to chain** area at the right side of the screen, select [Full report-to chain](#).

## The Communities Tab

A community makes it easy for teams and groups to stay in touch with each other, and share ideas and resources within a centralized place.

**To access the Communities tab:** in the application menu bar, select **Communities**.

All users have the ability to “start a community”; however, it is much easier to join a community than to start one. Before starting a community, determine your strategy and purpose. Why is a community necessary? Search to see if a similar community exists.



## Creating, Editing, and Deleting Communities

**To create a community:** under the My Communities tab, select **Start a community**. On the Start a Community page, enter information (e.g. Description, Tags, Members) as desired. Select **Save**.

**To edit your community settings:** select **Community Actions** and choose Edit Community from the menu. Make changes, and select **Save**.

**To add new module (e.g. Blog, Wiki) to your community:** select **Customize**. On the overlay screen, select **+** beside the module(s) you want to add. When finished, select **x** to close the screen.

**To delete your community:** select **Community Actions** and choose Delete Community from the menu. Select OK when prompted.

## Locating, Joining, and Leaving Communities

**To browse for a community:** under the Public Communities tab, select Recent, Popular, or Alphabetical, located in the navigation pane, and browse the displayed results. Alternatively, select a tag in the Tags area to search for a community related to a specific topic. Select a community title to navigate to it.

**To join a community:** navigate to a community you want to join. Select **Join this Community**. If the community is moderated, you may need to wait for confirmation from a community owner before you are added as a member.

**To leave a community:** navigate to the community you want to leave. Select **Leave Community**. Select OK when prompted.

## Community Discussion Forums

A discussion forum is a message board where community members can post and reply to topics of interest. Forums can be used to start and respond to discussions about a specific topic, and provide a helpful way of sharing knowledge and information with other members of the organization.

**To view a discussion topic:** select Discussion Forum, located in the community's navigation pane, and then select the title of the topic that you want to view.

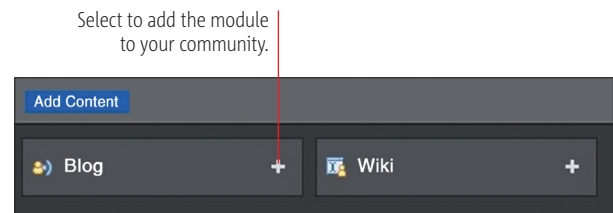
**To reply to a post:** select **Reply**, type your response, and select OK.

**To post a new discussion topic:** select Discussion Forum, located in the community's navigation pane. Select **Start a Topic**. Enter a title and content for your new topic, and select OK to post it.

## Adding Modules to a Community

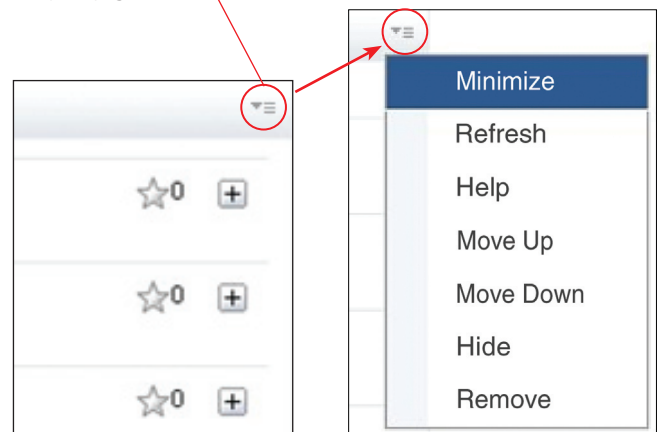
The **Blog** and **Wiki** modules do not appear in a community by default and must be added when new communities are created.

**To add new module (e.g. Blog, Wiki) to your community:** select **Customize**. On the overlay screen, select **+** beside the module(s) you want to add. When finished, select **x** to close the screen.



## Changing the Order of Module Headers in a Community

Select to open a drop-down menu quick page actions.



## Working with Community Bookmarks

**To add a new bookmark to the community:** select Bookmarks, located in the community's navigation pane. Select **Add Bookmark**. Enter the bookmark URL and name in the appropriate fields, and add a description and tags if desired. Select the **Add to Important Bookmarks** box  to add this bookmark to the Important Bookmarks area on the community Overview page. Select **Save**.

