Reflection: Using Social Bookmarking

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My experience with delicious.com was a good one.

The site was free, easy to sign up for, and easy to navigate. I sincerely appreciated the several different options for setup, including the optional browser toolbars. I personally dislike browser toolbars, so I was very glad to see that they were optional. (I have seen some computers where the user is looking at a tiny slice of a browser window with literally three-quarters of the screen filled with toolbars. They will take over if left unchecked. I think of them like a plague that I want to avoid if at all possible!)

So, without the optional toolbar, I was still able to easily use all of the functions of the site... including easily adding bookmarks, tagging them, and sharing them with classmates. I appreciated that the "title" was already filled in once an address was entered and I appreciated the option o mark an entry as "private" so I could select which links to share with the world and which to keep for my own personal use. It was all very clean and straightforward and all of the tools that I needed were readily available and easy to find.

Social bookmarking is a great idea all around. One of the key aspects to the teacher pages I designed for my school was a database for teachers to share important internet links with their students. In schools where teacher web pages are not required or not available, I would most definitely recommend at least using a social bookmarking site such as delicious.com to share those resources with students. (Teachers have learned over the years that if a resource is not simply "one click away", then many students will not bother to use it.) From a classroom management perspective, this is a great place to consolidate those resources and make them "one click away" for students to use at school and home. The tools at delicious.com would even allow teachers to maintain groups of links for the different classes or topics they taught.

For teachers, administrators, and other school professionals, this is also a great way to share and consolidate professional resources to share with eachother. I run a school website for our teachers that has a place with links and resources just for them to use. These are bookmarks to the common tools they need (gradebook, data tools, Georgia PSC, etc...) The teachers rely on these links daily as the "launching pad" to the things they need to do. Social bookmarking sites fill that need... not just for teachers, but all professionals. I couldn't imagine doing business without them.