## Adding Feeds to a Community

You can subscribe to news feeds from a variety of Internet sources and receive regular content updates in a feed reader.

**To add a feed to a community:**

1. Locate the feed icon on a web page, and then right-click and choose either **Copy Shortcut** or **Copy Link Location**, depending on your browser.
2. Return to the community and, in the navigation page, select **Feeds** ▶ **Add Feed**. In the **Add Feed** form, paste the URL for the feed in the **Feed** field.
3. Complete the remaining fields and select **Save**.



## The Blogs Tab

A blog is a personal online journal with reflections, comments, and links to interesting or important content. Employees can subscribe to your blog, receive updates regarding new entries and post comments. Pictures and links can be included in blog entries. The Blogs widget allows you to set up and write your own blog, as well as browse and view the blogs of other Connections users.

**To access the Blogs widget:** in the application menu bar, click [Blogs](#).

### Creating, Editing, and Deleting Blogs

**Creating a blog:** under the Browse Blogs tab, select [Start a Blog](#). On the Create Blog screen, fill in the fields as needed and select [Create Blog](#).

**Editing blog settings:** under the My Blog tab, select [Settings](#) to the right of the blog title. Make the desired changes, and select [Update Blog Settings](#).

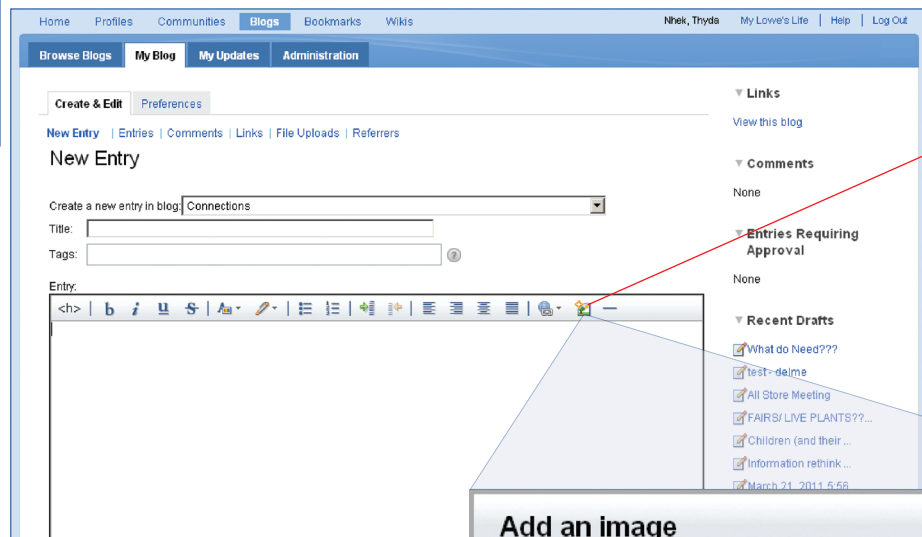
**Changing a blog's theme:** under the My Blog tab, select [Settings](#) to the right of the blog title. Select [Theme](#). Choose a theme (e.g. [Blog\\_with\\_Bookmarks](#)) from the menu, and select [Save](#) to apply the new layout.

**Adding new authors to a blog:** under the My Blog tab, click [Settings](#) to the right of the blog title. Click [Authors](#). Click [Add members](#). From the drop-down menu, choose the new author's status (e.g. [Owner, Author](#)) and type their name into the text field. Add more authors if desired, and click [Save](#).

*Tip:* Highlight and copy your entry in the text box in case your session runs out (if this happens, simply log back on using your Sales ID and MyLovesLife password).

### Uploading a picture to your blog entry:

1. Save the picture onto your hard drive and select the picture icon within the formatting bar.
2. Previously uploaded pictures are saved and can be reused for other entries.
3. Once the picture is loaded into the text box, drag the corners to resize the image.



### Locating and Viewing Blogs

**Browsing for a blog:** under the Browse Blogs tab, use the available options in the navigation pane (e.g. [Public Blogs](#)) and [Sort by](#) area to browse based on the chosen criteria. Select on a blog title to navigate to it.

You can also find blogs using the search box (see [Searching](#), page 2).

### Working with Blog Entries

**Adding comments to a blog entry:** select on the blog entry's title to navigate to it. Select [Add a Comment](#). Type your comment and select [Submit](#).

**Note:** Not all blogs permit user commenting.

**Recommending a blog entry:** select on the blog entry's title to navigate to it. Select [Recommend this Entry](#). Recommending entries helps drive other employees to view the entry. What you may find helpful, others might, too. The more an entry is recommended, the more popular it becomes and the longer it remains at the top of the list.

**Notifying other users about a blog entry:** select on the blog entry's title to navigate to it. Select [More Actions](#), then choose [Notify other users](#) from the menu. Add user names to the [People to notify](#) field, and enter details in the [Description](#) field, if desired. Select [Send](#).

**Deleting a blog:** under the My Blog tab, click [Settings](#) to the right of the blog title. Click [Remove Blog](#) and then click [Yes](#).

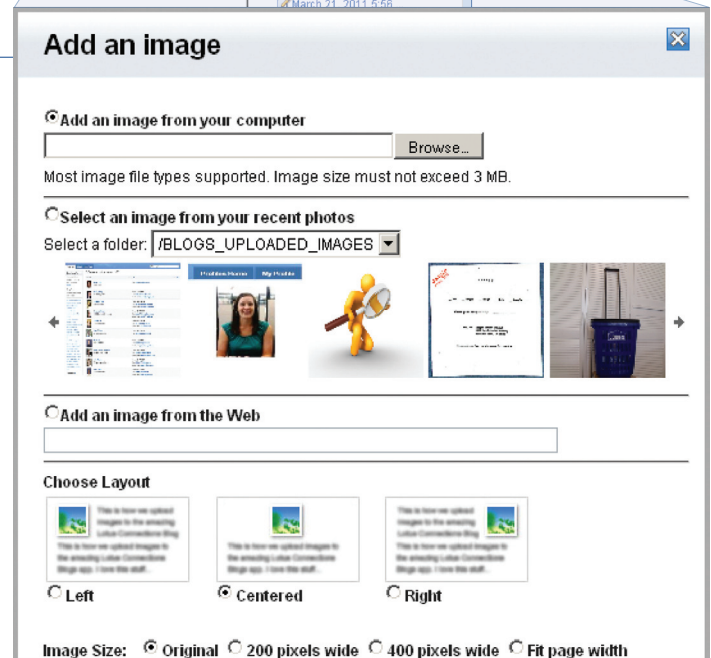
### Creating Blog Entries

**Creating a new blog entry:**

1. Navigate to the blog and click [New Entry](#).
2. Enter a title and tags for the entry in the appropriate fields.
3. In the Entry area, create your blog entry. The formatting bar can be used to customize text styles (e.g. italics, paragraph alignment) or add other elements (e.g. images, links) to the entry. Hover your mouse cursor over an icon to see what it does.
4. Click [Preview](#) to see what your blog entry will look like. When you are ready to publish your entry, click [Post to blog](#). You can also click [Save as Draft](#) to save your changes and publish at a later time.

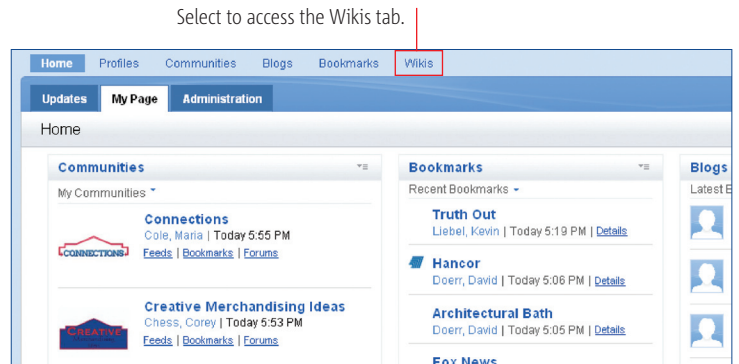
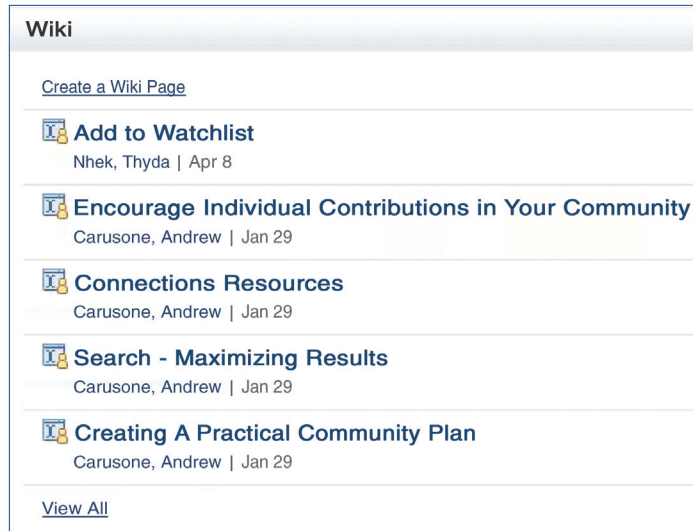
**Editing a blog entry:** under the My Blog tab, click [Entries](#), located beside the blog that contains the entry that you want to edit. Click [Edit](#), make the desired changes, and click [Post to blog](#).

**Deleting a blog entry:** under the My Blog tab, click [Entries](#), located beside the blog that contains the entry that you want to delete. Click [Edit](#), then click [Delete Entry](#). Click [Yes](#) to delete the entry.



## The Wikis Tab

Where you can create, edit, and manage wikis — collections of collaborative web pages that users contribute to and update as a team. The online encyclopedia Wikipedia.org is a good example of a wiki, although wikis can be adapted to any situation where you need to house and maintain a large collection of information (e.g. company policies, client profiles).



## Setting Up a Wiki

**Starting a new wiki:** under the Wikis tab, select **Start a Wiki**. Type a name for the wiki, and specify who can read and/or edit wiki pages. Add members to the wiki if needed. Type some tags to help identify the wiki and a brief description of the wiki's purpose, and select **Create Wiki**.

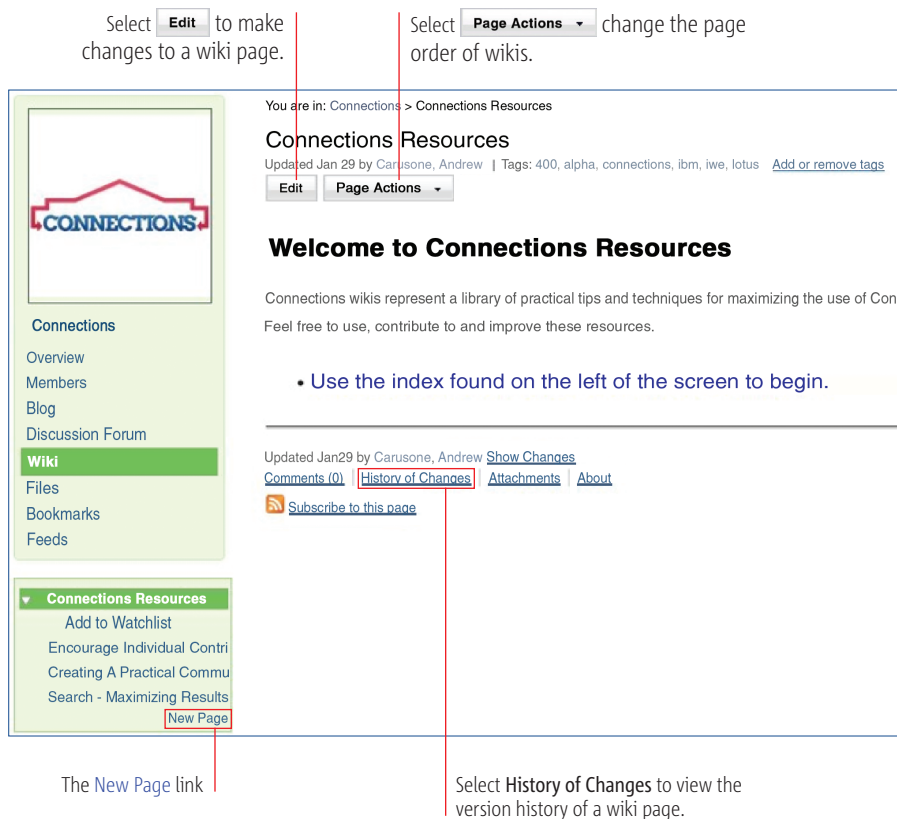
**Changing a wiki's settings and member access:** select the wiki's title to open it. In the Site Tools area, located beneath the navigation pane, select an option (e.g. **Members and Roles**, **Settings**) and make the desired changes.

**Deleting a wiki:** select the wiki's title to open it. Select **More Actions** and choose **Delete wiki** from the menu. Select **Delete this Wiki**.

## Browsing a Wiki

**Browsing a wiki:** under the Public Wikis or My Wikis tab, select a wiki's title to open it. Use the navigation pane to choose a page to view, or select **Site Map** to view how the pages are arranged hierarchically. Select **Pages Index** to see a listing of all pages in this wiki. You can also use the search box to find specific keywords or content

## A Connections Resources wiki page



## Working with Wiki Pages

If you have editor access to a wiki, you can add new pages or update existing ones. You can also choose how pages are ordered in relation to each other.

**Creating a new wiki page:** in the wiki's navigation pane, select **+ New Page**. Enter a name for the wiki page, and select **Add tags**. Type some identifying tags for the page into the text box that appears, and select **OK**. In the content area below, use the available options to create your wiki page. When you are finished, select **Save and Close** to add the page to the wiki.

**Editing a wiki page:** navigate to the page you want to edit, and select **Edit**. Make the desired changes to the page and select **Save and Close**.

**Viewing the version history of a wiki page:** navigate to the page and select **History of Changes**. In the list of page versions, select **View** beside a version to see it. Select **Restore** to revert the wiki page to a previous version.

**Making the current page a 'sub-page' of another wiki page:** under the Find Parent Page tab, select **Browse...**. Select the radio button  beside the page that you want to move the current page beneath in the page hierarchy.

**Moving the current page to the top level of the wiki hierarchy:** under the Find Parent Page tab, check the **Make this a top level page** box .

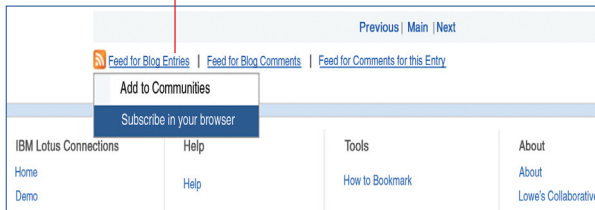
**Deleting a wiki page:** navigate to the page you want to delete. Select **Page Actions** and choose **Delete Page**. Select **Delete**.

## Adding RSS Feeds to Outlook

To subscribe to an RSS feed:

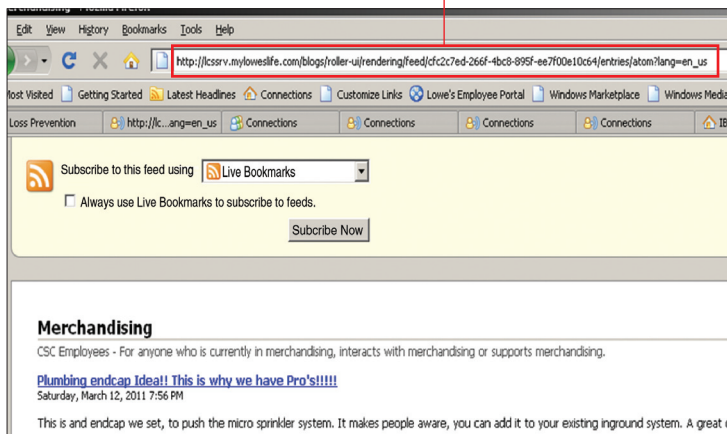
1. Select a blog within the Community of interest.
2. Scroll to the bottom of the page and hover your mouse over the **Feed for Blog Entries** link. A drop down box will appear, select **Subscribe in your browser** (if there's no drop-down box, select the link).

The [Feed for Blog Entries](#) link

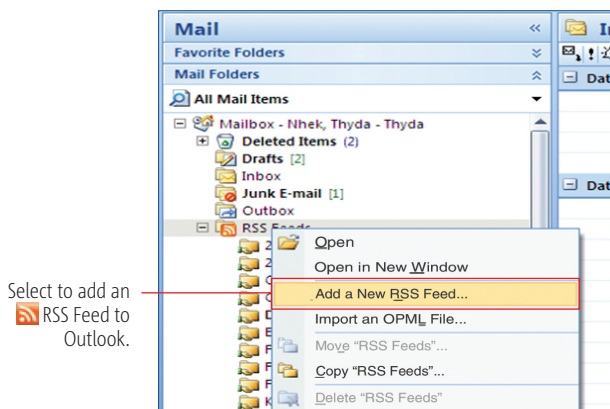


3. A new screen will open. Highlight and copy the URL address in the address bar.

The RSS Feed URL



4. Go to your Outlook Inbox and right-click on your **RSS Feeds** folder. Select **Add a new RSS Feed** from the menu.



5. In the **New RSS Feed** dialog box, press **CTRL V** to paste the feed URL in the **Enter the location of the RSS feed** field.
6. The Community will appear under the **RSS Feeds** folder, and you can now monitor blog entries activity within that Community.
7. To respond to a blog within your **RSS feeds**, you must select **View Article** to take you back in Connections.

## The Bookmarks Tab

Bookmarks enable you to collect and organize links to useful websites. You can create a bookmark to a web page with a single mouse click. Bookmarks can also be added to other Connections features.

To access the **Bookmarks** tab: in the application menu bar, select **Bookmarks**.

### Creating, Editing, and Deleting Bookmarks

To create a bookmark:

1. Under the **My Bookmarks** tab, select **Add a Bookmark**.
2. On the **New Bookmark** page, enter a title and description for the bookmark. Add the link URL (e.g. <http://www.nlearnseries.com>) in the **URL** field. Add tags as needed in the **Tags** field.

To edit a bookmark: under the **My Bookmarks** tab, select **show details**, located to the right of the bookmark you want to edit. Select **Edit**, change the bookmark information as desired, and select **Save**.

To delete a bookmark: under the **My Bookmarks** tab, check the box  beside the bookmark that you want to delete and select **Delete Selected**. Select **OK**.

### Locating and Viewing Bookmarks

To browse public bookmarks: under the **Public Bookmarks** tab, use the **Sort** by options (**Date**, **Popularity**) to sort the list of publicly available bookmarks. You can also use the **Tags** area or the search box to find bookmarks related to a specific topic. Select the title of a bookmark to follow the link.

### Working with Bookmarks

To notify another user about a bookmark: check the box  beside the bookmark(s) that you want to share. Select **Notify**, fill out the **Notify** form, and select **Send Notice**.

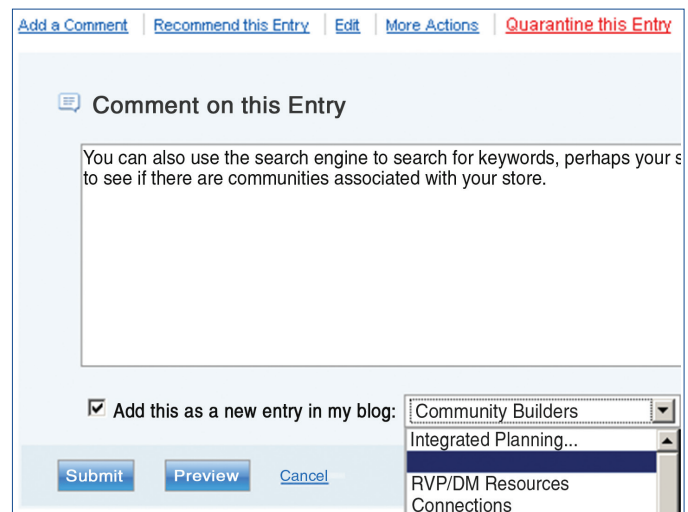
To copy a bookmark to another tab /module (e.g. **Community**, **Blog**): select **show details** beside the bookmark you want to copy. Select **More Actions**, and choose **Add to <tab name>** from the menu. Fill out the **New Bookmark** form and select **Save**.

## Trackbacks

A trackback is a way of linking content you found interesting from a blog entry and wish to share it with others in another Community.

To do a trackback with a blog entry of interest:

1. Comment on the Entry, and then select **Add this as a new entry in my blog**. Choose the community in which you would like to track the content back to.



2. The blog entry will appear in the community you selected with the direct link back to the initial entry.